Evaluating the impact of training programs on the staff members of the American University in Cairo: a case study of the training and development office at the American University in Cairo

Haider Qayssar

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EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF TRAINING PROGRAMS ON THE STAFF MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
A CASE STUDY OF THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

By
HAIDER ABDULRAHMAN QAYSSAR, B.A.

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NOVEMBER 2009
THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMS ON THE STAFF MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

A CASE STUDY OF THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

A THISIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION NOVEMBER/2009 BY HAIDER ABDUL RAHMAN QAYSSAR

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ART

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-------------------------      ----------------            -----------------------     ----------------
Department Chair/          Date                          Dean                           Date
To my family with love,
To my professors with respect.
To my country with hope.
For the journey of knowledge, to continue....
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my thanks to Dr. Jennifer Bremer, professor and chair of the Department of Public Policy and Administration at the American University in Cairo, for her advice, support, valuable assistance, encouragement, and useful supervision. I could not have completed this project without her help, and I am so grateful and indebted for her understanding, cooperation, and empathy to keep me going to get the degree. Dr. Jennifer, you have been such a significant person for me and all my colleagues that we all feel honored and proud to have had the chance to work under your guidance. Thank you for everything!

I am also particularly thankful to the faculty members of Public Policy and Administration department, especially Dr. Hamid Ali and Dr. Laila El Baradie for their willingness to support me when I was most in need of such support. Thank you for putting your trust in me when you approved of my request to study for two independent courses while I was in Iraq. I cannot express my appreciation adequately, and I remain indebted for you.

I am also deeply grateful to Dr. Aya Maher, professor of Public Administration at the Cairo University/Visiting Professor in the Department of Management at the American University in Cairo, for being one of the most helpful persons on my thesis committee. Thank you for sharing your comments, suggestions, and interesting ideas about Human Resources and Training with me.

Thanks are also due to Mr. Christopher Faulk, Professor of Rhetoric and Composition at the American University in Cairo, for using his unique linguistic abilities to revise and edit my language. Thank you for your constructive feedback and valuable time. Without you, I would probably still be lost fumbling in literature.

Last but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to the staff of the training and development office at the American University in Cairo, for helping me to get this project done.

And to God be the praise.
ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of training programs provided by the Training and Development office on the staff members of the American University in Cairo. To achieve this aim, the research has applied elements of a standard model of training evaluation in order to measure the satisfaction of the participants and explore their perceptions about these training programs.

The study used the Kirkpatrick’s four- levels model of training evaluation to measure the impact of training. The model was applied on a random sample of thirty five participants who were divided into two groups: ten managers and twenty five subordinates.

The results indicated that training had a positive impact on the participants’ managerial and behavioral skills. The study also pointed to several areas for potential improvement in the practice of the Training and Development office and suggested a set of recommendations in order to make the training process more efficient and effective.
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Abbreviations

ASTD: The American Society for Training and Development.
AUC: The American University in Cairo.
EGP: The Egyptian Pound.
T&D: Training and Development.
TIP: Training Impact Project
HRM: Human Resources Management.
IMI: International Marketing and Management Institute.
LTC: Leadership Training and Consultancy.
PEACE: Protocol and Etiquette Academic Centre of Excellency.
PMC: Pro Mark Corporation Limited
ROI: Return On Investment.
TNA: Training Needs Assessment.
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1. Introduction to the study:

Management training is recognized today more than ever before as organizations strive to compete domestically and globally in an environment of constant change. This means that the workplace is changing and so are the skills that employees must have in order to change with it (Nolan, 1996). As a result, training has taken a lead role in facilitating change and skill acquisition. For organizations to succeed or at least to survive, they must continuously seek to acquire new knowledge, skills, and flexible behavior. Effective training creates a motivated and skillful workforce which is a key element to achieve that end. In this sense, training is considered as an effective tool to cope with change. Training is changing in who we serve, how we serve, and why we serve them.

Faulkner (2004) suggests that timely action can make difference in bringing success or failure to new products in the market. To stimulate learning and motivate needed changes, corporations have invested in training programs that are designed to impact both organizational and individual performance. Thus, according to Faulkner (2004) training plays a major role in the continued success of an organization, especially in the current climate of increasing global competition and rapid technological change.

Due the tremendous importance given to training and development in organizations, this study examines the impact of the training courses offered by AUC Training and Development office on the AUC employees. The objective of this research is to explore the process of training in the AUC’s T&D office and to evaluate the training courses provided under its supervision. The study found that AUC’s training programs have had a generally positive impact on employees’ performance, although varying degrees of positive impact were observed on managerial and behavioral skills of the participants. Based on the results, the study concluded that the training programs were beneficial for most of the trainees; however, still a lot needs to be done to make the training process in the T&D office as effective as it could be.
Basically, this thesis is an exploratory study that falls in five chapters: an introduction and literature review, understanding the training process, methods, analysis of results, and conclusion and recommendations. Exploratory study means a preliminary study that is conducted to provide information on a topic in order to understand the problem better. Accordingly, the study is close to a limited applied research on a case study that attempts to define problems of practical nature. It is also an exploratory study because it explores the opinions and suggestions of the participants who attended training in the T&D office. Therefore, this study may be used to frame future wide-scale evaluation studies if they are to be conducted.

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study. Chapter two explains the training process briefly and concentrates on the importance of evaluation to any successful training program. It also provides a step by step comparison between the training process in AUC and the standard training process so as to benchmark the training activities in the AUC’s T&D office. This chapter also presents benefits of training and reasons of conducting it. Chapter three is dedicated to explain the methodology. It explains the methods that the study used in collecting the data and interpreting it. The methods section includes: the research plan, the sampling process, the targeted population, statistical analysis methods, data collection instruments, questionnaire design, and limitations of the study. Chapter four presents the results of the study and is divided into four sections: measuring the reaction level, measuring learning level, and measuring the impact of training on the participants’ behavior, and, finally, analyzing the managers’ questionnaire. Finally, chapter five concludes the research and provides a set of interesting findings on the training activities in the T&D office which could lead to better understanding and implementation of the training process. A bibliography of the work consulted and appendices are presented at the end of the study.
1.2. Background about the Training and development office:

The AUC’s T&D office is functioning under the supervision of the HR department. The training office is a unit which is composed of three members which are divided into two employees headed by a director. It is mainly responsible for providing management and technical training for the AUC staff members and it reports directly to the executive director of the HR department. The mission statement of the office is as follows:

The training and development office aims to create an organization of world-class and committed employees who love what they do and understand AUC’s vision, mission and goals. To build a culture of high performance and accountability where leaders take personal responsibility for developing and coaching people, in addition to driving excellent performance, which will lead to AUC being a ‘world-class’ university.

The office delivers in-house training and also offers a wide range of training opportunities through contracting with external training and consulting agencies. The AUC, through the coordination of the T&D office, has outsourced many of its training activities by building partnerships with global training providers such as: AB & ASSOCIATE, Dale Carnegie Training, International Marketing and Management Institute (IMI), Leadership Training and Consultancy (LTC), Protocol and Etiquette Academic Centre of Excellency (PEACE), Pro Mark Corporation Limited (PMC), Quest, and ZAD Group.

Through focused short programs, the T&D office provides training in leadership, management, interpersonal and communications skills, and technical training programs which are in line with annual training plan requirements and budget of AUC. The aim behind offering training as it stated on the AUC’s T&D office website is to equip individuals and cross-functional teams with new and practical tools that help them implement AUC strategy and advance their own careers.

As for the capacity of the office, each staff member may apply to a maximum of four workshops per academic year. This means that the number of participants depends on the received applications. Thus, there is no precise number of trainees that can be presented.
In this regard, a training report was requested for the purposes of this study as it would be a vital source of information; however, the T&D office responded by saying that at this time they do not generate training reports, as this information has not been requested from them.

The training report is important not only for recording how many participants have attended training but also as an essential source of information which shows all the details of the training activities in any organization. In this sense, the training report is considered by many training practitioners as the basic instrument which is used for measuring the effectiveness of the training programs. From another angle, the training report should be ready by the end of each training round because top level management would ask about it when they set the budget of their organization. Concerning the T&D office budget, the office abstained from giving any information which is related to the expenditure on training. Although obtaining information about the budget was a priority for purpose of this study since training activities may add a significant amount of cost to AUC’s operating budget, but the T&D office ultimately did not agree to provide this information, preferring to keep the focus on the training results reported by the staff and their managers.

Concerning the training process, it is important to mention that training in AUC is a centralized process. From what has been remarked when distributing the questionnaire to the participants, it appears that managers are the main source of information used in the process of the determination of the employee training needs. In fact, before the start of each academic year a proposed plan called the Training Guide (in a form of a set of programs representing the common training needs in AUC) is sent to the staff members along with application forms. The training guide includes: contents, objectives, qualifications, and the targeted group. Table 1 shows the whole list of training programs that are provided by the external training agencies in the AUC for the year 2009. As can be seen in Table 1, many of these programs are very general and they are not customized to satisfy the specific needs of departments or performance gaps of employees.

Furthermore, the AUC’s HR office through the T&D coordination, offers a set of training courses that aims to attract, retain and develop skilled personnel to the various
areas of the university. These programs, as Table 2 illustrates, are supportive to the needs of the diverse personnel of AUC, and they are designed to educate the employees about organizational culture of AUC such as integrity, teamwork, service, productivity and innovation. Conducting such training courses may be considered as a sign to pursue excellence, nurture employee satisfaction and retention, and implement the best practices.

