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Evaluating a new manager management training program

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EVALUATING A NEW MANAGER
MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Dena Athanasiou House

Howard Tokunaga, Ph.D.

May, 2001

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ABSTRACT

EVALUATING A NEW MANAGER MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

by Dena Athanasiou House

The evaluation of a new manager training program in a high technology company was conducted. New manager was defined as newly promoted to a managerial position or new to the company as a manager. The evaluation process included participants completing a pre- and post- self assessment survey. The self assessment survey was designed to assess participants' knowledge before and after the training in five key teaching areas: (1). role of the manager, (2). managing in the company's environment, (3). managing performance, (4). performance planning, and (5). building the team. The results indicated that there was a significant change in participants' knowledge overall and in three of the five key teaching areas: role of the manager, managing in the company's environment, and building the team. There was no significant change in knowledge in the key teaching areas of managing performance and performance management.

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Evaluating a New Manager
Management Training Program
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Running head: Evaluating Management Training

Abstract

The evaluation of a new manager training program in a high technology company was conducted. New manager was defined as newly promoted to a managerial position or new to the company as a manager. The evaluation process included participants completing a pre- and post- self assessment surveys. The self assessment surveys were designed to assess participants' knowledge before and after the training in five key teaching areas: (1). role of the manager, (2). managing in the company's environment, (3). managing performance, (4). performance planning, and (5). building the team. The results indicated that there was a significant change in participants' knowledge overall and in three of the five key teaching areas: role of the manager, managing in the company's environment, and building the team. There was no significant change in knowledge in the key teaching areas of managing performance and performance management.

Evaluating A New Manager

Management Training Program

Management training costs a great deal of money (Berry, 1990; Bushnell, 1990).

There are costs associated with the design, development and delivery of training programs as well as the time participants spend away from the job in the program. As a result, there is enormous concern on the return on investment of training programs (Morrow, Jarrett & Rupinski, 1997). In addition, the cost of management training continues to rise each year, resulting in senior management scrutinizing the costs more closely than ever before. This has lead to training professionals needing to account for training costs and return on investment (Bushnell, 1990).

It is difficult to account for the return on investment of training. Research shows that the best and possibly only way to account for training costs is to conduct training evaluation (Haccoun & Hamtiaux, 1994). Unfortunately, organization realities often limit training evaluation. Furthermore, if an organization does conduct an evaluation of their training programs, it is typically only an assessment of participants' reaction to the training. This level of training evaluation does not inform an organization of the effectiveness, utility or return on investment of the training program (Cousins & MacDonald, 1998; Clegg, 1987).

The focus of the current study was the evaluation of a new manager training program in a high technology company. New manager was defined as newly promoted to a managerial position or new to the company as a manager. The evaluation efforts in this

study went beyond assessing participants' reaction to the training. The evaluation efforts targeted the assessment of participants' change in knowledge of the topics presented in the training program. The evaluation design included the administration of a self assessment tool to participants before and after attending the program. Data collected from this evaluation effort was used to help the training department assess the effectiveness and utility of the concepts presented in the training program.

Definitions

Management training courses can be defined as courses developed for individuals with supervisory or managerial duties (Morrow et al., 1997). Training and development is viewed as one way to improve managerial performance (Clement & Aranda, 1982). The objectives or basis of management and supervisory training programs are typically to assist managers in developing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to carry out their management duties (Lundberg, 1962; Mann, 1990).

Management Training

The main topics covered in management training vary depending on the needs of the organization offering the training. Many companies refer to their management training as Management 101 because the program trains managers in the fundamentals of management and communicates a consensus of how the company wants managers to manage given the company's culture and framework (Mann, 1990; Livingston, 1983). Other topics covered in management training programs include communication, problem solving, decision making, motivating subordinates, the role of the supervisor, managing

performance, interviewing and time management (Urban, Ferris, Crowe, & Miller, 1985; Morrow et al., 1997; Post & Waddock, 1997). These skills are typically referred to as soft skills or human relations skills. These are markedly different from the skills taught in technical or sales training programs which are typically referred to as hard skills or more tangible and less subjective skills (Morrow et al.).

In summary, the basis of training is rooted in the notion that individuals who are trained will be different at the end of the training. These changes can be seen in the form of change in behavior such as the use of new knowledge and skills on the job (Haccoun & Hamtiaux, 1994; Fitzgerald, 1992). The changes that are expected are dependent on the content delivered in a program. The delivery or how the content is delivered will also vary. Differing topics are best taught in differing ways and different people learn better in different ways (Livingston, 1983).

Forms of Management Training. Livingston (1983) noted that in the past, many critical managerial skills were left to be learned on the job, where few managers ever mastered them because no one taught them how. In addition, Livingston pointed out that another form of management development, job rotation in the field, has also come to a screeching halt in many sectors due mostly to the high cost of relocating individuals. Livingston goes on to suggest that an alternative is to bring various forms of applied management development to where the people are. This would mean creating training experiences to substitute for on-the-job experiences. How these applied management development programs are delivered vary from highly organized, formal and systematic

programs to completely laissez-faire ones (Lundberg, 1962; Garrick, 1998; Douglas & McCauley, 1999; Kessels & Harrison, 1998).

Reasons for Management Training. According to Fitzgerald (1992), people need some level of training if they are to meet expectations, contribute to their organization, and experience a high degree of success. In addition, Clement and Aranda (1982) reported that one way to improve managerial performance is through training and development. Ultimately, organizations train their managers in human relations or management training programs with the notion that it will result in changes in supervisors' attitudes and philosophy and their behavior toward employees on the job (Lundberg, 1962).

