

Train the Trainer

Evaluation concept

Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK), project partner number 2

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Introduction

Evaluating the training, teaching and learning has been an emerging issue in the 1980's when it was actively researched within several disciplines like education, pedagogics, psychology and organizational sciences. During the 1990's the enthusiasm flagged, but the interest woke up again in parallel with the waves of refugees and immigrants arriving to the Europe. The needs to include newcomers to the hosting society, to teach local culture, habits and language, and to train professional skills to comply with the local requirements have highlighted the importance of developing new teaching and training methods. These new methods and tools in teaching and training should be compatible with the requirements set by cultural diversity of both the refugees and immigrants, and the societies more or less voluntary receiving the incomers.

Furthermore, during the past two decades the western countries have met - in addition to enormous flood of settlers - another phenomenon that challenges the education system: The post-war baby boom generation reaches age of retirement. This has two consequences, both requiring the answers from school systems. Firstly, the western countries should have a capability and capacity to educate and train more and more nursing personnel to cover both the vacuum left by those retiring, and to answer to the needs of ageing population. Secondly, these countries should be capable to renew their education systems to be able to satisfy the needs of business, to be able to train skilled labor and to be able to educate more persons that are both capable and willing to create their career as entrepreneurs and to continue the work of retiring entrepreneurs. If this fails, the consequences for European economy might be fatal or even disastrous.

This challenges not only schools and universities or teachers and trainees, but also those developing the courses and teaching and training methods used in the courses. Evaluating the learning of trainees, used methods and the impact of these methods on the learning would help teachers, designers and analysts to improve the methods.

The aims and targets of the evaluation are context dependent issues. Thus, in ideal world, the courses, the methods used in the courses and the means to evaluate the outcome of the course, the learning of trainees and the efficacy and success of the methods should be designed together so that the whole course is seen as main process inside which the training and evaluation are parallel subprocesses. This would be the best way to ensure that exactly those goals set to this unique program are measured during the evaluation. In this case "Train the Trainer" -training program has been planned parallel with the planning of the evaluation.

Train the Trainer

The "Train the Trainer"-program has been developed to respond the challenges met by those aiming to strengthen the awareness and competences for target-oriented HR-policy and workplace innovations in SMEs via training and consulting the entrepreneurs and personnel of SMEs. The trainers, consultants and coaches should be able to support companies in the development of their HR-policy as well as in workplace innovations through consulting and qualifying support.

The target group of the program is lecturers and consultants from (or delegated by) chambers, universities, other partners. The planned duration of course is 2 days, 8 lessons per day. Each lesson lasts 45 minutes. Methods used in lessons will be lectures, teaching talks, working in small groups, case studies and examples from real world. Material used during the teaching consists of e.g. information material (basics & backgrounds, thematic introductions etc.), presentations, questionnaires, question guides, checklists, analysis results, good practice examples and so on. Course should contain at least following issues:

1. Basics/overview of essential tasks and contents of employee-oriented and productivity-enhancing measures in HR-policy und workplace innovation
2. What is and how to apply with the KAIN-method (Knowledge Acquisition according to Individual Needs)
3. Overview of the contents of 3 SME-specific training courses:
 - a. Employees and Co-entrepreneurs

- b. Digitisation & Human Capital
- c. Innovation Processes
4. Instruments for analyses and interventions – how to
 - a. moderate internal working groups and responsibility circles,
 - b. facilitate dialogues to develop goals and measures,
 - c. support implementation processes
 - d. evaluation of results and process progress
5. Attitudes and behaviour in consulting processes
6. Supporting activities by KAforHR / Centres of Competence

Evaluation of courses including gained results and found problems is essential to be able to develop further the existing training programs as well as to consider the experiences gathered from these programs when building new curricula. The evaluation process of each course has been designed hand in hand with the course itself.

When evaluating courses the goals and real results should be compared. This is not always possible or fair and just. The evaluation should be targeted only to such measurable issues on which the designer, teacher, facilitator or student himself has an impact. Evaluating the impacts of training programs against the presented main goals would require large societal researches including the recording of the initial situation before starting the programs and the long-term follow-up research in which the conducted interventions and actions (In this case new forms of training and education) and their impacts on change of variables is followed (Figure 1). The final conclusions can be drawn just after some years or after decades. In this project this is not possible and the whole evaluation process must be rethought and simplified.

The most important variables, on point of view of achieving the goals set, are the motivation of student, the support he gets, the relevance of issues in curricula, the quality material and training and the ability of facilities to support training and learning. Although most of the variables presented above are so called soft variables, which can't be measured directly by targeting the measurement tool to some point or phase in the process, they can be assessed indirectly by assessing the feelings and comments of participants and other stakeholders.