As for the evaluation of these programs, the T&D office’s main instrument to evaluate training is a form named as training impact project (TIP). The T&D office uses these forms as a method to measure the return of investment (ROI) of training programs to the university. These forms were requested from the T&D office as they are of a paramount importance to the study. But the researcher has been provided with only two completed (TIP) forms. The reason for this may be because the T&D office could not collect enough completed forms from the trainees or the trainees were not interested in filling out the TIP forms. Therefore, it was not possible rely on the perceptions of only two individuals to make generalizations about the evaluation process in AUC.
Table (1) Training Courses Provided by External Agencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop Title</th>
<th>Training Provider</th>
<th>Targeted Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Leadership Path Covey’s The 8th Habit</td>
<td>LTC- Egypt</td>
<td>Managers and Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Celemi’s Medici Game</td>
<td>Quest</td>
<td>Managers and Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Carnegie’s How to Instill a Sense of Urgency</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>Managers and Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) World class Professionalism: Workplace Values and Ethics</td>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Business Etiquette for Professional Assistants</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Being a Phonogenic Star: Telephone Etiquette</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Management Skills- Covey’s 7 Habits of Highly Effective People</td>
<td>LTC- Egypt</td>
<td>Managers and Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Dynamic Managers Series</td>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>Supervisors and newly appointed Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Carnegie’s High Performance Teams</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>Managers and Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Carnegie’s Business Execution: Linking People to Goals</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>Managers and Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Carnegie’s Coaching Employees to Achievement</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>Managers and Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Change Management: Ken Blanchard’s Cung Ho</td>
<td>LTC- Egypt</td>
<td>Managers and Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) John Kotter’s Leading Bold Change: Our iceberg is Melting</td>
<td>ZAD group</td>
<td>Managers and Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) Riding the Waves of Change</td>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) World Class Customer Service: Dealing with Difficult Students and Parents</td>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>All AUC Staff Dealing with students and parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) Customer Driven Organization</td>
<td>Quest</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17) Arts of Customer Service Management</td>
<td>AB &amp; Associates</td>
<td>Managers and Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18) Carnegie’s Work Life Plus: Get Focused, Get results, Get a Life!</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19) Carnegie’s How to Conquer Workplace Stress</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20) Carnegie’s How to Remember Just about Anything</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21) Carnegie’s How to Be a Confident Public Speaker</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22) Decision Making and Problem Solving</td>
<td>ProMark</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23) Mind Map Your Way to Success</td>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>Managers and Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24) Business Writing With an Edge</td>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.aucegypt.edu/offices/HR/training/Documents/Training%20Guide%202009.pdf
The AUC’s HR office delivers a few specialized training programs that are related to achieving the AUC’s mission, vision, and values. Mostly, these programs teach the organizational culture of the AUC to the employees such as AUC’s academic integrity and managing diversified workforce. Table 2 includes a list of these programs.

Table 2 Training Courses Provided by the AUC’s HR office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop Title</th>
<th>Training Provider</th>
<th>Targeted Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Communication Plus</td>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Presentation Skills Must- Knows</td>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Human Resources: Staff Orientation</td>
<td>AUC’s HR Team</td>
<td>Newly appointed staff Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Academic Integrity at the AUC</td>
<td>AUC’s HR Team</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Performance Management Plus</td>
<td>AUC’s HR Team</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Competency Based Interviewing Skills</td>
<td>AUC’s HR Team</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) First Aid English</td>
<td>AUC Clinic</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Ways to Motivate Your Team</td>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Diversity Plus: Boosting Your Connections</td>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>All AUC Staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Tables 1 and 2 show that contracted training agencies control around 70% of the training activities, while, the AUC controls about thirty percent. This is an indicator that the AUC is seriously interested in developing the skills and core competencies of its employees by bringing external agencies that introduce new ways of doing things. Tables 1 and 2 also illustrate that managers are offered more programs than the staff members. From the tables, it is clear that conducting training in AUC is an expensive process because it requires financial resources to cover for the cost of the contracted training firms and the instructors.
To get an estimated cost of training in AUC, the researcher has called the training agencies that contracted with the AUC in order to get some information about the prices of the training programs so as to reach an estimated cost of training in AUC. In fact, the prices were different from one provider to another and also from one course to another. Therefore, it is difficult to come up with accurate estimate of the cost, but based on the information that was obtained from the providers on the phone, the average cost of one course is about 2,374 EGP for one individual as shown in table 3. The T&D office agreed to provide tracking sheet of the participants that includes the number of participants and the courses they took in 2009. The tracking sheet was for one academic semester; it starts from Jan. 2009 and ends in June 2009.

The information of prices was compared to the number of trainees and courses in the tracking sheet. Then the prices were multiplied by the number of trainees who participated in them to arrive at close estimate for each course. As can be seen in table 3, the estimated total cost of the training programs conducted in 2009 could be less or more 865,942 EGP. It is important to mention that this amount is only an estimate of the market value of the training provided by the AUC’s T&D office. AUC may have paid more or less depending on negotiations with the providers. When telephoned, three training agencies abstained from giving the cost of training and therefore numbers in italics in Table 3 are unreal because they were calculated by using the average.

Table 3 shows that the estimated cost of conducting training of one academic semester in AUC is about 865,942 EGP. By doubling this cost, we can assume that the estimated cost of training in the AUC for 2009 is about 1,731,884 EGP. Obliviously, it adds a significant cost to the budget and therefore it is important the HR department demonstrates the importance of training to the decision makers in AUC.
Table 3 The estimated cost of training in AUC from January 2009 to June 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Provider</th>
<th>Program Title</th>
<th>Cost Per Participant (EGP)</th>
<th>No. of Participants</th>
<th>Estimated Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>Dynamic Managers Series (Module 1+2+3+4)</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>Business Etiquette (Module 1+2+3+4)</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>89,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>Business Writing with An Edge</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>Dealing With Difficult Students &amp; Parents</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>Mind Map Your Way To Success</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>Riding the Waves of Change</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>New Workplace Value &amp; Ethics (Module 1+2)</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>68,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Carnegie</td>
<td>Carnegie's How To Be A Public Confident Speaker</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Carnegie</td>
<td>Carnegie's High Performance Team (Module 1+2+3+4)</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Carnegie</td>
<td>Carnegie's How to Instill Sense of Urgency</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Carnegie</td>
<td>Carnegie's Get Focused, Get Result, Get A Life</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Carnegie</td>
<td>Business Execution : Linking People to Goals</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Carnegie</td>
<td>How to Remember Just about Anything</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTC</td>
<td>Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People</td>
<td>3800</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>76,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTC</td>
<td>Ken Blanchard's Gung Ho!</td>
<td>3800</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>72,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTC</td>
<td>Covey's Great Leader, GreatYeams, Great Results (8th Habit)</td>
<td>3800</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProMark</td>
<td>Decision Making &amp; Problem Solving</td>
<td>2374.44</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest</td>
<td>Celemi's Medici</td>
<td>2374.44</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest</td>
<td>Customer Driven Organization</td>
<td>2374.44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB&amp; Associates</td>
<td>Art of Customer Service</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAD</td>
<td>Leading Bold Change</td>
<td>5500</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2374.44</strong></td>
<td><strong>420</strong></td>
<td><strong>865,942</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For one Semester
Table 4 shows the estimated percent of participants that were enrolled in programs provided by each training agency and it also shows the estimated percent of money spent on each provider. It can be inferred from Table 4 that IMI trained 54% percent of the participants and consumed 32.7% of the training estimated budget. It can be seen that that IMI and Dale Carnegie control about 58% of the training activities in the AUC and other 42% is distributed among the rest of providers.

Table 4 The Percent of Participants and Money by each provider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Provider</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Percent of Participants</th>
<th>Percent of Money</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMI</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>282,960</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Carnegie</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>207,500</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTC</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>209,000</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProMark</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26,119</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>49,863</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB &amp; Associates</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAD</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60,500</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>420</strong></td>
<td><strong>865,942</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The PEACE agency is not included because it did not provide training during the timeframe of the conducting this study.*

Besides, the training process involves spending a lot of work time because all of the training workshops mentioned above are conducted during work hours; they typically start at 2:00 AM and finish at 3:15 PM. In addition, they offer free lunch and refreshments after finishing the workshops. Because of the significant costs that are related to executing training programs such as financial, logistical, and time, these costs and efforts need to be assessed by the top management as useful and effective to the performance of the staff. This study is an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of these training programs. Therefore, it is hoped that it will be equally useful for the decision makers and the trainers at the AUC.

1.3. Statement of the Problem and Why the Area is Worthy of Study:

According to a study by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), US organizations alone spend more that $126 billion annually on employee
training and development (Paradise, 2007). It is posited that successful companies achieve that status because they commit substantial amounts of their resources to employee development programs (Washington and Jacobs, 2003). To meet the challenges inherent in the 21st century, work careers, organizations, and employees are required to continuously update their knowledge, skills, and work habits. Organizations are encouraged to invest highly in the development of their human capital (Ilgen and Pulakos, 1999).

Because training is such an important element to increase productivity and improve performance in management today, this research focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of the training programs which are offered by the Training and Development office at American University in Cairo on developing the skills, attitudes, and knowledge of the staff members. This study tries to determine the value of training under the supervision the T&D office from the perspective of the trainees who have participated in these programs. In addition, it attempts to investigate the training process and training activities of the T&D office to offer a preliminary assessment as to whether training in the AUC is a systematic and planned process.

Therefore, the main theme of this study is to assess the impact of these courses on the employees’ personal and professional development. This study tries to answer questions such as: what are the benefits of these courses from the standpoint of the employees who participated in them? And how can we measure the impact of these programs?

In order to measure the degree of satisfaction of participants and explore their perceptions about these programs, the study has adopted the model of training evaluation proposed by Kirkpatrick (1994). It is important to mention that this model will not be applied in its entirety, i.e., it will be adjusted to suit the context of the study.

1.4. Major Research Question and Specific Research Questions:

The mainstream belief among training researchers is that management training programs have positive effect on employees if conducted properly. The study assumes
that employee’s training and development programs provided by the AUC’s T&D office are intended to have a positive impact on the employees in particular and the organizational performance in general. Torraco and Swanson (1995) (as cited in Jacobs and Washington, 2003) argued that the axiom is that organizations which offer an array of learning opportunities not only enable employees to perform better on their jobs but also enable the organization as a whole to perform better.

**Major Research Questions:**

RQ: To what extent have the training programs provided at the Training and Development office resulted in an increase in knowledge, skills, and new behaviors of the AUC staff members participating in them? And do these courses have any impact on the employees’ performance?

**Specific Research Questions:**

1- How would the participants assess the value of training they received so far?
2- Can we consider the training process in the AUC as systematic and integrated?
3- How and who determines the training needs?
4- Is there a positive relationship between training and better performance and productivity?
5- What are the new skills, knowledge, and behaviors the trainees gain from these courses?
6- What are the benefits of training to management?

**1.5. Literature Review:**

This section presents a brief, yet inclusive review of definitions of training, and it explains different approaches for understanding the concept of the training process by distinguished scholars in the field. In addition, this section provides a theoretical framework that will guide our understanding through the developing stages of the concept of training evaluation. Finally, since the main aim of the thesis is to evaluate training, a special emphasis will be given to the literature on evaluating training programs.
1.5.1. Definitions of training:

Training is a term that is used in many spheres and different contexts of life; we hear it continually in our daily life whether in sport, military, academia, or psychology. Webster (1994) argued that history has been shaped by the successful practice of training in military advances, construction, transport, communication and public administration. Civilization was created as a result of the continuous transfer of knowledge, skills, beliefs, and values from generation to generation. For that reason the literature on training is very wide and diverse.