Organizations are developing management training programs to help their managers acquire the skills and knowledge required to meet the current and future business challenges of the organization (Berry, 1990; Post & Waddock, 1997). Other organizations develop management development programs to assist in attempts to shift strategic direction (Mann, 1990). Livingston (1983) reported management training programs are offered in organizations as a way to provide awareness, stimulation, concepts and new ways of thinking. Finally, as was found at Northern Telecom Inc., management training was put in place to help give managers the fundamentals of managing (Mann, 1990).

The reasons behind offering a management training program may vary from organization to organization, however, one consistent finding is that the cost of training is

very high. In fact, the cost of management education has risen sharply in recent years, and budgets for that purpose are being scrutinized more closely than ever before (Livingston, 1983).

Cost of Management Training. Each year companies spend millions of dollars on programs to help supervisors, managers and executives become more competent (Berry, 1990). In fact, Bushnell (1990), found that in the United States alone since World War II, corporations have spent up into the billions of dollars on training. In a study by Morrow et al. (1997), the organization they were researching spent over \$240 million on training during the duration of their project.

The bottom line is that given budgets of this magnitude, some sort of accountability, even if only meaningful within the context of the organization, is prudent (Morrow et al., 1997). In fact, training directors need to balance the cost and results of training and as with any corporate investment, training directors are held accountable for the return on investment (Bushnell, 1990). In summary, trainers are having to account for the training dollars spent and top management is looking for evidence that the dollars spent pay off (Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Bushnell, 1990; Post & Waddock, 1997).

Effectiveness of Management Training. There are a number of assumptions surrounding the effectiveness or pay off of management training. Urban et al. (1985) believe that perhaps the most important effect of a development activity is the positive feelings resulting from participants' perceptions of corporate interest in their personal and career development. Their theory includes the notion that participants selected for

organizational rewards, such as developmental experiences, may reciprocate through increased loyalty, and commitment, and longer tenure with an organization. The importance of this finding lies in their research which indicates that replacement costs for managers is equal approximately to their annual salary. In summary, for Urban et al. and Haccoun (1997) the value of management training is in the ability of the training to reduce attrition.

Lundberg (1962) and Fitzgerald (1992) found that the ultimate outcome of management training is job satisfaction of the participants. Job satisfaction is the outcome of the trainee experiencing a high degree of success on the job after the training program due to the skills and knowledge they learned in the training program.

In summary, the current findings or impact reported to be attributed to management training include the changes in behavior, knowledge and skills of the participants which will ultimately lead to increased loyalty, reduced attrition and increased job satisfaction. In general, Morrow et al. (1997) report that management training has a positive effect. However, despite the generally positive effect and utility of training observed in their study, Morrow et al. recommend that it is necessary to evaluate the effect and utility of each training program before making assumptions regarding the impact of training. In addition, they go on to warn that it would be simplistic to claim that training is a good investment or that training is a waste of time and money without first evaluating the actual impact and utility of the training program.

Evaluation of Management Training

Evaluating training is a critical aspect of the training process (Smith & Merchant, 1990). The evaluation process centers around two procedures, establishing measures of success (criteria) and using experimental and non-experimental designs to determine what changes have occurred during the training and transfer process (Goldstein, 1993). In general, it is a process designed to measure the degree of trainee changes (on learning as well as on other dimensions) that training courses cause (Haccoun & Hamtiaux, 1994).

Researches agree that evaluating training is definitely not easy (McEvoy & Buller, 1990). However, as Shelton and Alliger (1993) point out, there is no escaping it, trainers need to account for training dollars spent.

Why Evaluate Training. Training evaluation provides a wide range of critical information about a training program and it can be used to assess a number of different attributes of a training program. To begin, the use of training evaluation can and should be used to prove or show the value or return on investment of the training programs offered in organizations. In an evaluation study by Haccoun and Hamtiaux (1994), training evaluation was used to estimate the effectiveness of training in improving trainee knowledge. Training evaluation can also help indicate which areas of training should be emphasized, which training procedures seem most effective, and when training needs to be revised in order to more effectively deal with real needs (Kruger & Smith, 1987). Finally, training evaluation can also help trainers and organizations assess the degree to which objectives are realized in a training program (Goodacre, 1957).

Unfortunately, much of the money spent on training is wasted because many trainers don't know the appropriate steps to take to ensure that their training addresses a real business need nor do they know how to check to see whether that business need has been satisfied (Krein & Weldon, 1994). As a result, many business leaders still view training as an overhead expense.

How To Evaluate Training. In 1959, Donald Kirkpatrick proposed a four-level model of criteria for evaluating training: Level 1: how participants reacted to the program (learner reactions); Level 2: what participants learned from the program (learning); Level 3: whether what was learned is being applied on the job (job application); Level 4: whether that application is achieving results (observable business results) (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998). Each of the four levels has value. It is a matter of recognizing what the value is—and what the limitations are (Krein & Weldon, 1994).

In addition, Goodacre (1957) and Milheim (1994) found that evaluating a training program should include an experimental design developed with and built into the program. This technique will provide information on the overall value and specific strengths and weaknesses of the content and methods used in the training. It is generally accepted that an experimental design in evaluating a training program should include the measure of important variables both before and after a course to determine if improvement has occurred (Clement & Aranda, 1982). Variables typically used in evaluating training include the manager, subordinates and the organization as a whole

(Clement & Aranda, 1982). Furthermore, using multiple criteria in evaluating training permits more confident conclusions concerning the program's effectiveness (Urban et al., 1985). Evaluation criteria typically depend on the program, but usually includes program effectiveness and comparison across methods, change in performance on the job, reaction of students to training and changes in knowledge, skills, or attitudes possessed by the students (Urban et al.; Clegg, 1987).

