

## The Summative Evaluation Guide

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The *Summative Evaluation Guide* is a tool for conducting summative (post-training) evaluation of a course or program that has been deployed in the field and is ready to be re-visited. The Guide provides a structured process for deciding:

- What organizational factors do I need to consider?
- What resources are available to help me make this decision?
- What questions should I be asking about this course or program?
- What criteria should I use to make a “keep it/revise it/drop it” decision?
- Who should be involved in the decision-making process?

### *Section One: How to Use The Guide*

Here is the suggested process for using the Guide:

1. Answer the Organizational Factors questions in Section Two.
2. Select the courses or programs that you intend to evaluate for purposes of revision or elimination.
3. Apply the questions in this Guide to EACH of the targeted courses.
4. Develop a plan to collect data for courses with insufficient data
5. Compile and organize your data.
6. Draft recommendations for each course.
7. Meet with relevant stakeholders to determine your next course of action.

## *Section Two: Organizational Factors*

1. What courses are within the scope of this evaluation project? (e.g. one-day, one week?)
2. What resources do we have to dedicate to course revision (e.g. instructional designers, consultants, field personnel)
3. Are there certain “sacred cows” in the curriculum (i.e. courses that cannot be altered or dropped)?
4. Will the decision-making process be collaborative, or does one department or individual have the ultimate say on what courses are retained, modified or deleted?
5. Will all parties be objective during this process?

## *Section Three: Data Collection*

1. What data is currently available to help with the decision (e.g. certification data, levels 1-5 data, anecdotal data, performance data)?
2. What data collection methods will be used (e.g. survey, interviews, focus groups, observation)?
3. Who needs to be involved in the data collection process (consider course participants, their peers, management and subordinates, suppliers, business partners, subject-matter experts, customers and any key stakeholder group. See the table at the end of this article for a suggested format).

*Section Four: Planning Considerations*

These items refer to the planning process that was followed when the course or program under investigation was originally developed as well as the relevance of the course to today's conditions.

<b>Planning Considerations</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
The course is consistent with the organization's strategy.		
The course addresses company or business unit goals.		
The course supports other performance improvement initiatives.		
Business client requirements were identified before the training was designed.		
There was consensus around the need for the course before it was developed.		
If "yes" to the previous question, these requirements are still in effect for this client or client group.		
There is verifiable evidence that the solution would meet the client's business requirements.		
The business requirements were adequately defined.		
There is a direct correlation between the objectives and activities in the course and those business requirements.		
The course or program was based on sound theory.		
Current research supports the theory used to develop the course.		

*Section Five: Training Design*

This section asks you to reflect on several instructional design criteria.

<b>Design Considerations</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
The intended objectives could be accomplished within the constraints of the target work environment.		
The course design is consistent with sound instructional design theory and practice.		
The training objectives are consistent with performance requirements of the job.		
The objectives take into consideration all of the necessary components of the task to ensure effective performance.		
The course incorporates effective motivational practices.		
The course facilitates understanding of the content.		
The course facilitates skill development.		
The course addresses physical, psychological and interpersonal aspects of the learning environment.		
Time is effectively managed.		
The Participant's Manual is informative and easy to use.		
The Leader's Guide is informative and easy to use.		

*Section Six: Evaluation Metrics*

This section helps you to identify specific course or program metrics that have been collected over time.

Course offering data:

1. What was the actual attendance vs. projected attendance (i.e. how many people said they wanted the course, and then failed to appear when it was offered?)

Projected Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

*Levels of Evaluation:*

*Level One: End-of-course evaluations (reaction)*

*Level Two: Learning (in-class written or performance tests)*

*Level Three: Transfer of learning to the job*

*Level Four: Impact on the business (e.g. increased sales or improved customer service)*

*Level Five: Return-on-investment (the financial benefits from the program exceeded the costs of the program)*

<b>Level</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
One	There are sufficient quantities of evaluation forms to make an informed decision.		
	The data represents a cross-section of the target population.		
	The results meet or exceed the target evaluation level.		
Two	There are sufficient quantities of evaluation forms to make an informed decision.		
	The data represents a cross-section of the target population.		
	The test items are valid and reliable measures of actual participant performance.		
	The results meet or exceed the target evaluation level.		
Three	Skill and knowledge transfer is important with this course or program (if “no”, move on to the last section of the Guide)		
	Data exists on the application of these skills to the job (if “no”, move on to the last section of the Guide)		
	The data is valid and reliable.		
	There is anecdotal data to support or reject the occurrence of transfer.		
	Participants, their management and the trainer/facilitator were involved before, during and after training to facilitate learning transfer.		

<b>Level</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	A performance baseline was established before the training was conducted.		
	Performance change was evaluated after the training was delivered.		
	The results meet or exceed the target evaluation level.		
Four	Evaluation was conducted on the impact of the training on the business or organizational unit (if “no”, move on the last section of the Guide).		
	The results meet or exceed the target evaluation level.		
Five	Evaluation was conducted on the return-on-investment for this course or program (if “no”, move on to the last section of the Guide).		
	The results meet or exceed the target evaluation level.		

Directions: For each of the criteria listed in the left-hand column, check the box under each stakeholder who can provide data for the criterion. Blank columns are provided so you can add additional stakeholders relevant to your organization. Note: not all of the criteria identified in the previous sections are included in this matrix, so feel free to modify it as you see fit.

**STAKEHOLDERS**

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>Course Participants</b>	<b>Participants' Management</b>	<b>Participants' Peers</b>	<b>Participants' Subordinates</b>	<b>Trainers/ Facilitators</b>	<b>Course Developers</b>	<b>Business Partners</b>	<b>SME's</b>					
Course consistent With business Goals and Strategy													
Supports other performance improvement initiatives													
Requirements for course still in effect													
Verifiable evidence that solution will meet client's requirements													
The course objectives can be accomplished within the constraints of the work environment													
Course design consistent with sound ISD theory													
Training objectives consistent with job requirements													
Course builds on participant's motivation													
Course facilitates skill development													
Course manages time efficiently													
Participant Manual informative and easy to use													

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<b>Leader's Guide informative and easy to use</b>													
<b>Delivery promotes attention, relevance, confidence and satisfaction</b>													
<b>Level One data represents cross-section of target population</b>													
<b>Level Two items are valid measures of actual job performance</b>													
<b>Performance change was evaluated after training</b>													
<b>The course has had an impact on the business</b>													
<b>Return-on-investment has been positive for this course</b>													

## References

Handbook of Training Evaluation and Measurement Methods

Second Edition

Jack J. Phillips

Gulf Publishing Co., 1991

The Training Evaluation Process

David J. Basarab, Sr and Darrell K. Root

Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993