Aguinis & Kraiger (2008, p. 452) define training as “a systematic approach to affecting individuals’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to improve individual, team, and organizational effectiveness”. Swinney (2007) argued that training is the processes of helping individuals develop skills and knowledge for the purpose of improving or changing their performance. Webster (1994, p.58) looked at training as “the management of the learning process”. For him, training is an oriented process of development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals and groups to enable them to perform effectively or to improve performance in a job. For Goldstein (1980 p.2), training is the acquisition of skills, concepts, or attitudes that results in improved performance in an on-the-job environment. However, Anderson (1993, p.9) saw training as a process of changing employees’ behavior at work through the application of learning principles. This behavioral change usually has a focus on knowledge or information, skills or activities, and attitudes or belief and value systems. Miller (1970, p.15) stated that “training is a system for changing behavior in order to produce an increase in quantity or an improvement in quality of an individual’s contribution to the goals of the organization. The British Department of Employment defined training as the systematic development of the knowledge, attitude, and skill behavior patterns required by an individual in order to perform adequately a given task or a job. For Brinkerhoff and Gill (1994), training is seen as a partnership and a process rather than a series of discrete events.
For the purpose of this study, training will be defined as a systematic and an integrated process that aims at developing the capabilities of individuals, teams, and organizations by communicating new skills, knowledge, and attitudes in order to improve their performance in an on-the-job environment.

In the light of the previously listed definitions, it appears that training can be an indispensable factor for individual and organizational development if conducted appropriately. However, it is important to mention that training is no panacea nor it is an end in itself. It is an effective organizational tool to achieve a predefined set of objectives such as increased productivity and decreased turnover.

Moreover, literature shows that training is a systematic and a planned process. In this sense, training is viewed as a system which consists of clearly defined stages. Identifying training needs, designing training plan, setting training objectives, implementing the plan, and evaluating training efforts are all considered as a set of connected elements that work together for a particular purpose. Thus, training is systematic process and is best carried out according to a careful plan and in a thorough way.

1.5.2. Linking Training with HR Functions and Organizational Strategy:

Typically, the HR function is concerned with selecting, training, attracting, and retaining good employees that can create new institutional capabilities that add value to an organization. This means that the HR practices and policies are important tools to enhance the competitive advantage and contribute directly to the T&D practices of an organization. Tregaskis (1997) argued that the best approach to link the training activities with the overall business strategy is accomplished through successful integration of the internal HR functions. When the training and the HR activities are integrated with the needs of different departments and the organizational goals, the outcome would enhance the organizational capabilities and improve its overall performance. Achieving this integration can be achieved through the collection of workforce data such as performance appraisal, job description, and task analysis. Tregaskis (1997) stated that obtaining
workforce data from multiple sources provides the organization with clearer understanding of the choices and options open to them.

In this regard, feedback mechanisms play a major role in enabling the human resource system to adapt and change in line with the business needs and demands. Such feedback could be obtained from TNA, training evaluation reports, and individual performance appraisals. Figure1 illustrates the dynamic process between the HR and the T&D activities.

![Figure 1: The Relationship between the T&D Activities and Other HR Functions](image)


Therefore, integration with the HR functions could be used by the AUC’s T&D office as an effective method to control and evaluate training in AUC. We have said that training is needed to cover essential work-related skills through identifying current and future job needs. Identifying those needs can be achieved effectively through the coordination between the T&D and the HR functions. Although it seems a challenge, the integration of the HR functions is important to control the training activities because it provides a detailed record of strengths and weaknesses in the performance of an
employee. Maher (2009) argued that overall corporate objectives also must be considered when evaluating training because job analysis and performance appraisal are two important sources of information to the training specialist to design a good model for training evaluation. This means that an organization should design a strategy that effectively addresses the needed competencies in its workforce. Accordingly, the HR and the T&D activities should be consistent with the overall organizational strategy. According to Schettler (2002), the corporate training function should reside with the strategic functions of the HR department in order to form a strategic partnership. He mentioned that some executives hold firm to a belief that training is most effective when closely tied to HR, while others strongly support an independent department. Most, however, believe the best approach somewhere lies in between. This means that even though researchers disagree on the issue the T&D should operate independently from the HR department, but in principle they agree that the T&D activities should be used to fulfill the organizational objectives.

Finally, HR professionals provide important input regarding strategic assessment of organizational and department priorities to define the training needs. This systematic approach to deliver training in partnership with the HR department helps insure that the T&D activities would have as optimal impact on the organization’s performance in order to meet everybody's needs and also to drive the organization in the direction it needs to go.

1.5.3. Theoretical Framework:

Recently, training professionals have developed a hierarchical model of training evaluation. The hierarchy is composed of several levels of criteria against which training outcomes are assessed. The basic works on training evaluation was produced by Kirkpatrick (1978), Hamblin (1974), and Phillips (1996).

Kirkpatrick's (1994) four-level hierarchy may be the best-known model of training evaluation. His four levels are: trainee reactions, or attitudes, toward a course; their learning of new knowledge, skills, or attitudes; their behavior in their
job; and the results for their organization. According to Kirkpatrick, the effectiveness of a training intervention can be evaluated at four different levels, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Kirkpatrick’s Four Levels of Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1- Reaction</td>
<td>How students react to the training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2- Learning</td>
<td>The extent to which students change attitudes, improve knowledge, and/or increase skill as a result of the training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3- Behavior</td>
<td>The extent to which on-the-job behavior or performance has changed and/or improved as a result of the training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4- Results</td>
<td>The extent to which desired business and/or organizational results have occurred as a result of the training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Usage and value of Kirkpatrick's four levels of training evaluation” by Pulichino, J. Ed.D. dissertation, Pepperdine University, United States (2007).

The fourth level includes organization-wide outcomes such as sales, services, profits, and productivity. The main purpose of this thesis is to assess the impact of training programs from the perspective of the staff members; therefore, the study is more concerned with the first, second, and third levels of analysis. The selection of the first three levels will adequately answer the research question raised previously which is related to evaluating training from the customers’ or trainees’ point of view. At the same time, the fourth level is used to measure the return of investment (ROI) to an organization. Clearly, analyzing the fourth level of results falls outside the scope of this study. The fourth level was omitted as requiring a more sophisticated assessment than possible under the study’s restricted circumstances, in that it evaluates training on organizational level. Thus, this level was beyond the limits of this study. As a partial substitute, a brief questionnaire was developed for a sample of the trainees’ supervisors.
Due to its reliability and validity as a tool to evaluate training, the study adopted this model to evaluate training efforts in AUC, although it may be noted that there is no one way to evaluate or a ready made model which fits in all contexts of training. Also, trainees or customers are widely considered as an important source of feedback and evaluation. This study draws on this type of analysis because it seeks to apply Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation on the training programs conducted at the AUC’s T&D office by developing a questionnaire that is designed to measure the customers’ perceptions.

Brinkerhoff (1987) and Kirkpatrick (1994) agreed that the training process must be customer-oriented. Brinkerhoff used data collection and evaluation to make the training process more customer-focused. He considers the customer as the center of any training evaluation effort and deemed the customer as a particularly important source for continuous improvement. Kirkpatrick replaced term trainee by the term customer as training has changed from satisfying only organizational performance to affecting trainees. Trainees are considered as customers, and their evaluations are important sources of feedback for continuous improvement and quality training programs.

The work of Hamblin (1974) is another work used by training evaluation specialists. Hamblin has added an extra dimension to evaluation; the cost benefit dimension. For training programs to carry on, they must be evaluated continually as giving the most advantage in exchange for the amount of money that is spent on them. Hamblin’s book on evaluation is one of the most important contributions to evaluation. Hamblin believes that, as evaluation must be open-ended, it is hardly ever possible to set up a scientifically controlled evaluation.

Hamblin critiqued Kirkpatrick’s work. He extended the Kirkpatrick model by dividing the results level into two parts: non-economic or organizational variables and economic or ultimate value variables. The first three levels of the Hamblin model are the same as those in the Kirkpatrick’s model: reactions, learning, and job behavior. But Hamblin divided Kirkpatrick's results level into two parts because he believed that it was important to distinguish between economic and non-economic
results. Non-economic or organizational variables are: productivity, quality, and turnover rate. Economic or ultimate value variables include sales, costs, and profits.

Kraiger (2002) proposed a decision-based evaluation model. He argued that the model frames decisions about how to measure training impact around the intended purpose for evaluation, whether decision making, marketing, or providing feedback to participants, instructors, and instructional designers. The decision-based model emphasizes the idea of tailoring evaluation measures to the needs and sophistication of the intended audience. In other words, it suggests that the evaluation methodology should be designed according to the intended program in hand. Besides, he proposes that a training program can be assessed effectively by assessing three levels: the program itself, changes in the learner, and changes in the organization.

Philips (1996) argued that evaluation must go beyond the four levels of Kirkpatrick to include a fifth level which is the return on investment (ROI). Phillips measures training evaluation at Level 5 = return on investment (ROI) by comparing the benefits (financial and other) of the training intervention with the cost of the intervention.

From what has been discussed, it is clear that there is more than one model of evaluation. There are several models used by training specialists to assess the results of and benefits derived from training. But only a few of them have actually been empirically validated in a systematic manner, that is, only a few models of evaluation have been used widely enough to assess the training outcomes so that one might determine the value of the different assessment methods themselves. Aguinis and Kraiger (2008, p. 463) stated that “Kirkpatrick’s four levels approach to training evaluation continues to be the most widely used training evaluation model among practitioners (e.g., Sugrue & Rivera 2005; Twichell et. al. 2000). Hoyle (1984) listed many valuable sources of models of training evaluation for public and private organizations, but he argued that Kirkpatrick’s four level models (1975) is the most effective model for evaluating training programs in private sector organizations.
Chapter Two
The Training Process

2. Introduction:

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the training process, and to show that the evaluation phase is an essential part in this process. Moreover, it attempts to benchmark the training process in the AUC’s T&D office. For the purpose of this study, a special emphasis will be given to understanding the training evaluation process. Finally, the chapter will explore the different reasons and objectives of training in general and evaluation in particular.

2.1. Understanding the Training Process:

There is a consensus among training researchers that the training process should be looked upon as a system that consists of inputs that are in some way transformed through processing to produce a desired output (Kraiger & Aguinis, 2004; Faulkner, 2003; Anderson, 1993; Basrab & Root, 1992). That is why the training process is often described as a systematic process. For that reason, it is important to understand that the training process is a set of interrelated work tasks where each task builds upon the previous one. The training process includes four stages that are performed by the trainer to successfully deliver training programs. The traditional approach to the training system tends to cover four phases as illustrated in the puzzle Figure1; they include assess, design, deliver, and evaluate. Each training project must follow the following steps:

1. A training needs analysis stage.
2. A design/development stage.
3. An implementation stage.
4. An evaluation stage which feeds back into a new or revised phase of the training needs.
The pieces of the training process puzzle must fit together to make a meaningful picture of an effective training process as can be seen in Figure 2. This point will be discussed in details as we explore the process step by step in the next sections.