Techniques have been developed and published to help trainers evaluate management training programs. However, Cousins and MacDonald (1998) and Clegg (1987) found that trainers do not evaluate the outcomes of their training programs for the following reasons: 1. it is too costly or time consuming, 2. results are not measurable or are susceptible to the influence of extraneous factors, 3. they do not have the necessary statistical background. In addition, Clegg (1987) found that of the organizations who actually conducted training evaluation, less than one-half of the evaluation methods that could be used in evaluating management training programs were actually being used.

Current Evaluation Techniques and Shortfalls. Evaluating training on interpersonal skills is difficult and so it typically involves assessing the reaction of the trainees to the training program, for example, if the participants liked the materials, format and facilitators and whatever they learned in the program (Kruger & Smith, 1987; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998). Rarely do training evaluations make a like effort to measure actual results or accomplishments (Goodacre, 1957; Lundberg, 1962). In addition, those programs that do report evaluation efforts almost invariably utilize some

form of questionnaire or end-of-course rating form (Lundberg, 1962; Kruger & Smith, 1987; Clegg, 1987). End of course questionnaires may fill a training department's administrative requirements for course evaluation, but they may not tell an organization what they need to know (Erickson, 1990). In summary, training experts seem to agree that we need to measure more than just the trainee reactions toward a course, it should assess both the acquisition of training content and its transfer to the work environment (Clement & Aranda, 1982; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998).

Current Study. The purpose of the current study was to conduct a Level 2 evaluation of a management training program in a high technology company. The Level 2 evaluation method utilized was modeled after Kirkpatrick's four-level training evaluation model (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998). The Level 2 evaluation included the administration of pre- and post- self assessment surveys. The self assessment surveys were designed to assess the change in participants' knowledge in five key management skill areas taught in the program. The five key management skill areas included: 1. the role of the manager, 2. managing in the company's environment, 3. managing performance, 4. performance planning, and 5. building the team. This evaluation method was considered an aggressive goal as it has already been established that it is difficult to evaluate management training programs and hence, many organizations avoid it all together. In addition, more than half of those organization who do evaluate their management training programs only utilize Level 1 post-test evaluation design focused on participant reactions to the training (Clegg,

1987; Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998).

The purpose of the management training program evaluated in this study was to help assimilate new managers to the position of manager in the given company. The program was also designed to provide managers with the basic tools, knowledge and information for managing people. The objectives of the program were for participants to be able to: a.) understand the fundamentals of how the company operates, b.) better understand senior management and their expectations of managers, c.) make business decisions consistent with the company's values and business practices, d.) manage individual and work group performance to achieve business results, e.) select, assimilate, develop and recognize employees to retain the best talent, and f.) build support networks with managers in all aspects of the business.

The program was designed to address input the training department had received regarding their management training programs. The input stated that the management training programs offered by the organization did not meet the needs of new managers. Therefore, the current program was designed to help train new managers in the skills they needed to be successful in the company. The intended audience for this program was new managers defined as individuals newly promoted into a role that included supervising/managing people, or managers below the executive level who were new to the company.

The program was designed and developed after an extensive six month needs assessment was conducted to identify the skills and competencies new managers needed to be successful in the company's environment. The needs assessment included interviewing and conducting focus groups with new and experienced managers in the company, executives of the company and human resources professionals. In addition, the needs assessment included benchmarking with other high technology companies to assess their management training practices.

Given the input from the needs assessment and benchmarking, a four and a half day program was designed. The program was delivered by a combination of in-house trainers and external consultants, all of which were involved in the needs assessment, design and development of the program. Methods used to teach the program included a business simulation, lecture and discussion sessions, interactive role playing, case studies and skill building exercises. In addition, the program hosted four executive guest speakers throughout the week long training program.

With the time and money spent on designing, developing and delivering the training program, the organization had a vested interest in understanding the effectiveness and utility of the concepts taught in the program. By implementing a Level 2 evaluation methodology, the organization believed it would gain insight into the degree to which the objectives of the training program were realized by the participants (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998.) In addition, the evaluation design would assist the organization in identifying which of the

five key management skill areas were most effective and which might need to be adjusted to meet the organization's training needs.

Method

The purpose of this study was to evaluate a new manager training program using a Level 2 evaluation method from Kirkpatrick's four-level training evaluation model. The Level 2 evaluation method included the administration of pre- and post- self assessment surveys (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998). The self assessment surveys were designed to assess the change in participants' knowledge in the five key management skill areas taught in the program. The designers of the training program built into the program Kirkpatrick's Level 2 evaluation method as a tool to help the training organization assess the effectiveness and cost utility of the program given the time and money spent by the organization on the design, development and delivery of the program.

Participants

There were 50 participants in this study. One participant did not provide demographic information. Demographic information was collected with the pre- self assessment tool in order to obtain background and management experience information of the participants.

The participants were employees of a high technology company. The company's headquarters are in the Silicon Valley, however, attendees in the training program

included employees from the company's various offices. Attendees worked in offices located in various U.S. States ($\underline{n} = 44$), Europe ($\underline{n} = 1$), Asia ($\underline{n} = 3$), and Israel ($\underline{n} = 1$). The participants included managers working in various functions within the company. The functions included customer service, engineering, facilities, finance, human resources, information systems technology (IS&T), legal, manufacturing, software engineering, safety, marketing, business development, product support, and operations. Engineering was the function most frequently reported (12%). The age of the participants ranged from 26 to 60 years. The age range most frequently reported was 36-40 years ($\underline{n} = 14$). The participants consisted of 24% female ($\underline{n} = 12$) and 75% male ($\underline{n} = 37$) attendees.

Participants of the new manager training program were also asked to report how many years they worked for the company, ($\underline{M} = 4.1$), ($\underline{n} = 49$); how many total years of management experience they had, ($\underline{M} = 4.2$), ($\underline{n} = 49$); how many years of management experience they had with the company, ($\underline{M} = 1.3$), ($\underline{n} = 49$); and how many direct reports they had at the time of the program, ($\underline{M} = 3.9$), ($\underline{n} = 49$). This information was obtained in order to help the training organization understand if the participants met the criteria for the training program. The criteria for the training program was new managers defined as either newly promoted to a management position or new to the company with management responsibilities.

