

PRESENTATION OF THE BUSINESS CASE

When was applied the Methodology?

Tempo Training & Consulting operates in the field of vocational training for about 11 years. During this time we have obtained a lot of experiences also in the field of training's evaluation and providing of the feedback from the training activities to the employers. In the current time, we are realizing the long-time educational and training projects for the companies from all the Czech Republic.

One of these projects is realized also for the company, which name is LOSTR. This company is situated in Louny and it is the biggest employer, with its seven hundred of employees, in the Ústecký region. LOSTR is specialized in the manufacturing of products from the steel and they are certificated for:

- Development, production, service and modernization of the rail vehicles
- Development and production of the steel constructions, including the pressure tanks

This project is realized on the base of the Application about the financial support from the public sources, which was approved to this company on 1st January 2007. This project is co-financed by 75 % from the European Social Fund and by 25 % from the national budget.

Project aims are:

- Training of the workers by the certificated training and educational company.
- Increase the value of the employees.
- Competitiveness increase of the company through the vocational training of employees.
- Set up more flexible methods of work organization by leaders to the strategic management of the company, managing of human sources, communication, time and better control in the stress situations.
- Creating of 10 new work positions.

What was applied?

AVALNET was developed as the continuing project for the successfully realized project nr. P/02/B/F/BB-125502 – ROI, which was coordinated by Portuguese company CECOIA and was finished in September 2005.

The main object of the project is then to create the network, which will improve the conception, deliver and transfer of innovative products in the areas of assessment, evaluation and ROI. The main field of focus is quality improvement of VET systems and practices throughout Europe.

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Evaluation

Evaluation of VET systems and practices throughout Europe is very specific area, to which should be attached very big importance. A lot of evaluators realize the evaluation in the standard and given ways, which are not in many times sufficient for the overall and quality evaluation. Right due to this reason are developed new and better methods of evaluation in last few years. One of them is also ROI methodology. This method becomes still more and more popular among the organizations, which need to evaluate the training activities, because they are able to assess the training results also from the financial and monetary point of view.

When we want to make the successful evaluation, we have to lay down to ourselves four basic questions:

Why?

- Improving of employees' skills and knowledge is the way to the better business results of the company.
- Evaluation and feedback are very important motivation factors for the employees.

What?

- It is necessary to set up, which areas and fields we want to evaluate.
- It is necessary to evaluate all impacts of the training – positive X negative influences.

How?

- There exist a lot of evaluation methods and tools, which are used during the providing of feedback on the training activities.
- We have to select the best method or tool, which will absolutely fit for our purposes.

If?

- If the training activity was done in the right way, there is a big presumption, that the business result will have the benefit for the company.

The usefulness of training, which lies in the improving and raising of staffs' skills and knowledge, can be seen for example in the higher work effectiveness, higher satisfaction of customers, time saving, higher profits or lower production costs.

Which were the methods or tools?

Training activities were prepared for ten groups of workers and to each group is determined different type of training activity. Main object at each group of workers is to raise the independence, flexibility and responsibility, which should lead to the higher productivity and competitiveness of LOSTR.

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Groups of trained workers:

Top management, executive management, masters, leaders of the teams, dealers, administrative workers, technicians, specialized workers of the working-class professions, technical-economic workers, working-class.

Areas of training:

Negotiation and argumentation, Motivation, Leading of workers, Team work, Managerial methods, Communication, Management of human resources, Strategy of selling and buying process, Application of ISO standards, PC courses.

The companies' staffs have attended the above mentioned courses, which were created by personal training and IT skills. Each course lasts for 2 days (1 day=7 learning hours) and the trained groups were consisted from 6 to 15 participants. The training courses and activities were lead and realized by external lectors and trainers, who work for Tempo Training & Consulting.

The training activities were evaluated at several levels and the main purpose were to valorize the effect of training on the staffs and the connected effects, which were displayed on the business results of the company.

First level of evaluation, which was realized through the questionnaire, was created immediately after each course. The main target of this evaluation level was to obtain and detect the imminent feelings and impressions from the training activities, which were described by each participant. Its purpose was to be the starting and comparing point for the next steps of evaluation. From the first part of the questionnaire we got the basic data about the age, job, function and responsibilities concerning their work. In the second part were situated the questions about the satisfaction, expectations and amount of time which is necessary for attending the course. The last part of the questionnaire was dedicated directly to the positive and negative aspects of the training. We wanted to obtain the information about the contentment of the participants, their opinions about the strong and weak points of training activities and possible suggestions about the factors, which should improve and make the courses more effective.

Second level of evaluation was dedicated directly to the assessment of the content parts of training courses. The main aim of the questionnaire was to summarize the overview and quality of staff skills and knowledge before the training cycle. On the base of the information, they had to determine and analyze the areas of their weak points. After all this process, they were able to set up the fields of improvements, which should of course replenish the imperfections mentioned in the previous part of the questionnaire. In the last part of the questionnaire, they had to evaluate the asset of information, skills and knowledge, which they obtained during the training cycle. They also had to outline, how they want to implement the obtained skills and knowledge in their work.

The third level of evaluation was perceived from the long-term sight and its main object was to assess the real results and impacts of the training activities, which were

projected in the everyday activities and work of the participants. This level of evaluation took into account the relevant factor of time during the application of results into practices, because it was done 4 months after the end of each training course. The evaluation questionnaire was not divided into several parts as the previous ones, but it was conceived as the complex assessment of achieved results. Its aim was to answer on these spheres of questions:

- How is the measure and achievement of implementation of new skills and knowledge obtained during the training courses into the practice?
- How is the frequency of using of new skills and knowledge obtained during the training courses in the practice?
- How was the interference in old activities by the application of the new theories and knowledge
- How were the benefits for the company as the result of the training courses?
- How were the barriers of using and implementation of new skills and knowledge into the practice?

After these three levels of evaluation, we were able to compare the results of individual questionnaires. During the comparison, we wanted to detect, where the differences among the estimations and real results were and how big these differences were. In the final phase it led to complete overview about the success and effectiveness of the training courses.

What were the results?

At least, but not last, was made the level of evaluation, which main aim was to assess the monetary aspects of the training courses. We wanted to detect, in which measure were influenced the business results of the company and if the training activities contributed to the better position at the market. According to the achieved results of the project, we detected, that the biggest asset of the benefits were caused by improvement in the areas of:

- work effectiveness,
- saving of time,
- utilization of human resources,
- utilization of productive factors,
- internal communication,
- selling processes,
- Strategic management.

At the end of the project was evident, that the company improved the place at the market and it achieved higher level of competitiveness. Moreover, there was set up more flexible system of work. All these factors led to the higher turnover of the company, which increased in the period of several months. Top management of LOSTR agreed that main contribution on this positive effect were created by the implementation of training courses.

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