![Figure 2, Stages of the training Process](image)


But this view of training tends to simplify reality. Organizations do not exist in isolation from their environment. They are subject to the vagaries and influences both of internal and external forces such as changes in technology, government policies, competition, and pressures from the interest groups or the stakeholders. That is why training providers are in favor of a more flexible and integrated model such as the one described in Figure 3, the ADDIE model that best describes the integrated nature of the training process. The figure shows that the training process is series of interlocking cycles which are organized by the monitoring and evaluation.
It is worthwhile to mention that the training process is an integrated process which works as a complete system or a cycle. However, if we compare the model above with the steps taken by the AUC’s T&D office to carry out training, it appears that this complete cycle is broken down to a series of fragmented activities rather than an integrated process.

2.1.1 The Training Needs Analysis (TNA):

The TNA is the first step in the establishment of a training and development program. It is used as a foundation for determining the selection and the design of the instructional program, program objectives, the implementation of the program, and the evaluation of the training provided. These processes form a continuous cycle which always begins with the needs assessment.

“Without diagnosis, there can be no solid prognosis” (Anderson, 1993, p.73). Training needs analysis is the diagnostic part of the whole training process. Failure to conduct such analysis means that the whole training process is built on shifting sands. TNA is the core of any training program because it gives the basis for the program
development and establishes a criterion for measuring the success of the program after its completion. The formula for the TNA is very simple one. Lawson (2004) found that the training determination process is essentially a mathematical problem. He considers DP is the desired performance and CP refers to the current performance, we have the following outcome:

\[
\text{DP} - \text{CP} = \text{TNA}
\]

So, the current performance minus the desired performance equals TNA. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2004) defined the training need as a want or a desire. It is a gap between (what is) and (what ought to be). Therefore, the purpose of the TNA is to identify the performance requirements or needs within an organization in order to help direct resources to the areas of the greatest need. Those needs must be related closely to fulfilling the organizational goals and objectives, improving productivity and providing quality goods and services. So, needs assessment is used for identifying gaps and providing information for a decision on whether the gaps could be addressed through training. The assessment is part of a planning process which focuses on identifying and solving performance problems. These performance problems may be related to knowledge, skills and attitudes.
2.1.1.1. Determining the Needs at the T&D Office:

If training programs are to be effective, they must meet the needs of participants. There are many ways to determine these needs. Kirkpatrick (1994) lists some common sources of the determination process:

1. Ask the participants.
2. Ask the bosses of the participants.
3. Ask others who are familiar with the job and how it is being performed, including subordinates, peers, and customers.
4. Test the participants.
5. Analyze the performance appraisal forms.

The current process of determining the needs at the T&D office concentrates largely on one source. The main source to gather the information about the performance gaps is limited to asking the supervisors of the participants who attend training. The T&D office is officially responsible for determining the needs of the participants based on the advice of their supervisors and managers. Although it is important to ask for the supervisor’s opinion about the needs of their subordinates since they are familiar with their jobs to a large extent, it would not ideally be counted as the sole source of information. All sources of information available such as checklists, questionnaires, pre-test and post-test evaluations, evaluation of users such as students or other staff and faculty members, and focus groups with employees should be taken into consideration when determining the training needs of the employees.

2.1.2. The Design and Development of a Training plan:

Having collected sufficient training needs information, the ideal model calls for the training officer to put a plan to decide on the methodology, resources, and facilities that will be used in the implementation stage. Basically, the design phase is linking the needs assessment to the actual creation of a new training plan. This is where we assemble information tied to each program objective.
On the basis of needs assessment data, it should be possible to determine: how are the
tasks performed now? What are the logistics to perform those tasks? What type of
learning is necessary to acquire the new behaviors? And what type of instructional
method is most likely to accomplish that type of learning?

When an agreed-upon plan is ready to fill the gap in performance, the training
providers must try to choose the best channel of communication to convey the needed
skills, knowledge, and behavior. In this way, the design and development stage is
concerned with making decisions about the content and the methods that are used to
communicate knowledge such as: videos, games, simulations, group discussion, lectures,
hand outs, role pay, and case studies. It is essential to use the right instructional method
for the concerned material.

Despite the fact that the T&D office has contracted global training providers, the
implementation process is not customized to the needs and expectations of the
participants because most of the training providers offer ready-made programs. On the
other hand, many participants complain about the programs being repeated, as will be
discussed further in the results section. This complaint is also applicable to the examples
that the instructors bring to the classroom because some people said that some examples,
case studies, and even ideas had been repeated and used for three times or more in
different courses.

2.1.3. Implementation:

In this stage the plan is put into action. At implementation, the trainer is responsible
for choosing training techniques to effectively deliver the training program and making
sure that the place of training is a conducive environment for learning. For a training
program to be successful, the trainer should be conscious of several essential elements,
including a controlled environment, good planning, the use of various training methods,
good communication skills, and trainee participation. People must be actively involved in
the learning process so that they use the training opportunity to its greatest advantage.
Research shows that people understand concepts better and retain information longer
when they are actively involved in the learning process. Active training expert Siblerman (2006) defines active training as “the process of getting the participants to do the work”. The idea of active training is based on an old Chinese saying, expanded by Siblerman (2006).

What I hear, I forget.
What I hear and see, I remember a little.
What I hear, see, and ask questions about or discuss with someone else, I begin to understand.
What I hear, see, discuss, and do allows me to acquire knowledge and skill.
What I teach to another, I master.

When it comes to implementation, the T&D office follows a centralized policy that leaves little room for the participants to express their suggestions and evaluations. At the beginning of each academic year, the offices issues a flyer under the name of “The Training Planner” which consists of a set of programs that will be implemented based on the offers of the training providers. Although the planner has a wide spectrum of choices, this can not substitute for consulting with trainees on their needs and preferences. The trainee’s role must not be marginalized when it comes to making decisions about what they need to learn and how to learn it. According to training specialists, there should be pre-test and post-test evaluations sheets for each and every training session so that a decision can be made about the worth of training against the time, effort, and resources spent in doing it.

2.1.4. The Evaluation:

Having explained the training process, we are in a better position to understand evaluation. This section sheds light on the importance of the training evaluation to the corporate training programs. Some organizations may still consider training as subsidiary management issue. However, it is no longer seen in this way by major corporations or organizations. Evaluation must be conducted on a regular basis in order to meet business needs.
Goodacre III (1957) (as cited in Kraig, 1996, p.295) provides a quotation that is most appropriate as an introduction to the importance of evaluation to training process.

Managers, needless to say, expect their manufacturing and sales departments to yield a good return and will go to great lengths to find out whether they have done so. When it comes to training, however, they may expect the return—but rarely do they make a like effort to measure the actual results. Fortunately, for those in charge of training programs, this philanthropic attitude has come to be taken for granted. There is certainly no guarantee, however, that it will continue, and training directors might be well advised to take the initiative and evaluate their programs before the reckoning day arrives.

Anderson (1994) argued that in order to get an insight for the degree to which training programs achieve their objectives, we should consider the evaluation phase of the training process. This study adopts Basrab & Root’s definition of evaluation (1992). They argued that the evaluation process is a systematic process by which pertinent data are collected and converted into information for measuring the effects of training, helping in decision making, documenting results to be used in program improvement, and providing a method for determining the quality of training. The evaluation process assesses the total value of training with respect to the needs of the participants, the cost/benefit to the organization, and the requirements of the stakeholders.

Basrab & Root (1992) listed multiple purposes for measuring the value of training programs. The following is a list of typical reasons for using the training evaluation process.

1. To identify whether a training program is accomplishing its objectives. Objectives may not only be learning objectives but may also be behavioral changes in personnel, monetary effects on the company, and quality results.

2. To benefit those who sponsor training programs. Sponsoring training programs can mean funding development of the course program or sending employees through the program.

3. To decide if the participants are behaving more effectively on the job and if that behavior is a result of the training.

4. To identify whether training contributed directly to the participants' improved job performance or whether the improved job performance was due to environmental changes in the work situation.
5. To identify learning from the course program that is actually being used in the work situation or to identify learning that is not applicable to the work situation and should be eliminated.

6. To find if training contributed to a more effective and a more efficient business organization.

7. To identify strengths and weaknesses in the training process and the reasons or causes of those strengths and weaknesses.

8. To find the cost/benefit ratio of a training program.

9. To decide who should participate in future training programs.

10. To identify which participants benefited the most and which benefited the least from the course program.

11. To decide if the course program has both merit and worth.

12. To establish a data base that can help management in making decisions (Basrab and Root, 1992 p.23).

In brief, their main view is that the evaluation process should be conducted regularly by measuring the participant’s improved job performance and by documenting the benefits to the organization. Thus, it would be easier to demonstrate the worth or value of the overall training process to management.

2.1.4.1. Summative and Formative Evaluations:

There are two main types of evaluation that the training practitioners usually use to determine the value of training. Brandenberg and Martin (1986) argued that evaluation is a judgment on the value of something against a standard. A standard is a criterion to measure success or failure. In turn, judgments are divided into two classes: summative and formative. Summative evaluations are concerned with the go/no go decisions. For example, should we implement the X program? Should we offer training this year? Audiences of the summative evaluation are the senior management in an organization. The basic purpose of the summative evaluation is to provide a summary report of the training results. In contrast, formative evaluations seek to identify ways of improving the evaluated entity. For example, what can be done to improve the course? Trainers are generally the audience for formative evaluation because they are the people who will
have to fix the course. The basic purpose of the formative evaluation is to measure the progress and to use the information in program improvement during the life span of the program.

In brief, formative evaluation provides information to staff for purposes for improving the course program during its development and implementation; whereas, summative evaluation provides information to show the merit or worth of training as a whole.

2.1.4.2. Why The T&D Office should Evaluate its Training Programs:

There is an old proverb in management that says “If you can not measure it, you can not manage it.” For training to be managed effectively, it must be evaluated. Evaluation is an essential part of the training process because, in simple words, it tells the people in charge whether training is achieving its objectives or not. Therefore, it is essential that the AUC’s T&D office start generating training reports to enable management to determine whether the benefit of training outweighs its cost. Evaluation would help the T&D office to discover whether training programs are achieving objectives such as increasing knowledge, developing skills, or changing attitudes of the employees or whether it is waste of the AUC’s money, time, and effort. As can be seen in Table 3, the estimated cost of training in the AUC is high. So, evaluation has to be conducted, for the training to be cost-effective and for the T&D office to demonstrate its value.