There were three ways participants were enrolled into the training program. Participants could have been automatically enrolled into the program based on the criteria

of being a new manager in the company. Participants could have been nominated to attend the program. Nominations were made by either a participant's manager or Human Resources Representative. Nominations were based on a manager's or Human Resources Representative's assessment that the program would benefit the nominated participant. The final way a participant could have been enrolled in the program was for the participant to enroll him or herself into the program by contacting the training department.

Materials

Two self assessment surveys were used for this study. Both surveys had the exact same 34 statements. One self assessment survey included the addition of demographic questions which were used to collect the information included in the Participant section of this paper.

The statements on the self assessment surveys were based on five key management skill areas taught in the new manager training program. The five key areas included: 1. the role of the manager; 2. managing in the company's environment; 3. managing performance; 4. performance planning; and 5. building the team. The statements on the self assessment surveys were randomly intermixed and were not labeled to indicate which skill area was being represented by each statement. The order of the statements were the same on both the pre- and post- self assessment surveys.

A cover sheet, labeled page 1, was included with the surveys to explain to the participants the purpose of the tool. The purpose, as listed on the cover sheets, of the self

assessment surveys were three-fold: 1. to assess participants' knowledge before and after the program in the five key management skill areas taught in the program, 2. to help the participants identify their areas of strength and areas of development, and 3. to help participants monitor their progress in the program. The cover sheets also included the approximate time it would take to complete the surveys (10 minutes). Directions were also included. The directions instructed participants to read each statement carefully and determine how much the participant agreed or disagreed with each statement.

Participants were then instructed to circle the number next to each statement that best represented their level of agreement. The cover sheets also informed participants to turn in their completed self assessment surveys to the instructors and that all answers would remain confidential.

The self assessment surveys were made up of 34 statements describing participants' knowledge or understanding of management skills or competencies taught in the program. The self assessment statements began on page 2 of the surveys.

Instructions on how to fill out the self assessment surveys were provided on the top of page 2 prior to the listing of the actual statements. The instructions repeated some of the information from the cover sheets, but focused on directing participants to read each statement carefully and determine how much they agree or disagree with each statement. The instructions informed participants to circle the number next to each statement that best represented their level of agreement. Participants were also instructed to be candid

and honest in their responses. Finally, participants were reminded that all answers would remain confidential.

To determine one's level of agreement or disagreement with each statement, the self assessment tool utilized a Likert Scale with a range of choices from 1 to 5 where: 1 represented Strongly Disagree; 2 represented Disagree; 3 represented Somewhat Agree/Disagree; 4 represented Agree; and 5 represented Strongly Agree. The scale definitions were at the top of each page 2 of the self assessment surveys, following the instructions and prior to the listing of the statements. The statements, as previously mentioned, were listed in random order and not positioned based on key management skill areas taught in the program. They were simply listed and numbered from 1 to 34. Next to each statement were the representative numbers from 1 to 5 of the Agree to Disagree Likert Scale. Following is an example of the Likert Scale with descriptors and a sample question with the representative numbers from 1 to 5:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree/Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
1. I understand Senior Management's expectations of me as a manager at [Company Name].....				1 2 3 4 5

The pre- and post- self assessment surveys and demographic questions were tested in a pilot of the training program. Participants in the pilot program provided input as to the clarity and understanding of the questions as well as on the ease of taking the tool.

The self assessment surveys and demographic questions were then re-written to address feedback provided by the participants in the pilot program.

Key Management Skill Areas. There were five key management skill areas taught in the program. Participants' knowledge or understanding before and after the training program in these five key management skill areas were assessed by the self assessment surveys. The first key management skill area was the role of the manager. The purpose of this key management skill area was to help participants understand their role as a manager in the company, what the expectations of the executive staff were of the managers in the company and how to manage employees while staying within the company's legal parameters. In addition, the role of the manager included teaching managers how to practice the company's values and how to get results through others. This key management skill area focused on helping the participants in the training program understand their role and the expectations placed upon them as managers in the company. Examples of statements representing this key management skill area on the self assessment surveys included: 1. I understand Senior Management's expectations of me as a manager at [company name]; and 2. I know how to practice [company name] values on the job.

The second key management skill area was managing in the company's environment. The company felt it had a unique culture. By training the participants in how to manage within the company's culture, the company believed the participants would have a better chance of being successful as managers in the company. Managing

in the company's environment included helping the participants understand the company's history, accomplishments, marketplace, competitors, customers and future challenges. This key management skill area also included training participants in how to develop strategies to get results given the company's organization structure and culture. Examples of statements representing this key management skill area on the self assessment surveys included: 1. I know who [company name] competitors are; 2. I know how to develop strategies to be successful in [company name] organizational structure.

The third, fourth and fifth key management skill areas were aimed at giving the managers tools and information on managing their employees. The third key management skill area was in managing performance. This skill area focused on understanding how a manager's expectations and behavior shape an employee's performance. This area also focused on teaching the managers effective ways to give and receive feedback, hold staff meetings and recognize employees for their accomplishments. By learning these various communication techniques, the company felt the participants would be better equipped at managing employee performance. Examples of statements representing this key management skill area on the self assessment surveys included: 1. I know effective ways to use feedback to shape employees' behavior and performance; 2. I know how to apply effective meeting practices to staff meetings.

The fourth key management skill area was entitled performance planning. The focus here was on training managers how to create objectives and set team direction.