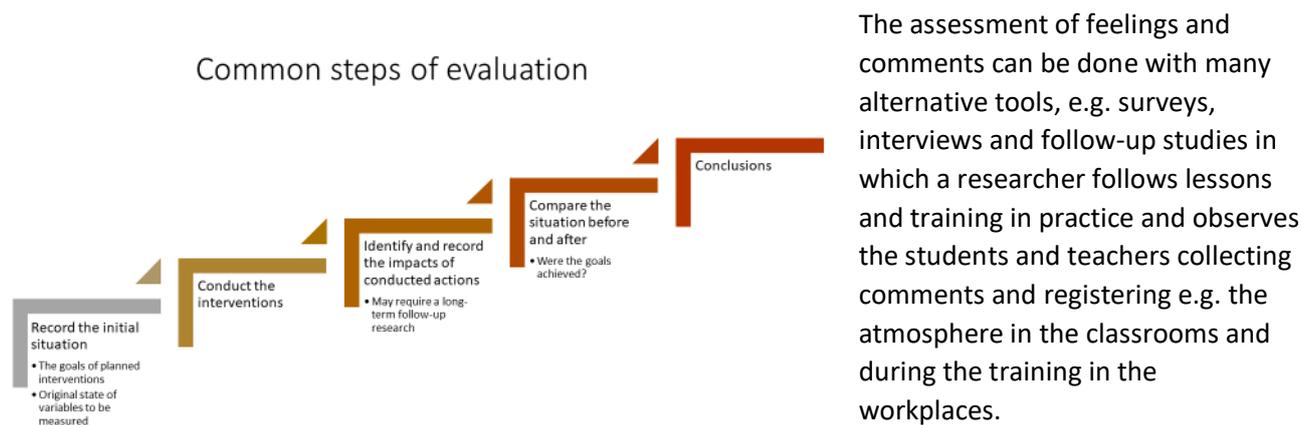


Figure 1: Evaluation process

The assessment of feelings and comments can be done with many alternative tools, e.g. surveys, interviews and follow-up studies in which a researcher follows lessons and training in practice and observes the students and teachers collecting comments and registering e.g. the atmosphere in the classrooms and during the training in the workplaces.

In this case the experiences and comments of participants will be surveyed by simple questionnaire

with questions approaching the common impressions, the applicability of facilities, the relevancy and importance of each issue and the experienced quality of each lesson and material used.

Evaluation concept

The objective of the evaluation is to determine whether the goals of the program will be achieved in the implementations evaluated, and how the program has impact on student's career and opportunities.

The type of the evaluation follows standard course evaluation methods, i.e. formative, process and outcome evaluation, the latter only partial:

- The formative evaluation will provide feedback to the curriculum designers, developers and implementers to ensure that designed and implemented courses really meets the needs of the intended audience, i.e. assure or improve the quality of program. Formative evaluation and analyses will answer to the following questions:
 - Were the goals and objectives suitable for the audience?
 - Were the training methods and course materials appropriate for the audience?
 - Should the program or some part of it be developed further and if, how?
 - Furthermore, formative evaluation also provides information that benefits the development of the program, facilities and timing.
- The process evaluation will provide information concerning the training and lectures, like asked questions and verbal feedbacks.
 - Process evaluation answers the question “What did you do?”
 - It focuses on procedures and actions used to produce results.
 - Process evaluation takes place during the training delivery and at the end of the training.
 - The co-organizer (Responsible for the course)
 - monitors the training,
 - describes the training process as a whole, and
 - records the findings into the written report.
- The outcome evaluation tries to find out how the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of the audience developed. It takes a long time to find out the outcomes of the education and training, so in this stage only the main topics participants are able to do at the end of training, will be assessed.

The evaluation process will be as follows:

1. Semi-structured questionnaires will be created for the participants (Appendix A)
2. Time for the survey (approx. 15 minutes) will be allocated in the end of the course
3. In the beginning of the course the co-organizer (Responsible for the course) will inform participants about the evaluation and its importance for further development actions
4. The co-organizer (Responsible for the course) distributes the questionnaires to the participants to be filled in before leaving the course. The purposes of the questionnaire and how the data will be used should be explained clearly to the participants. This will help to improve the response rate and encourage them to make comments that can be useful to improve future programs.
5. The participants complete the questionnaires and return them to the co-organizer.
6. The co-organizer collects the questionnaires and deliver them to the evaluator.
7. The evaluator compiles all feedbacks and summarizes written analysis on the evaluations.