The basic purpose of the training evaluation according to Basrab and Root (1992) is to satisfy the needs of the stakeholders. Stakeholders are any persons affected by training. Key stakeholders are the sponsors and the participants because they have vested time and resources in the process. Therefore, if their needs are not met, then training has no value to them. The following five points summarize what the stakeholders look for when sponsoring training:

1. Reduction in cycle time
2. Improved quality
3. Increased performance
4. Reduced errors
5. Increased sales

In this sense, it is clear that evaluation is not an end in itself but rather a tool to help decision makers to make better decisions concerning the training process. Stufflebeam and Webster reaffirm this point when they considered the training evaluation as “decision-oriented” process where the purpose is to “provide a knowledge and value base for making and defending decisions” (1980, 12). This idea has reiterated by Anderson and Ball, who stated that, “program evaluation involves providing services to decision makers” (1978, 6).

The training evaluation process provides a method to track and measure training against stakeholders’ requirements. Therefore, it is essential the AUC’s T&D office start to generate training reports after the completion of each training round so that these can be used by the top management to make sound decisions about the effectiveness of the training efforts. For training activities to be successful in the AUC’s T&D office, evaluation reports must be considered as a process that is rigorously followed in order to produce measurable and consistent results of the training activities. Although very simple, Figure 5 gives the best picture of what the training in the AUC should look like in the future. Training is not a series of fragmented activities; it is an interconnected process in which each phase builds upon and feeds into the other.

![The training Puzzle](image)

*Figure 5 The training Puzzle*

Chapter Three
Methods

3. The Methodology:

Hoyle (1984) argued that the selection of a good model is the first step for the evaluator, but designing a questionnaire that is unique to the context of the organization or course in question is the second most important step in the process of training evaluation. Based on such argument, the researcher has chosen a valid and reliable model of evaluation from the literature and then adjusted to fit the context of the study.

The main tool to collect the data is an adjusted questionnaire. Adjusted in this case means that the researcher modified the original questionnaire by deleting some questions and adding others in order to suit the context of the study (see section 3.2.) for more details about the selection and adjustment of the selected evaluation model. The results of the data were then analyzed by using the SPSS software program.

This study was designed to evaluate the impact of the training programs on the AUC staff members and therefore the method used in the study concentrated on exploring the ideas and perceptions of those who took part in training programs. To answer the research question adequately, evaluation questionnaires were distributed to a random sample of 25 participants to collect their perceptions about the training that they received at the AUC’s T&D office. The T&D office provided the researcher with a list of 50 randomly selected participants for the purpose of surveying their opinions about training. But the researcher was able to obtain only 25 completed questionnaires. In fact, the researcher faced a number of limitations during the process of collecting data because some of participants did not complete the questionnaire and also the researcher was committed to a tight timeframe to finish the research. Therefore, For more details about the limitations of the study, (see section 3.4). Furthermore, a second evaluation of performance questionnaire was completed by 10 managers who supervise the work of participants in order to collect their views regarding the performance of their subordinates since they are presumed to be familiar with their subordinates’ performance to a large extent. Only three managers out of the ten actually supervise the work of the participants’
sample because the majority of participants did not agree that their managers evaluate their performance and for this reason the researcher used the snowballing technique to access the rest of managers. Managers were chosen because they are entitled to make judgments about the performance of their employees before and after implementing the training programs.

3.1. The Sampling process:

Thirty-five individuals participated in this study. The population targeted can be divided into two groups: subordinates and supervisors. A sample of 25 staff members who have received training under the T&D office were chosen randomly. Another sample of 10 managers were chosen by the using the snowballing technique. The decision to use the supervisors or managers as source of data is important because Bracken (1996) pointed out that information from senior and managerial level staff is increasingly recognized as useful tools in employee evaluation and organization development. Accordingly, the total number of observations is N= (35) that is divided into subordinates (25) and managers (10).

Despite the differences in age, gender, and educational attainment, all the participants share one common characteristic which is the time for taking training courses. They were chosen because they attended training within the last six months prior to conducting this study. This timeline was chosen so that the selected participants can remember what type of courses they attended and what the pros and cons of these courses were, from their perspective. Thus, the study focused only on those who attended training from the period of April 2009 to October 2009. In spite of the fact that the number of participants is relatively small, the sample is still considered representative of the population for three reasons. First, the sampling process was random; therefore, the sample is rich with a wide spectrum of opinions from individuals of different backgrounds. Second, the 25 respondents involved in the study can be considered as a valid sample for making generalizations about the total number of 125 individuals who attended training during the timeframe specified. Third, most of the participants were well-informed about the training courses because they attended more than four programs. Furthermore, the
researcher faced a number of difficulties such as stringent timetable for thesis completion, lack of resources, and problems related to having access to the data and participants. These barriers are discussed in the section below that addresses the study limitations.

The data shows that there is a relatively high discrepancy in the participants’ male-female ratio because, as Figure 6 shows, the percentage of female participants is 83.9%, whereas the males’ percentage is 16.1%. Perhaps this can attributed to fact that number of female staff in AUC is greater than the male staff.

Figure 6, Gender’s Ratio of the Sample

As for the participants’ educational attainment, Figure 7 shows that 50% percent of the sample holds an M.A. or a graduate degree, while 33 % have a B.A. and the Ph.D. percent is 6.7%.

Figure 7, Educational Attainment of the Sample
3.2. Data Collection Instruments:

The main instrument used to collect data is an adjusted questionnaire taken from one of the most reliable text books on evaluating training programs which is *Evaluating Training programs: The Four Levels* (1994) by Donald Kirkpatrick. The questionnaire is divided into three parts. Each part is designed to measure one level of evaluation. The researcher introduced some changes to that questionnaire tailored to the context of the study. The questionnaire is designed to survey the opinions and perceptions of the employees towards the training courses that they received. It is important to mention that Kirkpatrick’s model measures each level separately by using a different questionnaire which is designed specifically to measure a certain evaluation level. For example, in measuring the trainee’s satisfaction with a training program, Kirkpatrick used the reaction sheets or happiness sheets to evaluate this level, and he used another set of questions to measure the second and third levels and so on. Because of limitations related to time and resources, the researcher summarized a set of questions for each level and put them in one questionnaire. The process of summarizing the first three levels into one questionnaire was adopted to significantly reduce the time involved in answering the questions and also to makes it easier for the participants to complete the questionnaire. The fourth level was omitted as requiring a more sophisticated assessment than possible under the study’s restricted circumstances, in that it evaluates training on organizational level. Thus, this level was beyond the limits of this study. As a partial substitute, a brief questionnaire was developed for a sample of the trainees’ supervisors.

The participant questionnaire is structured to involve two types of questions, fixed alternatives and open-ended questions, so as to get wider insights and comments from the participants. The adjusted questionnaire consists of three parts. The first part is designed to measure the reaction of the participants to the programs, that is, whether they like it or not. The second measures how much they believe they learned from the training. The third examines to what extent they are applying what they learned from training, based again on their perceptions on this issue.
The questionnaire for supervisors is designed to measure the performance of employees from the former’s viewpoint, with the aim of identifying possible improvements and deficiencies before and after the implementation of the training programs.

3.3. Statistical Analysis Methods:

The statistical package for social science (SPSS) was used to reach the results. An alpha level of .05 was chosen as the cut-off for significance. Explanation is provided with each significant result. In analyzing the data obtained for the study, the following non-parametric statistical models were followed:

1) Frequency distribution
2) Cross tabulation
3) Gamma test

The frequency distribution is used to analyze the intensity of the participants’ feelings, agreements, and levels of satisfaction. This type of analysis was used because of the nature of the collected data as it based on a 5-points scale that measures in terms of preferences and rankings.

A cross tabulation test is usually used to describe the distribution of two or more variables simultaneously. The study used this type of analysis in the managers’ questionnaire to detect the effect of training on the performance of their employees before and after attending training courses. Cross tabulation is also used in the participants’ questionnaire to see whether there is a relationship between the participants’ gender/level of education and the extent to which they report benefits from taking training.

The Gamma test is a non-parametric measure of correlation. It measures the strength of the relationship between the two variables and informs the researcher whether this
relationship is positive or negative. The study used this type of statistical analysis because of the following reasons:

1. Nonparametric methods are most appropriate when the sample size is small.
2. The sample is not known to be normally distributed.
3. Non-parametric methods may be necessary when data have a ranking but no clear numerical interpretation, such as when assessing preferences, in terms of levels of measurement.

The Gamma (\( \gamma \)) test \(^1\) is basically a measure of ordinal association that reflects the relationship between two ordinal variables regarding the strength and direction of their relationship Sheskin (2007, 34).

\[ C = \frac{2}{n^2} \sum_i \sum_j n_{ij} \left( \sum_{k \neq i} \sum_{f \neq j} n_{hk} \right) \]

\[ D = \frac{2}{n^2} \sum_i \sum_j n_{ij} \left( \sum_{k \neq i} \sum_{f \neq j} n_{hk} \right) \]


\(^1\) The sample \( \gamma \) is calculated as: \( \gamma = \frac{C - D}{C + D} \)
3.4. Research Limitations:

It proved difficult to get AUC staff members to participate or to complete the questionnaire for the study. Although 50 questionnaires were distributed among the participants, only 35 were completed, despite repeated personal visits and emails. Thus, those who were not interested in the study and who did not answer the questionnaire may have different points of view than those participated in the research. It worth mentioning here that there is a danger of selection bias, in that those who refused to participate might have a lower opinion than those who agreed to participate. The participants were visited several times as many appointments were given to receive the answered questionnaires, but many times it was found that the questionnaire had not been completed. Furthermore, the researcher noted an overall lack of data concerning the training process in the AUC. The T&D office does not generate any reports related to the training process. Moreover, the sample size does not allow statistical conclusions regarding training in the AUC. Therefore, any general statements that have been made in this study are restricted by this limitation and must be regarded as indicative. In addition, the research focused on a timeframe of six months prior to the distribution of questionnaires so that participants could more accurately remember what they have learned from their training experience, and also in order to include participants who had had enough time to apply what they have learned from the training program. This does not capture the long-term impact of training, if any. Moreover, the study also noted an institutional bias in the completed questionnaires because the participants (N=25) never chose the ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ options to answer any question regarding the effectiveness of the training courses that they receive, instead they prefer to select neutral to express their real opinion (see appendix C and D). Finally, it was not possible to obtain copies of the training budget and expenditures for the purpose of the study.
Chapter Four
Analysis of Results

4. Introduction:

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of training programs provided at the AUC’s T&D office by surveying the perceptions of participants who have attended training courses and their supervisors. This chapter presents the results of the study and is divided into four sections: measuring the reaction level, measuring learning level, and measuring the impact of training on the participants’ behavior, and analyzing the managers’ questionnaire. Thus, the first three sections tackle the participants’ questionnaire results, and the fourth section is dedicated to the managers’ questionnaire. All the collected data was treated statistically by the use of (SPSS) software program.