This skill area also focused on teaching participants how to status and manage employee objectives during changing sets of circumstances. The goal of this skill area was to give participants the tools they would need to set employee expectations and be able to monitor employee performance. Examples of statements representing this key management skill area on the self assessment surveys included: 1. I know how to create performance plans that include the objectives of my work team; 2. I understand how to create win/win performance agreements with employees.

The fifth key management skill area focused on building the team. This included training in how to hire, assimilate and maximize the people resources on a work team. The goal of this skill area was to teach participants how to identify the human resources needs of their organization and how to hire and develop people to meet those needs. Examples of statements representing this key management skill area on the self assessment surveys included: 1. I know how to build cases for hiring new employees; 2. I know how to design assimilation plans for new employees.

Design and Procedures

This study used a pre- post- survey design. On the morning of the first day of the new manager training program, a pre- program self assessment survey along with demographic questions were administered to participants. A post- program self assessment survey with the exact same questions as on the pre- program self assessment survey was administered to the participants on the afternoon of the last day of the program.

The trainers of the program collected the pre- program self assessment surveys with the demographic questionnaires from the participants on the first day of the program and placed the completed surveys in a folder. The folder was then picked up by the program evaluator on the afternoon of the first day of the program. On the last day of the program, the trainers administered and collected the post- program self assessment surveys. The completed surveys were collected by the trainers and placed in a folder. The folder with the surveys was picked up by the program evaluator at the end of the last day of the program.

The evaluator of the program used the SPSS statistical software program to analyze the data. The analysis of the pre- and post- self assessment survey data included a paired-samples t-test. The analysis was done to compare results from the pre-and post- self assessment surveys. A comparison of the total survey scores and the scores of each of the five key management skill areas was conducted to assess if participants experienced a significant increase in knowledge in the skills taught in the program. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic data.

Result

Data for this study was obtained using pre- and post- self assessment surveys with a five point Likert Scale where: 1 represented Strongly Disagree; 2 represented Disagree; 3 represented Somewhat Agree/Disagree; 4 represented Agree; and 5 represented Strongly Agree. Using the SPSS statistical software program, t-tests for paired samples was performed for the overall pre- and post- self assessment surveys as well as for each of the five key management skill areas taught in the program and represented on the self assessment surveys. The analysis included looking at the mean, standard deviation and significance of the overall pre- and post- self assessment surveys and each of the five key management skill areas. Table 1 shows the paired samples t-tests, including the mean and standard deviation, for the overall pre- and post- self assessment surveys and each of the five key management skill areas.

Significant results were found in four of the six variables: pre- and post- self assessment surveys overall $F(1,40) = -15.24, p < .05$; key management skill area 1, Role of the Manager $F(1,42) = -11.99, p < .05$; key management skill area 2, Managing in the Company's Environment $F(1,41) = -12.81, p < .05$; and key management skill area 4, Building the Team $F(1,43) = -11.25, p < .05$. There were no demonstrated significant differences in key management skill area 3, Managing Performance $F(1,41) = -10.51, p > .05$, or key management skill area 4, Performance Planning $F(1,43) = -11.39, p > .05$.

Table 1

Pre- and Post- Self Assessment Surveys Overall
and Five Key Management Skill Areas

Pre- and Post Self Assessment Variables	Pre- Self Assessment			Post- Self Assessment		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Overall Self Assessment	47	108	14.8	43	143.5	11.9
Key Management Skill Area 1: Role of the Manager	50	19.0	3.5	43	25.3	2.5
Key Management Skill Area 2: Managing in the Company's Environment	48	29.9	4.1	43	37.8	3.5
Key Management Skill Area 3: Managing Performance	49	19.8	3.6	43	25.7	2.3
Key Management Skill Area 4: Performance Planning	49	25.4	4.7	44	34.0	3.3
Key Management Skill Area 5: Building the Team	50	15.1	3.1	44	20.5	2.3

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to evaluate a new manager management training program in a high technology company using a Level 2 evaluation method modeled after Kirkpatrick's four-levels of training evaluation (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton

& Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998). The Level 2 evaluation method included the administration of pre- and post- self assessment surveys to the participants of the program. The self assessment surveys were designed to assess the change in participants' knowledge from the first day, pre- self assessment survey administration, to the last day, post- self assessment survey administration, of the program. The self assessment surveys were designed to assess the change in knowledge overall from the program and in the five key management skill areas taught in the program. The five key management skill areas taught in the program included: (1). the role of the manager, (2). managing in the company's environment, (3). managing performance, (4). performance planning, and (5). building the team.

Summary and Implication of Findings

The results of the study (see Table 1 with highlights below) included a change in overall participant scores of the self assessment surveys from the pre- and post- self assessment survey administration. Only three of the five key management skill areas taught in the program and assessed by the surveys showed a significant change in knowledge from the pre- to the post- self assessment survey administration. The three key management skill areas which participants showed having a significant change in knowledge from the pre- and post- self assessment survey administrations were: Key Management Skill Area 1: role of the manager; Key Management Skill Area 2: managing in the company's environment, and; Key Management Skill Area 5: building the team. The two skill areas with no significant increase in participants' knowledge

from the pre- and post- self assessment survey administration were: Key Management Skill Area 3: managing performance, and; Key Management Skill Area 4: performance planning.