The evaluation approach will be based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The Microsoft Excel package will be used to transcribe the feedbacks and interviews. Open questions will be categorized and qualitative analysis of the groups will be done.

The final evaluation report will discuss the following issues:

- Did the curriculum reach the targets?
- How well was the knowledge creation and sharing realized?

- Did the participants assimilate knowledge and tools?
- Was the venue and equipment appropriate for the training course?
- What kind of further development will be needed, if any?

Schedule of the evaluation

The schedule of the evaluation should be matched to the phases of the curriculum. There is no sense to evaluate the course before the students have a true and fair view of the course, its phases and contents. Thus, the survey will be conducted in the end of the course.

Appendix A: Questionnaire for participants of the Train – the – Trainer -course

Please circle the scale that applies to your opinion on the following aspects of the Train the Trainer – training you participated.

Scale: 1= Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither disagree or agree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

In common						
The facilitation (location, room etc.) was suitable for training		1	2	3	4	5
The topics and issues were relevant and responded to the goals of training		1	2	3	4	5
The lecturers explained topics of the lessons, additional questions, experiences, and topical issues arisen during the course well		1	2	3	4	5
There were enough time scheduled for each issue.		1	2	3	4	5
I got valuable knowledge from lessons and examples presented by lecturers.		1	2	3	4	5
I believe that can utilize the knowledge gained from lessons in my future career.		1	2	3	4	5
I can utilize the skills trained and knowledge gained when consulting my clients		1	2	3	4	5
Comments concerning the common issues						
Lessons and Topics						
Topic 1	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Topic 2	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Topic 3	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Topic 4	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5

Topic 5	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Topic 6	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Topic 7	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Topic 8	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Topic 9	The presentation was clear and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
	The issues were relevant and topical	1	2	3	4	5
	The information presented were up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Free speech						
What was good?						
What could have been done better? (E.g. was some topic missing or unnecessary)						
Would you recommend the course to someone you know? If not, why not?						
What do you need for supporting the customers?						
Other comments						

Thank you for your answer.

Train the Trainer

Riga 2019
Evaluation report

Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK), project partner number 2

Compiled by Dr Kari Lilja and Dr Sirpa Sandelin

Introduction

The first Train the Trainer-seminary for consultants and trainers was held in Riga 16th -18th October 2019. The aims of this seminary were a) train the first trainers within the frames of KA4HR-programme, and b) test and evaluate the training concept for further development.

Evaluating was conducted according to the process defined and described in the document KA4HR_WP2_A4_TtT_Evaluation concept.docx. Eleven (11) participants completed the evaluation questionnaire in the end of the seminary. Questionnaire consisted both the structured questions and free speech questions. Structured questions were claims concerning the common issues of the seminary and topics of the seminary. The truth of each claim was evaluated in Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree – 5 = Strongly agree).

In the free speech questions, comments concerning the common issues and the course of the training, like “What was good” and “What could have been done better” were asked.

In the following chapters, results of the survey and recommendations derived from the results will be presented.

Results

Satisfaction to the common issues

The participants were most satisfied to the facilitation (Average 4,45). They also felt to have had enough time scheduled for the lessons (4.27). However, the probability to be able to utilize the knowledge when consulting the clients (3,36) or in their own future career (3,82) was not seen to be very high. (Figure 1).