4.1. Measuring the Reaction level:

This level is concerned with measuring the perceptions of the participants toward the training programs that they received at the T&D office. Six questions were put in the participants’ questionnaire to measure their reaction to the programs. The results of the reaction level display, as Figures 8-13 show, that the participants were generally satisfied with the training programs. Although 23% of the sample expressed concern that the timing of training was not suitable, as Figure 11 illustrates. In fact, it can be inferred from results of the reaction level that the overall impression of the sample is positive about training because they overwhelmingly feel that the training was satisfactory.

Furthermore, using Gamma test at 0.05 level of significance showed that there is no significant ordinal association between gender or level of education and the degree to which personnel expressed satisfaction with the training. The lack of a relationship between gender and education variables, on one hand, and how the participants rated the benefit from training, can be attributed to the fact that the sample was relatively small, so the effect was not clear. This observation may not be generalized; however, it can be further investigated in any future wide-scale study about training.
1) The program content which I took last academic year met my expectations

- Exceeded  
- Met  
- Not Met  

(N= 25)

![Bar chart showing results of Question 1](image)

*Figure 8, Results of Question 1 in Response to Whether Training met the expectations of the Participants*

2) The material covered in the program(s) was relevant to my job duties.

- Strongly agree  
- Agree  
- Neutral  
- Disagree  
- Strongly Disagree  

(N= 25)

![Bar chart showing results of Question 2](image)

*Figure 9, Results of Question 2 in Response to Whether the Training Programs Were Relevant to the Job Duties of the Participants*
Q. 3) The schedule of sessions was suitable (Time, length, sequence)

- Strongly Agree  - Agree  - Neutral  - Disagree  - Strongly Disagree

(N= 25)

Figure 10, Results of Question 3 in Response to Whether the Timetable of the Training Programs was Suitable for the Participants

4) With respect to my current and future job needs, the training opportunities were available to me

- Too Early  - Just in Time  - Too Late

(N= 25)

Figure 11, Results of Question 4 in Response to Whether the Training Opportunities Were Offered in a Timely Fashion to the Participants
5) How would you rate the training program(s) given by the office of T&D in general?.

- Excellent     - Very Good     - Good     - Fair     - Poor

(N= 25)

![Bar chart showing ratings of training program](chart1.png)

*Figure 12: Results of Question 5 Regarding the General Impression of the Participants about Training.*

6) Overall, I was satisfied with the training?   Yes        No

(N= 25)

![Bar chart showing overall satisfaction](chart2.png)

*Figure 13: Results of Question 6 with respect to Measuring the Level of overall Satisfaction about the Training Quality*

In general, results of questions 1-6, as can be seen from Figures 8-13, show that the trainees reacted favorably to the training because 93.3%, according to Figure 13, of the sample agrees that training was satisfactory whereas only 7% was dissatisfied with training. Thus, the overall impression of the sample at this level is in favor of training.
4.2. Measuring the Learning Level:

At the learning level, results demonstrate that the participants have a high degree of interest in training activities and appreciate the role of training in enriching knowledge, acquiring or developing skills, and improving performance. From the answers to question 10 about the best instructional method used in the training programs, there is unanimous agreement among the participants about group discussion as the most useful method. Therefore, there is direct evidence, as Figure 17 shows, that group discussion was the most helpful method of understanding the concepts during the training.

When analyzing the answers to the open-ended questions related to this level, the study found that some participants felt doubt regarding the ability of the instructors and communicators to convey the ideas. One of the respondents said that she noticed that some of the trainers were not teaching the courses that are supposed to be taught in the AUC in particular or the Middle East region in general because most of the examples and solutions were applicable in the USA and did not fit the AUC’s situation in her view.

7) To what extent do you feel you have learned from the program that you attended? (N= 25)

![Bar chart showing responses to Question 7](image)

*Figure 14. Results of Question 7 Concerning the Amount of Knowledge and Skills that the Participants Learned From Training*
8) The training has increased my capability of performing current or future job tasks

• Strongly Agree • Agree • Neutral • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

(N= 25)

Figure 15, Results of Question 8 as to Whether Training Increased the Capabilities of Performing the Job Tasks of the Participants

9) The instructors were effective communicators

• Strongly Agree • Agree • Neutral • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

(N= 25)

Figure 16, Results of Question 9 Concerning the Effectiveness of the Communicators
10) How would you rate the most useful training method on a scale of five. (1= most useful 5= least useful) (Group discussion, Video Tape, Case Study, Simulation Handouts) (N= 25)

![Box plot showing ratings of different training methods.]

*Figure 17,* Results of Question 10 in Response to Rating the Most Effective Training Method

11) The course activities, simulations, or games were

- Very helpful
- Helpful
- OK
- Not Helpful
- Useless
- Non used

(N= 25)

![Bar chart showing ratings of training techniques and instructional strategies.]

*Figure 18,* Results of Question 11 with Respect to Rating the Training Techniques and Instructional Strategies
12) The facilities were appropriate environments for learning

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

(N= 25)

*Figure 19*, Results of Question 12 Regarding the Appropriateness of the Facilities of Training

Kirkpatrick (1994) argued that evaluation of the learning level is important because no change in behavior can be expected without effective learning. This means that effective learning motivates the trainees to change their attitudes and behavior towards the better. Regarding the measuring the learning level the study noticed that the training programs, as reported by the participants in Figures 14 and 15 concerning the amount of knowledge and skills that the participants learned from training, contributed effectively in increasing the learning curve of the participants and improving their attitudes. According to Figure 14, 65% of the participants felt that their learning experience from training was very satisfying while 26% of them reported that they have learned a lot of new skills. Whereas only 10% believed that training was unsatisfying. Generally speaking, results related to the learning level show that training facilitated the process of learning to the participants and helped them to gain new knowledge and skills.
4.3. Measuring the Impact on the Behavior Level:

It is difficult to measure the behavioral level accurately because it is hard to know exactly how people think or behave. For this reason, the study depended mainly on the comments and the perceptions provided by the sample in the open-ended questions. In addition to the comments, the study also relied on the fixed alternative questions to reach an assumption about this level. According to the data collected, the study supports a conclusion that training has positively affected the performance capabilities of participants. Almost all of the comments provided by the participants and their managers support that claim. In this regard, some said that the training made them realize their potential and do their job better. Others mentioned that training affected not only their behavior on-the-job but also their conduct in life in general, while another person posited that training makes him a life-long learner and a better decision maker. One manager said that training helps him to improve the way he thinks, deals with people, and how to organize his life priorities. An interesting comment regarding measuring the impact of training is stated by a manager “some of the employees used efficiently what they learned; others were able to apply some of what they learned. It depends on the character of the employee.” To measure this level, five questions (13-18) were directed to the trainees:

13) I will be able to apply much of the material I learned to my job.  (N= 25)

- Strongly Agree  • Agree  • Neutral  • Disagree  • Strongly Disagree

![Figure 20, Results of Question13 Regarding the Degree to Which Participants Apply what They Learn from Training](image)
14) I feel that the workshop(s) will help me do my job better

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

(N= 25)

*Figure 21*, Results of Question 14 as to Whether Training Workshops helped the Participants to do their Jobs in a Better Way

15) Training makes me a better decision maker

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

(N= 25)

*Figure 22*, Results of Question 15 in Response to Whether the Training Programs Made the Participants Better Decision Makers
16) Training helps me solve work problems

- Strongly Agree  - Agree  - Neutral  - Disagree  - Strongly Disagree

(N= 25)

![Bar chart for question 16]

*Figure 23, Results of Question 16 as to Whether Training Programs Helped the Participants Solve Their Work Problems*

17) Open-ended Question.

18) Did you feel that the program gave you the ability to (Choose one please):

- Understand the concepts presented in a general way
- Understand the concepts and how they apply to my specific job
- Understand the concepts and how to actually apply them to my work

(N= 25)

![Bar chart for question 18]

*Figure 24, Results of Question 18 Regarding the Degree to Which the Participants have Actually Applied what they learned from Training in their Work*
The behavior level measures what change in job behavior occurred because people attended training. As described previously, it is difficult to measure to what degree participants change their on-the-job behavior because it is complicated question that has no accurate answer. But the results of the behavioral level show that 50% of the participants were able to transfer much of what they learned during training into their work. According to Figures 22 and 23, 61% of the participants reported that training made them better decision makers, and it changed they way they do their work. In summary, the analysis of the data collected through the participants’ questionnaire show that the participants reacted favorably to the training programs because the overall opinion of the sample is positive about the training that they received.

4.4. Results of the Managers Questionnaire:

The aim behind using this questionnaire was to assess the managers’ perceptions about the level of performance of their subordinates before and after participating in training. Due to some difficulties discussed in the limitations to the study, the researcher was able to get responses from ten managers only. The questionnaire includes six questions; the first five are fixed alternative questions about the levels of creativity, commitment, motivation, and performance. The sixth is open-ended for providing comments. Statistical analysis of the data obtained from the managers establishes direct evidence that training improves the performance of the employees. Statistical analysis was performed using frequencies, percentages, and gamma test to analyze the managers’ questionnaire (N=10). According to Figures 25-29, almost all the ten managers agree that the overall level of their participants’ performance and commitment was improved as a result of attending training.

Using Gamma test at 0.05 level of significance where $P\text{-value} < 0.05$, the study found that there is a significant positive relationship between taking training and improving level of performance of the employees. This relation was a strong relation as the gamma value is 1. as Table 6 shows.
From table 6, a significant positive relationship was observed between the training and the level of performance of employees. The majority 90% of the managers in the sample preferred to send their employees to training and agreed that the level of their performance was improved after training. A small minority of them 10% expressed the opinion that training did not affect the performance of the employees. Using the gamma test shows a strong positive relationship between attending training and increased performance as assessed by the managers. This relationship is supported by a manager statement that “training helps my employees to solve the work problems; I would send them to new course.” Figure 25 shows that the managers rated the level of skills and knowledge that their subordinates have after attending training as higher than it was before taking training programs. The results of question 1 of the managers’ questionnaire, as can be seen in Figure 25, show that managers believe that the level of knowledge and skills of their subordinates improved as a result of attending training.