Table 1

Pre- and Post- Self Assessment Surveys Overall
and Five Key Management Skill Areas

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	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
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Key Management Skill Area 4: Performance Planning	49	25.4	4.7	44	34.0	3.3
Key Management Skill Area 5: Building the Team	50	15.1	3.1	44	20.5	2.3

The result of overall change in participant knowledge from the pre- to the post-self assessment survey administration suggests that individuals trained in the program were different at the end of the training (Haccoun & Hamtiaux, 1994; Fitzgerald, 1992). By conducting Kirkpatrick's Level 2 evaluation methodology and going beyond assessing participants' reactions to the program, the evaluators of the program were able to assess the degree to which the objectives of the training program were realized. In addition, conducting the Level 2 evaluation of the five key management skill areas and identifying which key skill areas experienced a change in knowledge from the pre- to the post-self assessment administration helped the training department assess which areas of training should be emphasized, which training procedures seemed most effective, and when training might need to be revised in order to more effectively deal with real needs (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998). In summary, the evaluation study helped the organization understand which key management skill areas lead to a change in knowledge in participants. This information helped add support to the argument for the need to measure more than just trainee reactions toward a course, but also the need to also assess the acquisition of training content (Clement & Aranda, 1982; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998).

The implications of conducting a Level 2 evaluation in this study helped the organization offering the new manager management training program increase their confidence in the effectiveness and utility of the program (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998). In addition, by

assessing which of the five key management skill areas resulted in significant change in knowledge, the organization was able to focus initial program enhancements on the key training areas that did not show a significant increase in knowledge. This format allowed for problem solving and improvement in that it pinpointed weak spots in the training program. Simply measuring trainee reactions would not have provided this information (Clement & Aranda, 1982).

Strengths and Suggestions For Improvement

The study included piloting the pre- and post- self assessment surveys a few months before the administration of the self assessment surveys for this study. This pilot of the self assessment surveys helped increase the confidence level of the utility and relatedness of the self assessment surveys to the new manager management training program. It also ensured that the participants would be able to clearly understand the questions and the Likert Scale used in the self assessment surveys.

Another strength of the study was that the training department actually conducted an evaluation study that went beyond the typical one-group, post-test only design (Haccoun & Hamtiaux, 1994). This study built into the management training program a Level 2 evaluation method from Kirkpatrick's four-level training evaluation model using pre- and post- test experimental design (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998). By designing the evaluation method while developing the training program, the training department increased the confidence level that the statements on the self assessment surveys directly related to the five key

management skill areas in the program (Goodacre, 1957; Milheim, 1994). Using an experimental evaluation design provided the training department with quantitative measurable improvement information for the program. With the evaluation data, the training department would be able to assess beyond participants' initial training reactions to the program. They would also be able to assess which skill areas trained in the program might need improvement. In this study, the two key management skill areas that may require enhancement are the key skill areas of managing performance and performance planning.

A final area of strength in the study was the collection of the pre- and post- self assessment surveys during the training program. Typically, only about one-half of follow-up questionnaires are returned when participants are asked to send them back to the training department after the training program has been completed (Kruger & Smith, 1987). Of the 50 participants in the current study, 50 participants turned in the pre-self assessment surveys and 45 participants turned in the post-self assessment surveys.

Shortfalls to this study included not having participants that more closely represented the target audience of the program. The target audience was new managers in the company defined as newly promoted to the position of supervising or managing others or new to the company as a manager. In this study, the participants' average years with the company was ($\bar{M} = 4.1$), the average years of total management experience was ($\bar{M} = 4.2$), and the average years of management experience with the company was ($\bar{M} = 1.3$). In addition, not all participants answered all questions on both the pre- and post-

self assessment surveys. This may have added to the non-significant findings of two of the key management skill areas in the program. In summary, it would be difficult to know if the non-significant was due to the training or due to the already existing knowledge of the participants.

Another suggestion for improvement would be to use various evaluation techniques with the pre- and post- self-assessment surveys. Self assessment surveys used alone could lead to less variability, more lenience and less agreement as compared to other rating sources (McEvoy & Buller, 1990). Suggestions would be to include a survey of participants' managers, peers and direct reports regarding their perception of the participants' knowledge in the five key management skill areas taught in the training program. Collecting this information could lead to different outcomes regarding the significance of the five key management skill areas. This information would also help provide the training department with more detailed information regarding the utility of the skills taught in the program back on the job.

Finally, comparing the participants of the training program to a control group in both the pre- and post- self assessment surveys and in performance measures after attending the program could also further add to the assessment of the effectiveness and utility of the new manager management training program. Performance measures often used in other studies include promotions, grade increases and attrition (Urban et al., 1985).

Suggestions For Future Research

The overall results indicated that there was a significant change in knowledge from the pre- self assessment survey administration to the post- self assessment survey administration. The study did not measure, however, participants' managers, peers or direct reports assessment of the participants' knowledge in the five key management skill areas taught in the program. An assessment beyond the participants would have increased the reliability of the results and the understanding of whether or not participants utilized the skills back on the job.

Adding to the experimental design by including a control group would also be of interest. Comparing the participants' self assessment scores and performance measures to a control group would help the organization understand more fully if there was a change in knowledge and behavior on the job after attending the management training program. In addition, there would be an increase in confidence that the significant changes in knowledge in the participants were related to the training program versus external factors.

Additional research on the key management skill areas that did not result in significant findings would also need to occur before any significant updates or changes be made to the training program. It is suggested that such research should include further investigation with a participant group which more closely resembles the intended target audience of the training program. Such investigation would help the training department understand if the results were due to the training program or due to participants already

having existing knowledge and experience in the key management skill areas prior to attending the program.

The results indicated that overall, the training program created a change in participants' knowledge in the five key management skill areas taught in the program. These results helped the training organization justify the usefulness of the information provided to participants by participating in the training program. However, the magnitude of return on investment to the company can not be measured by the evaluation methodology utilized in the program. It is suggested that the program evaluation include evaluation methodology where by the organization can assess the use of the skills taught in the program back on the job. It is suggested that the training department devise an evaluation method which incorporates Kirkpatrick's Level 3 and Level 4 methods of evaluating training in addition to the current Level 2 evaluation method. It is at a Level 3 and Level 4 evaluation method where an organization can assess the utility of the skills taught in the program back on the job by the participants and hence be able to assess more fully the return on investment of the training program (Goldstein, 1993; Shelton & Alliger, 1993; Krein & Weldon, 1994; Cousins & MacDonald, 1998).