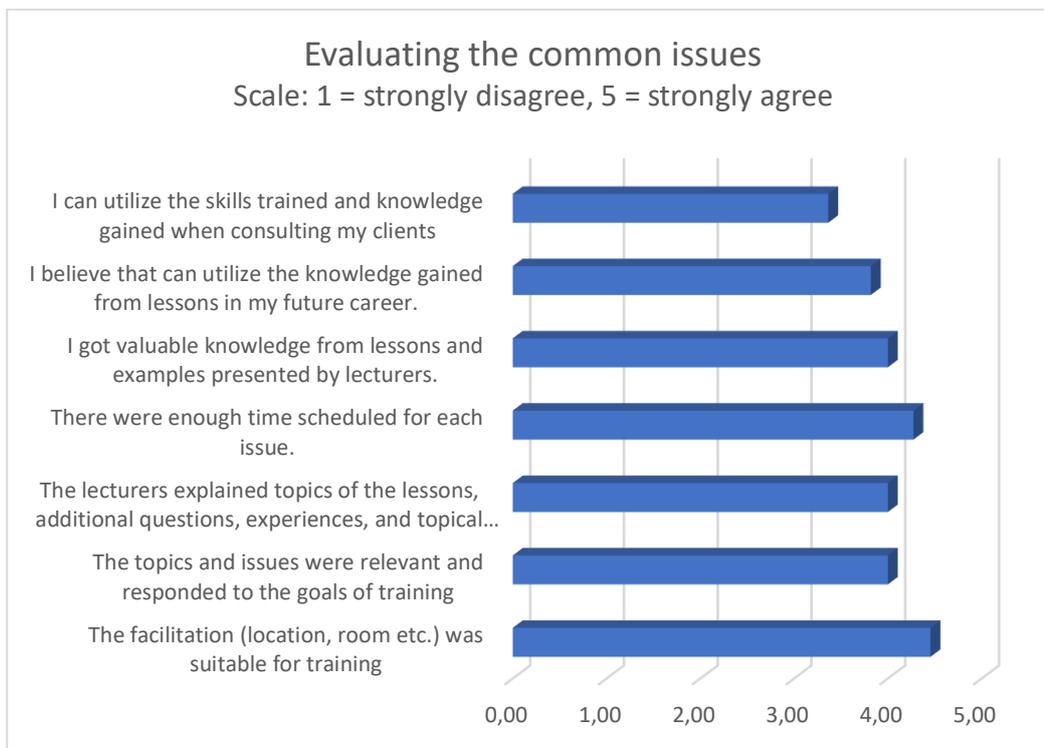


Figure 1: Common issues, average of the answers

Satisfaction to the topics of the course

Answering to this part of the questionnaire was more complicated, because the topics (or modules) were not named in the questionnaire. Most of the respondents identified six (6) different topics, one had divided SME-connected issues into three subtopics, two had identified only 5 topics and some had completed all the topics with same grade (4 vs 5)

The respondents were satisfied with the presentations which seemed to be clear and understandable (Average went below 4 only in SME-specific training). However, the relevancy and topicality of the issues and up-to-dateness of the information were in common below the grade 4 (Figure 2).