Table 6 The Relationship Between Performance and Training (N=10)

| The evaluation for the skills and knowledge that your subordinate has before attending training? | Gamma |
|---|---|---|---|
| The evaluation for the skills and knowledge that your subordinate has after attending training? | excellent | very good | Good |
| very good | 3 | 2 | 60.00% | 40.00% | 3 | 100.00% | 2 | 100.00% | 1.0 |
| good | 3 | 100.00% |
| fair | 3 | 30.00% | 50.00% | 2 | 20.00% |
| Total | 3 | 5 | 2 |

Figure 25, Comparing the Subordinate’s Level of Knowledge and Skills Before and After Attending Training (N=10)
As for question 2 results, the managers appreciate the role of training in increasing the level of creativity, motivation, and initiative taking of their employees. According to Figure 26, four managers rated their employees’ level of motivation and initiative taking as excellent and another six managers gave their employees very good on the rating scale. This means that the managers consider training as an important factor for the participants’ on-the-job improvement.

Moreover, managers regard training as tool to boost the employees’ level of commitment to the AUC’s organizational goal. As Table 2 shows, the AUC’s HR office delivers a few specialized training programs that are related to achieving the AUC’s mission, vision, and values. These training courses aim at increasing the awareness of the employees about the AUC’s organizational culture and also sometime these courses used as a tactical instrument to make the employees more committed to the AUC. In this regard, the remarks and answers from the managers, as seen in Figure 27, indicate that training strengthen the relationship between the employee and the university. This point is in line with many studies that argue that training may lead to more job satisfaction and professional development of employees which finally could result in creating a psychological link between the individual and the organization. Figures 14 and 15
reaffirm this idea further since about 80% of the participants strongly agreed that training made them better decision makers.

![Comparing the Subordinate's Level of Commitment to the Departmental and Organizational Goals Before and After Attending Training](image)

**Figure 27**, Comparing the Subordinates’ Level of Commitment to the Departmental and Organizational Goals *Before* and *After* Attending Training

Figure 28 illustrates that the managers have the same views as those of participants about the role of training in enabling an employee to handle the work problems effectively and in making the employee more capable of taking decisions independently.

![Comparing the subordinate’s ability to make decisions and solve work problems independently before and after attending training](image)

**Figure 28** comparing the Subordinates’ Ability to Make Decisions and Solve Problems Independently *Before* and *After* Attending Training

52
Concerning results of question 5 of the managers’ opinion about the subordinate's level of performance before and after attending training, the managers expressed their satisfaction with the level of their employees’ performance after attending training as Figure 29 shows. Statistical analysis by using the gamma test establishes a direct positive relationship between training and better performance, as can be seen from Table 9. It is clear that managers agree that training significantly improve the ability of the employees to understand and address the work responsibilities. That is why most of the managers recommend that their employees attend more training programs in the open-ended questions.

![Comparing the Subordinates’ Level of Performance Before and After Attending Training](image)

*Figure 29, Comparing the Subordinates’ Level of Performance Before and After Attending Training*

In the final analysis, the evaluation of the levels of reaction, learning, and behavior of the trainees yielded positive results about the role of training in increasing their knowledge, skills, and improving their attitudes because the majority of them agreed that training has left significant a positive impact on their job behavior. Similarly, analysis of the data collected from the managers’ questionnaire show that training improved the overall level of performance of the trainees in the eyes of their supervisors. However, this does not mean that the training process in AUC’s T&D office cannot be improved. The study identified many disadvantages in the training process in the AUC. The pros and cons of the entire training process in AUC will be discussed in details in the next chapter. In addition, a list of recommendations based on the conclusion of the study will be provided in order to improve the training process.
Chapter Five
Conclusions and Recommendations

5. Conclusion:

By applying Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation to assess the T&D office training programs, the study found that AUC’s training programs have had a generally positive impact on employees’ performance, although varying degrees of positive impact were observed on managerial and behavioral skills of the participants. Based on the results, the study concluded that the training programs were beneficial for most of the trainees; however, still a lot needs to be done to make the training process in the T&D office as effective as it could be.

The study has provided a set of interesting findings on the training activities in the T&D office which could lead to better understanding and implementation of the training process. These findings suggest a number of recommendations that if considered could improve the practice of the T&D office which would, in turn, mean better training services to the AUC employees and success for the university as a whole.

Based on the literature and the results, the study has identified some areas of concern that need to be addressed for the training to be effective. The training process in AUC is not based on scientific methods and therefore there are many areas of improvement that need to be tackled. All training practitioners, researchers, and theorists have agreed upon one basic principle about training. That principle is that training should be systematic and integrated with workplace-defined competencies. In this respect, training in the AUC is conducted as a series of unrelated activities rather than an integrated or interconnected process.

The first major challenge that this study revealed is that the T&D office’s role is limited to a coordinator rather than an initiator or organizer of the action. This finding is in line with Craig’s (1987) view that management would prefer to take only a superficial look at training needs because they want training activities not training results. Almost 80% of the training is done by contracted agencies and the T&D office is not an active
player in this process. In fact, resources and attention are directed to the implementation of the training programs at the expense of the other steps, including both assessment/planning and evaluation/modification. That is, the office’s role is confined to preparing the environment and registering employees who wish to attend training; it is a link between the AUC and the external training agencies. Therefore, some defects are inevitably present in the practice of the T&D office and in the way it handles the training process in AUC.

Furthermore, as discussed above, training is needed to fill gaps in the performance and to achieve the organizational goals. Training can only fill these gaps if it is based on well organized managerial efforts to identify them. Craig (1987) suggested four different approaches to defining of training needs: needs survey, job description, performance analysis, and competence-based. In fact, the T&D office does not currently follow any of these approaches. If the training needs determination is not given attention, then how can we identify the gap in performance? And if the gaps are not identified, the training process may well be ineffective and aimless because all the subsequent stages are built on the foundation of needs determination. Thus, the effective determination of the training needs is the beginning of a successful training program and the beginning is always considered as the most important part of a process. Through interviews with participants, they reported that the job description and performance appraisal reports are not used in determining the needs. They added that they do not participate in the process of need determination.

Moreover, the T&D office adopts a centralized training policy. From what has been remarked when distributing the questionnaire to the participants, it appears that the training unit mainly relies on the managers to determine the training needs of the employees. Although managers are considered as an important source of information, ideally they may not be the main source of information used in the process of the determination of the employee training needs. In fact, before the start of each academic year a proposed plan called the Training Guide is produced, which sets out programs representing the common training needs in the AUC. This is sent to the staff members
along with application forms. The training guide includes: contents, objectives, qualifications, and the targeted group of participants such as managers, employees, or assistants. However, when participants where asked, they pointed out to some disadvantages of the training guide. They believed that some programs do not reflect what they need to learn and they also feel that the sequence of program offerings is disorganized. In addition, they added that the training guide offers more programs of better quality to the managers, whereas, it offers limited programs to the employees.

From analyzing the comments and suggestions of the participants, we can say that many of the respondents would prefer to change this policy to a decentralized one that takes into consideration department-specific needs or permits them to customize their own programs. Adopting a decentralized policy would help the T&D office to be more efficient and effective. A decentralized policy would require each department in the university to submit a report to the T&D office stating its needs and preferred programs and then the T&D office would put together a comprehensive training plan based on the feedback of the departments. Designing such a comprehensive plan would enable the T&D office to set smart objectives for the training process, discover the negative points of the programs, and evaluate the overall benefit from the process.

Basically, training aims at achieving the organizational goals through developing the capabilities of employees, but currently training in AUC may be viewed as a benefit for the staff who consider the training programs as an opportunity to refresh themselves by staying away from the work environment as well as by adding programs to their resume. It is not incorrect that the employees get benefits, but training should also serve the institution. The basic duty of the T&D office and the AUC’s HR department is to align the benefits of training with achieving the overall organizational objectives. Moreover, many of the training programs that the T&D offers are general, rather than customized programs that are responsive to filling gaps. That is, the training courses should be tied to the job responsibilities and the performance gaps of the trainees in order to gain maximum benefits from training to the organization and the staff.
Based on the analysis of the results and observation, several conclusions can be derived about the areas for improvement:

1. The repetition of courses, examples, and case studies and the lack of new programs.
2. Ineffective time management of the workshops as many respondents reported that some programs are either too long or too short to be conducted in three days only.
3. Some participants reported that some instructors and lecturers appear unqualified to give lectures.
4. Lack of training reports such as pre-test and post-test evaluation sheets, checklists, and training data in general.
5. The T&D office is not fully staffed; it is operated by three staff members only. This number of employees is not enough to carry out the responsibilities of training effectively.
6. The training needs determination process is not effective.

5.1. Recommendations:

Based on the deducted conclusions, several recommendations can be made in order to establish a set of guidelines for improving the practice of training in the T&D office:

1) The T&D office should do away with its centralized training plan and start to implement a decentralized one as soon as possible. Many employees complained that the training programs were not customized to address their job needs. For example, a participant complained that the T&D office should be more focused on the needs of each department in the university, i.e., different programs for different departments according to the nature of their function and services. For instance, accountants in the HR department require a different type of training from the accountants in the financial department.
2) The training function must be considered as a key organization subsystem. Basically, training is largely planned and should be considered as integral part of the company’s operation. Therefore, for the output of training to be effective, the T&D office should consider all the system’s processing components (TNA, design, implementation, and evaluation), not only the design or implementation.

3) The T&D office must start to generate more comprehensive reports, beginning with an annual report that records essential details about the training process. In addition to that, the T&D office must start to distribute evaluation sheets after finishing each workshop in order to get feedback about the quality of training, and then compiling the results.

4) The HR professionals provide important input regarding strategic assessment of organizational and department priorities to define the training needs. This systematic approach to deliver training in partnership with the HR department helps ensure that the T&D activities would have as optimal impact on the organization’s performance in order to meet everybody's needs and also to drive the organization in the direction it needs to go.

5) The T&D office ought to send a questionnaire, prior to conducting training, to all employees asking them to identify their needs because they are the best sources of needs determination. Many comments show that they prefer to participate in the identification of their own current and future needs. Managers and the bosses may participate, but should not be considered as the only source.

