

Training Evaluation

Training costs time and money. How do you know whether money spent on training is a worthwhile investment? In this guide we look at ways to evaluate the effectiveness of training - for individuals and your organisation.

Why **evaluate** training?

What do you want your training activities to achieve for your museum? If training is not bringing results, for example, in improved staff performance, does the problem lie in people's ability to develop skills or in the content of the training or how it is delivered? Evaluation of training helps you to assess what training has done and can do for you.

Evaluation and effectiveness

Effective training is training that:

- meets the objectives of your organisation
- meets the objectives of the individuals receiving training
- improves people's performance in their work
- is targeted at the right people and is suitable for those people.

Evaluation allows you to judge the effectiveness of training. It also enables you to decide whether the training you have organised:

- makes best use of the time and money you invest in it
- meets your organisation's and individuals' needs
- can be improved to meet your needs and make better use of your resources.

Evaluation and planning

Evaluation of your training provides feedback for planning further training. See *Developing a Training Plan*, Te Papa National Services Resource Guides Issue 11 for detailed guidance on how to identify training needs and priorities and set up programmes.

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Knowing **what to** *evaluate*



**YOU PLAN TRAINING TO MEET NEEDS. YOU EVALUATE TRAINING
TO SEE IF THE NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET.**

Before training takes place

Training is not complete without evaluation. Evaluation starts before the training takes place.

- Overall you need to evaluate the most suitable method of delivering training to meet the objectives.
- If you are using an outside source for training, you need to evaluate what they offer prior to using them.
- You also need to make sure that the individual who will receive training is clear about the objectives.

Identify training options

Focus your training budget on critical training needs. Look at a range of options for developing skills at work. Courses and seminars held at other places will always be an important part of meeting training needs. But other options can provide low-cost alternatives such as:

- on-the-job training
- mentoring and coaching by more skilled staff
- structured learning sessions run by your own people, perhaps with outside expertise
- visits and attachments to a larger museum
- personal study.

Can training providers deliver?

If you are going to invest time and money in outside courses, check out the training providers. Will they give value for money? Do their courses meet professional standards? Are the courses appropriate and relevant?

Effective training courses will generally have:

- clearly stated objectives that enable you to match the needs of the person being trained with the appropriate course
- a detailed breakdown of the training programme giving the time and resources allocated to different areas of learning
- assessments that measure the trainee's learning while on the course.

ENSURE YOU KEEP AND CIRCULATE INFORMATION ON BOTH SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL TRAINING.

Compare the training on offer

Where possible, seek information on comparable programmes from more than one provider.

- Seek detailed information on course objectives, content, trainer qualifications, and evaluation data.
- Ask for references from organisations similar to yours that have used the programmes you are looking at.
- Consider negotiating a test run for one person before putting other staff through the programme.
- Consider putting in-house programmes to be run by an external provider out to tender.

SMART objectives

Objectives for training should be SMART. When you evaluate any objective, check it against this acronym of qualities.

Is the objective:

- **S**pecific?
- **M**easurable?
- **A**chievable?
- **R**esults-oriented?
- **T**ime-bound?



ENSURE THAT INDIVIDUALS KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM AND OF YOU FROM ANY TRAINING YOU PROVIDE.

Establish an individual training action plan

A training action plan is an agreement between an individual and their manager. It sets out what both parties expect a specific course of training to achieve and how new skills will be supported on the job. Refer to the action plan on page 10 for an example.

Before the training

The manager and staff member should discuss and note down:

- the reason for the training
- the objectives that the training is intended to achieve
- the support and assistance that the trainee will receive in using the skills back on the job.

After the training

The manager and staff member meet again to discuss the relevance of the training, and its usefulness overall including:

- the extent to which the training met the identified needs
- any problems or issues arising from the training
- how the training will be applied on the job.

This will also help in evaluating the application of skills on the job.

Four key **evaluation**

questions

In this section we look at four straightforward questions you can ask to help you to evaluate how effective a specific course of training has been, especially one in which you have invested funds from your training budget.

The questions are:

- What did the trainee think of the training?
- What have they learned from the training?
- Has their ability to do their job improved?
- How will the training benefit the museum?

You may have some difficulties getting this information. Individuals may not be willing to identify problems such as non-performance or lack of skill that the training is intended to resolve. In other cases, they may not wish to critique the training out of concern for limiting the future opportunities of others. They may also feel reluctant to assess their own level of development in new skills.

What did they think of the training?

A positive response to training is conducive to effective learning. However, personal reactions and attitudes are complex. They are the result of factors such as interest of the content, training methods, other trainees, the training context, location, and the trainee's perceived success in the training.