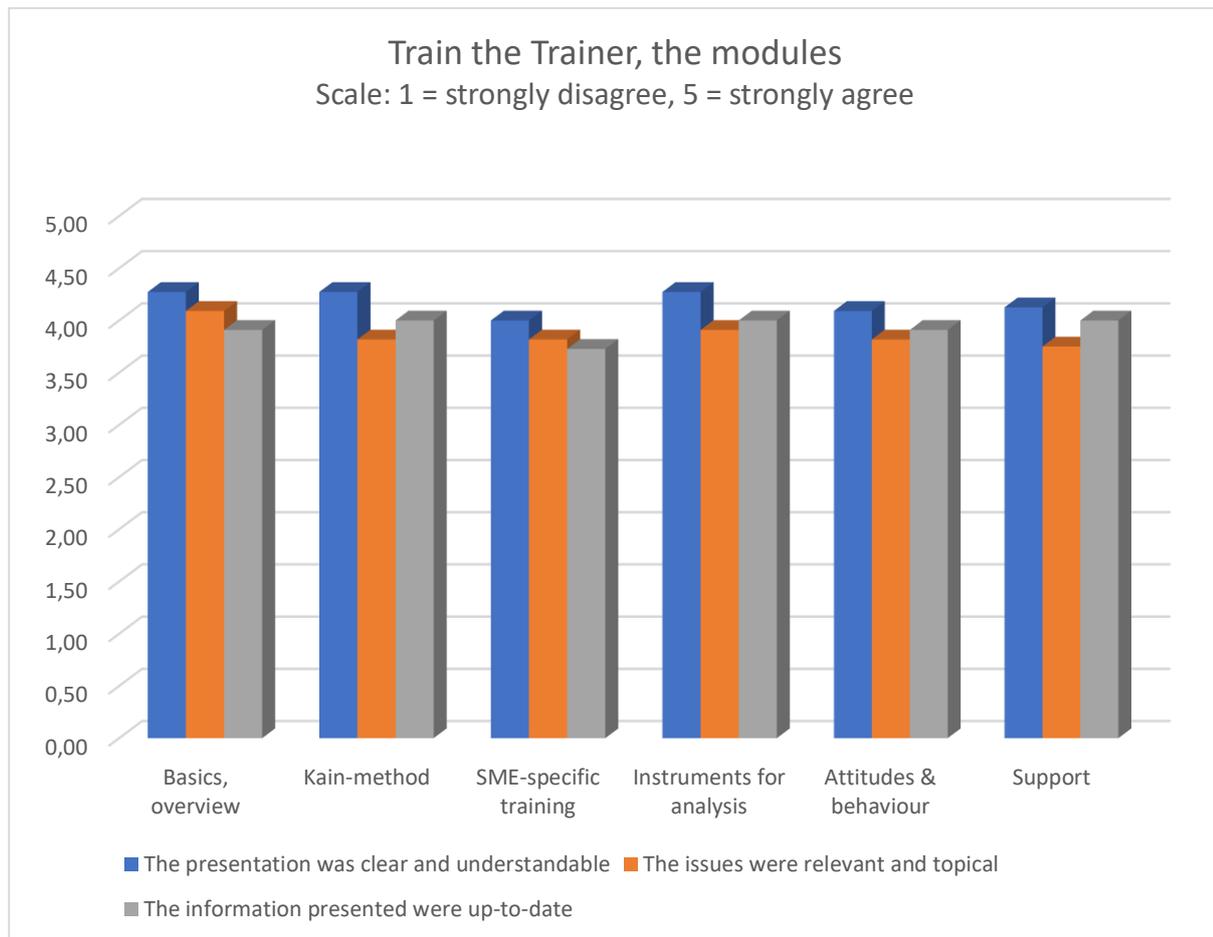


Figure 2: Modules, average of answers

The free speech

In the free speech –questions, some issues were highlighted. For example, the contents and titles of the modules were found to be slightly ambiguous and might need some clarification. Also the simulation game may need stronger direction. However, in common, the atmosphere was found to be good and relaxing, the group work and the mix of different methods were good points and those who hadn't been consultants, learned what it is to be a consultant. Nevertheless, the speakers should be better prepared and the focus should more precisely have been set to the HR. Some had also found it confusing to have the TtT-seminary and workshop mixed together and somebody found it disturbing that some of the participants used their laptops not in tasks of workshop or seminary but other businesses not connected to the theme. Only few would recommend the course – in this form – to somebody they know. To support their customers, participants need knowledge, methods, willingness to do changes and practical advises.

Conclusions and recommendations

The participants in this course were mainly staff of project partners. In common, they did not have a lot of experience in consulting, although some of them had long experience. In this kind of situations there are two alternative ways to conduct the course. The first one is to utilize the experience of experienced consultants for example by asking them to tell true stories – this would give the practice some of the respondents were missing. The other alternative is to try to form the group as homogeneous as possible, so that all the participants are on the same line. However, in most cases this is not possible.

Clarification of basic concepts would be recommendable. This should be done in the beginning of the course. Rethinking the target group, to whom this course is meant and how much do they know about the topics and issues could help in this.

The relaxed atmosphere was the most mentioned positive argument. It would be a good idea to keep the course informal and casual in the future too.

Appendix: The list of free speech answers

- a) Common issues
 - a. The contents and titles were ambiguous and need some clarification
 - b. Well developed, presenters were really professionals, topics were refreshing, valuable, good simulation of real business life
- b) What was good
 - a. The atmosphere created in the room by the organizers / trainers was calm, relaxing, task oriented (5 pcs)
 - b. Group work (2 pcs)
 - c. Mix of methods (2 pcs)
 - d. We learned what it means to be a consultant (2 pcs)
 - e. facilitator
 - f. Meeting other partners
 - g. Presenters, topics,
 - h. Everything
 - i. Simulations
- c) What could have been done better
 - a. The simulation game: Clear roles, organization etc (2 pcs)
 - b. Lecture after the lunchbreak in 1st day was a little difficult, something interactive could have been better
 - c. Not all speakers / presenters were specially well prepared
 - d. HR Focus was missing, the roles for the simulation were not clear
 - e. More information on HR in general
 - f. The workshop and the TtT should be clearly separated
 - g. No other works with laptops by the other participants
- d) Would you recommend the course to someone you know, if not, why not
 - a. For people who likes listening, making notes etc, but it is not suitable for active people who would like to be more involved in the process
 - b. Yes, even for non-consultants, the methods are very useful (4 pcs "Yes")
 - c. Not as it is now.
 - d. Nothing new
 - e. No, To whom was TtT targeted?
- e) What do you need for supporting the customers
 - a. More practice
 - b. n/a
 - c. Knowledge, methods and willingness to do changes
 - d. More practice, training a new usage of methods, outside view, outside experiences
 - e. Translated materials
- f) Other comments
 - a. This course was very suitable for people who are strong in analytic thinking, they like everything clear and defined. For those who like summarized information, texts and explanations were too long. Their attention will probably be lost.
 - b. Topic 3 would have been better if contents of trainings were already more developed
 - c. Thank you very much (2 pcs)