6) On the long run, the T&D office is in need of more employees, especially a statistician, an active coordinator, and a special needs determination specialist. But the current viable solution would be cutting down on unnecessary programs and providing training for the training staff on new skills such as statistics and identifying performance gaps.
7) More attention should be given to the issue of time management of the programs. Many participants pointed out that the workshops were disorganized. Important programs are short and the subject matter is not covered appropriately, whereas, unimportant programs are long. Some programs needed more time than one day, so should either be streamlined so as to focus on fewer topics or spread over a longer time period, so that staff can get the most out of them.

8) More screening of instructors and lecturers is needed before allowing them to give lecture to the employees. Surveying the opinions of the employee sample shows that there is a huge difference among instructors; some lecturers are considered as excellent, while others are described as unfit for the job.

9) Offering more training programs to staff members who are not managers would target employees who may be in more need of skill development.

10) The office should avoid repeating individual training programs as this may create monotony and lack of interest among the trainees.

11) Striving to present new programs every time would meet a wider range of needs. In this regard, some participants believed that the courses offered by AUC were much better than the ones offered by external training providers.

5.3. Discussion:

The literature on training evaluation continues to grow rapidly as the HR departments strive to demonstrate the value of training to management. This study was designed to investigate the impact of training programs on the employees of the American University in Cairo. The findings of the study have contributed to the literature on training evaluation and they have supported the assumption that training has many benefits to employees. The present study is the first systematic research to be conducted on in-house training at the American University in Cairo. Despite the restrictions, the
outcome of the study can be built upon in future research studies on training evaluation. The study has identified a number of challenges facing the T&D office and it has presented a set of interesting findings on the training process. On the basis of these findings, the study has put forward a number of recommendations to overcome the challenges observed in order to make the training process more effective.

The participants surveyed agreed that training was an important factor for developing their skills and improving their performance. This would seem to support the mainstream hypothesis among training researchers that training is a present capital investment for a significant future return represented in higher employee productivity and improvement in conduct. The employees surveyed expressed that training helped them process work speedier and improved their decision making and problem solving skills. In addition, training improved not only on-the-job behavior, but also the conduct of participants in their personal lives. Furthermore, results indicated a positive relationship between training and performance.

In both the literature review and the data analysis of the results, the study provides several recommendations for the T&D office and the HR department in the AUC who are charged with the responsibility of evaluating the training programs. The T&D office may start applying Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation in order to measure the effectiveness of training on the employee because this would maximize the potential of successful training in the future.

One of the central actions suggested by the findings of this study is that the T&D office should begin summative and formative evaluations. Indeed, this may be seen as the most important finding of the study. Perhaps the T&D office can make use of training to offer programs to present good learning opportunities that may not be available elsewhere. This may lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and morale among employees.
Pulichino (2007) argued that if one knows the result, one is better able to know the behavior that will produce the result. If one knows the behavior, one is better able to know what learning needs to happen to change or improve the behavior. If one knows what needs to be learned, one is better able to know how to plan what needs to be learned. Once these tasks accomplished, training is considered effective. Although it may seem like a daunting task for the training practitioners to start doing evaluation, Kirkpatrick insisted that they should start step by step and level by level, until they are able to accomplish all four levels. The most important thing for the trainers, he said is “Just get started”. This lesson may be applied to AUC’s T&D office and other training departments as well.
Bibliography


Sheskin, D.J. (2007) *The Handbook of Parametric and Nonparametric Statistical Procedures*


Appendix-A-

Evaluation of Training Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a part of a thesis research conducted by graduate student Haider Qayssar from the –PPAD- Public Policy and Administration Department. Filling out the questionnaire does not take more than 10 minutes of your precious time; however, please free to take as much time as you need to complete it. Thank you for your participation.

Aim of the Study

The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide the office of Training and Development at the American University in Cairo with your reactions and perceptions by knowing what skills and knowledge you have acquired from the programs that you have participated in. You have been chosen because you have received training under the office of T & D at the AUC.

The information you provide is a vital source to evaluate the effectiveness of the training courses and it will be used to promote the training process offered by the Training and Development Office at the American University in Cairo.

Your confidentiality is guaranteed and the information you give will be secretly treated and used for the purpose of this study only.

This study is conducted by

Haider Qayssar from the –PPAD- Public Policy and Administration Department / School of Public Affairs.

In cooperation with

The office Training and Development team at the American University in Cairo
Instructions: Please circle the most appropriate answer which closely describes your reaction to each of the following questions. Thank you very much for participation!

Sex:  • Male  • Female
Age:
Education:  • High School Grad.
            • College Grad
            • M.A. or Graduate Degree
            • Other ........................ please indicate

1) The program content which I took last academic year met my expectations
  • Exceeded  • Met  • Not Met

2) The material covered in the program(s) was relevant to my job duties.
  • Strongly agree  • Agree  • Neutral  • Disagree  • Strongly Disagree

3) The schedule of sessions was suitable (Time, length, sequence)
  • Strongly Agree  • Agree  • Neutral  • Disagree  • Strongly Disagree

4) With respect to my current and future job needs, the training opportunities were available to me
  • Too Early  • Just in Time  • Too Late

5) How would you rate the training program(s) given by the office of T&D in general.
  • Excellent  • Very Good  • Good  • Fair  • Poor

6) Overall, I was satisfied with the training?  • Yes  • No
Please briefly explain why or why not
........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................

7) To what extent do you feel you have learned from the program that you attended?
  • Too Much  • OK  • Not Enough

8) The training has increased my capability of performing current or future job tasks
  • Strongly Agree  • Agree  • Neutral  • Disagree  • Strongly Disagree

9) The instructors were effective communicators
  • Strongly Agree  • Agree  • Neutral  • Disagree  • Strongly Disagree

10) How would you rate the most useful training method on a scale of five.1= most useful 5= least useful
    • Group discussion
    • Video Tape
    • Case Study
11) The course activities, simulations, or games were
- Very helpful
- Helpful
- OK
- Not Helpful
- Useless
- Non used

If you responded not helpful or useless, how would you improve them?

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

12) The facilities were appropriate environments for learning
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

13) I will be able to apply much of the material I learnt to my job
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14) I feel that the workshop(s) will help me do my job better
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15) Training makes me a better decision maker
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

16) Training helps me solve work problems
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

17) What is the most useful training program(s) that you have taken? Please state the reasons briefly.
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

18) Did you feel that the program gave you the ability to (Choose one please):
- Understand the concepts presented in a general way
- Understand the concepts and how they apply to my specific job
- Understand the concepts and how to actually apply them to my work

19) Can you give an example of knowledge or a specific skill that you learned in the program and that you have applied on the job?
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

19) What suggestions do you have for future programs?
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
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Appendix-B-

**Evaluation of Performance Questionnaire**

This questionnaire is a part of a thesis research conducted by graduate student Haider Qayssar from the –PPAD- Public Policy and Administration Department. Filling out the questionnaire does not take more than 5 minutes of your precious time; however, please free to take as much time as you need to answer it. Thank you in advance for your participation.

**Aim of the Study**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide the Office of Training and Development at the American University in Cairo with your evaluation about the performance of your employee before and after attending training programs.

The information you provide is a vital source to evaluate the effectiveness of the training courses and it will be used to promote the training process offered by the Training and Development office at the American University in Cairo.

Your confidentiality is guaranteed and the information you give will be secretly treated and used for the purpose of this study only.

This study is conducted by

Haider Qayssar from the –PPAD- Public Policy and Administration Department / School of Public Affairs.

In cooperation with

The Training and Development Centre team at the American University in Cairo
Instructions: Please circle the most appropriate answer which closely describes your reaction to each of the following questions. Thank you very much for participation!

1) What is your evaluation for the skills and knowledge that your subordinate has?
   
   Before attending training  ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair
   After attending training   ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair

2) What is your impression about your subordinate’s creativity, motivation, and initiative taking?
   
   Before attending training  ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair
   After attending training   ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair

3) What do you think of his level of commitment to the departmental and organizational goals?
   
   Before attending training  ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair
   After attending training   ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair

4) What is your opinion about the level of performance of your subordinate?
   
   Before attending training  ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair
   After attending training   ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair

5) What is your opinion about your subordinate’s ability to make decisions and solve problems independently?
   
   Before attending training  ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair
   After attending training   ● Excellent ● Very Good ● Good ● Fair

6) Do you have any comments you would like to add?
   
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
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   ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
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## Appendix-C-

### Summary of the Results Related to the Reaction Level.

1) The program content which I took last academic year met my expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exceeded</th>
<th>Met</th>
<th>Not Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2) The material covered in the program(s) was relevant to my job duties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) The schedule of sessions was suitable (Time, length, sequence)

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) With respect to my current and future job needs, the training opportunities were available to me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Too Early</th>
<th>Just in Time</th>
<th>Too Late</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.0 %</td>
<td>76.7 %</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5) How would you rate the training program(s) given by the office of T&D in general.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6) Overall, I was satisfied with the training?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix-D-

Table 7 Summary of the Results Related to Learning Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagreement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7) To what extent do you feel you have learned from the program that you attended?</td>
<td>Too Much: 25.8%</td>
<td>OK: 64.5%</td>
<td>Not Enough: 9.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) The training has increased my capability of performing current or future job tasks</td>
<td>Strongly Agree: 12.9%</td>
<td>Agree: 67.7%</td>
<td>Neutral: 19.4%</td>
<td>Disagree: 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) The instructors were effective communicators</td>
<td>Strongly Agree: 25.8%</td>
<td>Agree: 58.1%</td>
<td>Neutral: 16.1%</td>
<td>Disagree: 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) How would you rate the most useful training method on a scale of five. 1= most useful 5= least useful. (Group discussion, video tape, Case study, simulation, and hand outs)</td>
<td>Group discussion: 43.3%</td>
<td>Video Tape: 6.95%</td>
<td>Case Study: 13.85%</td>
<td>Simulation: 17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) The course activities, simulations, or games were?</td>
<td>Very Helpful: 29%</td>
<td>Helpful: 45.2%</td>
<td>OK: 25.8%</td>
<td>Not Helpful: 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) The facilities were appropriate environments for learning</td>
<td>Strongly Agree: 22.6%</td>
<td>Agree: 64.5%</td>
<td>Neutral: 6.5%</td>
<td>Disagree: 6.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Appendix-E-

Summary of Results Related to the Behavioral Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13) I will be able to apply much of the material I learnt to my job</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>67.7%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) I feel that the workshop(s) will help me do my job better</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) Training makes me a better decision maker</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) Training helps me solve work problems</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Do you feel that training gave you the ability to? (Choose on e please) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Understand the concepts presented in a general way. | Understand the concepts and how they apply to my specific job. | Understand the concepts and actually applied them to my work. |
| 44.8% | 27.6% | 27.6% |