Conclusions

Overall, the results of this research study are preliminary. They indicate that there was an overall change in knowledge in participants attending the training program. As a result, there is encouragement that the overall training program provided useful information. This also supports the research that conducting evaluation efforts beyond

the assessment of participant reactions to the training can help a training department understand more fully the usefulness of the training that is being offered.

However, there was not enough information from the results of the study to identify clearly if changes should be made to the program. In addition, it is not clear if the program met the needs of the target audience for which the program was designed.

Although it was clear that two of the five key management skill areas resulted in non-significant findings, conclusions regarding the reason for these findings cannot be made at this point. It is not understood if the non-significant findings were due to the training program or if they were due to external factors such as participants already having knowledge in the key management skill areas. Further research with a target audience as well as with a control group would help to clarify this issue.

In conclusion, although there is more work to be done in evaluating this new manager training program, this preliminary study has provided the company with valuable information regarding the usefulness of the program. Efforts put forth in designing, developing and delivering this program were seen as beneficial for the organization as the program did result in significant findings overall and in three of the five key management skill areas taught in the program.

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APPENDIX A

Survey and Results

SELF ASSESSMENT

The following self assessment tool is for you as a participant in **The Applied Manager: Getting Results Through People**.

The purpose of the tool is to provide you with information on the management skills or competencies taught in the program. The information may help you:

- Assess your knowledge or understanding before training
- Identify areas of strength
- Identify areas for development
- Monitor your progress in the program

The tool will also provide the Human Resources Development Department (HRD) with information to continuously improve the program.

You will fill out the tool on the first and last days of the program. The self assessment tool includes 34 statements on your **knowledge or understanding** of management skills or competencies taught in the program.

The self assessment will take approximately **10 minutes** to complete. Please **read each statement carefully** and determine how much you **agree or disagree** with each statement. Next to each statement, circle the number that best represents your level of agreement. Please be candid and honest in your responses.

Turn in your completed self assessment to the instructors.

All answers will remain confidential.

Self Assessment Tool

Each statement describes your knowledge or understanding of management skills or competencies taught in the program. Please **read each statement carefully** and determine how much you **agree or disagree** with each statement. Next to each statement, circle the number that best represents your level of agreement. **Please be candid and honest in your responses.** All answers will remain confidential.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree/Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I understand Senior Management's expectations of me as a manager at Applied.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. I understand the fundamentals of how Applied's business operates.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. I know how to build support networks with managers in all aspects of the business.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. I understand Applied's history and accomplishments.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. I understand Applied's marketplace.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. I know who Applied's competitors are.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. I understand Applied's future challenges.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. I know who Applied's customers are.....	1	2	3	4	5
9. I know how to practice Applied's values on the job.....	1	2	3	4	5
10. I understand the key responsibilities of managers at Applied.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. I know how to develop strategies to be successful in Applied's organizational structure.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know how to define strategies to get results in Applied's culture.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. I understand my legal obligations as a manager at Applied.....	1	2	3	4	5
14. I understand how my behavior and expectations shape employees' performance.....	1	2	3	4	5
15. I know how to use communication to support collaboration and getting results through others.. ..	1	2	3	4	5
16. I know how to create performance plans that include the objectives of my work team.....	1	2	3	4	5
17. I understand how to create win/win performance agreements with employees.....	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree/Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
18. I know effective ways to use feedback to shape employees' behavior and performance.....	1	2	3	4	5
19. I know how to use communication skills to manage sensitive employee situations.....	1	2	3	4	5
20. I know how to make informed decisions regarding sensitive employee situations.....	1	2	3	4	5
21. I know how to apply effective meeting practices to staff meetings.....	1	2	3	4	5
22. I understand Applied's staffing processes and procedures.....	1	2	3	4	5
23. I know how to build cases for hiring new employees.....	1	2	3	4	5
24. I know how to develop interview plans for interviewing employee candidates.....	1	2	3	4	5
25. I know how to design assimilation plans for new employees.....	1	2	3	4	5
26. I know how to reward and recognize employees for their good performance.....	1	2	3	4	5
27. I know how to set team direction for my new work teams.....	1	2	3	4	5
28. I know how to write my performance plans.....	1	2	3	4	5
29. I understand how my performance plans should link to my manager's performance plans.....	1	2	3	4	5
30. I know how to conduct performance plan contracting meetings with employees.....	1	2	3	4	5
31. I know how to complete work reviews for staff meetings.....	1	2	3	4	5
32. I understand the usefulness of work reviews in statusing my work team's objectives.....	1	2	3	4	5
33. I understand how to manage my work team during changing sets of circumstances.....	1	2	3	4	5
34. I understand how to maximize the people resources on my work team.....	1	2	3	4	5

Continue On Next Page

Personal Profile

Please answer the following personal profile questions. All answers will remain confidential.

1. How long have you worked for Applied Materials? ____years and/or ____months
2. How many years and/or months of total management experience do you have? ____years and/or ____months
3. How many years and/or months of management experience do you have at Applied? ____years and/or ____months
4. How many direct reports do you currently have? _____
5. Which functional/technical area do you currently work in (please check one):
  - ☐ Customer Service
  - ☐ Engineering
  - ☐ Facilities
  - ☐ Finance
  - ☐ Human Resources
  - ☐ IS&T
  - ☐ Legal
  - ☐ Manufacturing
  - ☐ Software Engineering
  - ☐ Other (please describe): _____
6. Please list the country or U.S. state in which you work: _____
7. Age (please check one):
  - ☐ 20-25
  - ☐ 26-30
  - ☐ 31-35
  - ☐ 36-40
  - ☐ 41-45
  - ☐ 46-50
  - ☐ 51-55
  - ☐ 56-60
  - ☐ 61 or older
8. Gender (please check one):
  - ☐ Male
  - ☐ Female
9. So that we may return your self assessment to you, please fill in the following information:

Name:
Mailstop:

Date:
Employee ID:

Turn in your completed self assessment to the instructors.

Thank You!

SELF ASSESSMENT

The following self assessment tool is for you as a participant in **The Applied Manager: Getting Results Through People**.

The purpose of the tool is to provide you with information on the management skills or competencies taught in the program. The information may help you:

- Assess your knowledge or understanding before training
- Identify areas of strength
- Identify areas for development
- Monitor your progress in the program

The tool will also provide the Human Resources Development Department (HRD) with information to continuously improve the program.

You will fill out the tool on the first and last days of the program. The self assessment tool includes 34 statements on your **knowledge** or **understanding** of management skills or competencies taught in the program.

The self assessment will take approximately **10 minutes** to complete. Please **read each statement carefully** and determine how much you **agree or disagree** with each statement. Next to each statement, circle the number that best represents your level of agreement. Please be candid and honest in your responses.

Turn in your completed self assessment to the instructors.

All answers will remain confidential.

Self Assessment Tool

Each statement describes your knowledge or understanding of management skills or competencies taught in the program. Please **read each statement carefully** and determine how much you **agree or disagree** with each statement. Next to each statement, circle the number that best represents your level of agreement. **Please be candid and honest in your responses.** All answers will remain confidential.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree/Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I understand Senior Management's expectations of me as a manager at Applied.....	1	2	3	4	5
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5. I understand Applied's marketplace.....	1	2	3	4	5
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7. I understand Applied's future challenges.....	1	2	3	4	5
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14. I understand how my behavior and expectations shape employees' performance.....	1	2	3	4	5
15. I know how to use communication to support collaboration and getting results through others.. ..	1	2	3	4	5
16. I know how to create performance plans that include the objectives of my work team.....	1	2	3	4	5
17. I understand how to create win/win performance agreements with employees.....	1	2	3	4	5

The Applied Manager: Getting Results Through People

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree/Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
18. I know effective ways to use feedback to shape employees' behavior and performance.....	1	2	3	4	5
19. I know how to use communication skills to manage sensitive employee situations.....	1	2	3	4	5
20. I know how to make informed decisions regarding sensitive employee situations.....	1	2	3	4	5
21. I know how to apply effective meeting practices to staff meetings.....	1	2	3	4	5
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23. I know how to build cases for hiring new employees.....	1	2	3	4	5
24. I know how to develop interview plans for interviewing employee candidates.....	1	2	3	4	5
25. I know how to design assimilation plans for new employees.....	1	2	3	4	5
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33. I understand how to manage my work team during changing sets of circumstances.....	1	2	3	4	5
34. I understand how to maximize the people resources on my work team.....	1	2	3	4	5

So that we may return your self assessment to you, please fill in the following information:

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Mailstop: _____ **Employee ID:** _____

Turn in your completed self assessment to the instructors.

Thank You!

t-tests for Paired Samples

Variable	Number of pairs	Corr	2-tail Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
ATOTAL	total of all pre- questions			108.0244	14.744	2.303
	41	.390	.012			
BTOTAL	total of all post- questions			143.4634	11.860	1.852

Paired Differences			t-value	df	2-tail Sig
Mean	SD	SE of Mean			
-35.4390	14.888	2.325	-15.24	40	.000
95% CI (-40.138, -30.740)					

t-tests for Paired Samples

Variable	Number of pairs	Corr	2-tail Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
AROLE	pre- questions: Role of mgr.			19.0000	3.519	.537
	43	.385	.011			
BROLE	post- questions: Role of mgr.			25.3023	2.512	.383

Paired Differences			t-value	df	2-tail Sig
Mean	SD	SE of Mean			
-6.3023	3.447	.526	-11.99	42	.000
95% CI (-7.363, -5.241)					

t-tests for Paired Samples

Variable	Number of pairs	Corr	2-tail Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
AENV pre- questions: Environment	42	.460	.002	29.8571	4.182	.645
BENV post- questions: Environment				37.8095	3.473	.536

Paired Differences			t-value	df	2-tail Sig
Mean	SD	SE of Mean			
-7.9524	4.024	.621	-12.81	41	.000
95% CI (-9.206, -6.698)					

t-tests for Paired Samples

Variable	Number of pairs	Corr	2-tail Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
AMGP pre- questions: Mging perf	42	.291	.062	19.8333	3.588	.554
BMGP post- questions: Mging perf				25.6905	2.170	.335

Paired Differences			t-value	df	2-tail Sig
Mean	SD	SE of Mean			
-5.8571	3.613	.557	-10.51	41	.000
95% CI (-6.983, -4.731)					

t-tests for Paired Samples

Variable	Number of pairs	Corr	2-tail Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
APERPLAN pre- questions: Perf plan	44	.249	.103	25.4318	4.687	.707
BPERFPLN post- questions: Perf plan				34.0227	3.274	.494

Paired Differences			t-value	df	2-tail Sig
Mean	SD	SE of Mean			
-8.5909	5.004	.754	-11.39	43	.000
95% CI (-10.112, -7.070)					

t-tests for Paired Samples

Variable	Number of pairs	Corr	2-tail Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
ABLDG pre- questions: Bldg. the team	44	.381	.011	15.0909	3.116	.470
BBLDG post-questions: Bldg. the team				20.5227	2.583	.389

Paired Differences			t-value	df	2-tail Sig
Mean	SD	SE of Mean			
-5.4318	3.202	.483	-11.25	43	.000
95% CI (-6.405, -4.458)					