Criteria for evaluation

Target the information that is of most use to the organisation. This will include the trainee's reaction to:

- the quality and relevance of the content of the training
- time allocated for topic areas
- teaching methods, including degree of interaction, activities or opportunities for hands-on practice
- the quality of trainers and presenters, including subject-matter knowledge, facilitation, group management and coaching skills
- the quality of resource materials provided
- the quality of facilities and surroundings
- any suggested improvements to the training.

Methods of evaluation

These could include:

- completion of an evaluation questionnaire on or immediately following the training (see the sample training evaluation form on page 11)
- discussion after the training with the trainee's manager or supervisor.

What have they learned?

Has the trainee acquired the skills and knowledge that the training was intended to develop? The trainee will be able to contribute to this kind of evaluation by identifying the skills they consider they have learned, and the level to which they feel they have learned them. This information should be supported by feedback from the trainer.

Where the course focuses on particular skills, it is reasonable to expect the training provider to assess participants to ensure they have achieved the desired level of competence.

Criteria for evaluation

These could include:

- assessment of the specific knowledge and range of skills the trainee has acquired
- assessment of the level to which skills have developed.

Methods of evaluation

These could include:

- results from assessments on the training course
- self-assessment by the trainee immediately following the training
- post-course discussion with the trainer and manager.

Reinforcement and support

Activities to reinforce and support the training could include:

- sharing knowledge and skills learnt with peers and colleagues
- immediate opportunities for practice.



Has their ability to do the job improved?

Effective training ensures that the skills and knowledge taught can be transferred to practical situations and applied in the shortest possible time, with the least possible assistance. There may be practical as well as technical difficulties in assessing this. Make sure that performance is a true reflection of the effect of training and not other factors.

Trainees must also have the opportunity to put their training into practice. This will depend on the nature and range of their activities on the job, and the degree of supervision required.

Criteria for evaluation

These could include:

- relevance of the skills and knowledge to the museum
- ability to use immediately the skills and behaviours taught
- the degree of supervision required
- comparison with any pre-course assessment of skills.

Methods of evaluation:

These could include:

- post-course discussion with the manager or supervisor
- direct observation of performance by the manager or supervisor
- self-assessment or assessment by the manager at defined points (for example, one month and three months after training).

Reinforcement and support

Activities to reinforce and support the training could include:

- setting up opportunities for supervised practice
- using the pre- and post-training action plan (see example on page 10). (The action plan is a tool for evaluating the use of skills and knowledge and identifying any problems with this.)



How will the training benefit the museum?

You should consider both the immediate and the ultimate benefits of training for the organisation. The evaluation of immediate benefits should relate to the original reasons that the investment was made, but it should also take account of other relevant but unexpected benefits.

Assess immediate benefits of training by the effects it has had on:

- the individual undergoing the training
- the trainee's immediate workgroup or team
- the operation of the unit or department in which they work
- the museum as a whole
- the community in which the museum exists.

Criteria for evaluation

These could include:

- improvement in how the person is performing their job
- increase in the quantity of output
- savings in time
- savings in costs
- improvement in the quality of services.

Methods of evaluation

Some of these methods should already exist in, for example, the ways in which you monitor and review the performance of individuals or the museum as a whole. Others that could be considered include:

- peer assessment and feedback
- community surveys
- service questionnaires
- return on investment.

Return on investment

You can evaluate training in financial terms, by calculating the actual dollar value of benefits of training over the costs of training. However, there are practical and technical difficulties in judging outcomes in this way. They include taking into account the various assumptions made about the terms 'cost' and 'effectiveness'.

You will need to use this kind of evaluation selectively.



Pre and post-training action plan

<p>Manager and trainee to complete this column before attending training</p>	<p>Complete this column 6 weeks to 3 months after attending training</p>
<p>Training:</p> <p>Date:</p>	<p>Training:</p> <p>Date:</p>
<p>Personal Objectives</p> <p>What do you want to learn by attending this training?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. <p>How will this training develop your ability to do your job?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. <p>On-Job Application</p> <p>What barriers or issues may prevent application of these skills on the job?</p> <p>What strategies could be used to overcome these barriers? (Consider resources, assistance, coaching etc)</p>	<p>Post-Training Review</p> <p>Comment on the degree to which the training met your objectives</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> All objectives met by training <input type="checkbox"/> Most objectives met by training <input type="checkbox"/> Some objectives met by training <input type="checkbox"/> Few objectives met by training <input type="checkbox"/> No objectives met by training</p> <p>Comment on the degree to which you have used the skills you have learnt</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> All skills learnt used on-job <input type="checkbox"/> Most skills learnt used on-job <input type="checkbox"/> Some skills learnt used on-job <input type="checkbox"/> Few skills learnt used on-job <input type="checkbox"/> No skills learnt used on-job</p> <p>Comment on difficulties encountered in applying new skills back on the job</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Lack of opportunity to use skills <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of time for use of skills <input type="checkbox"/> Skills learnt were not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> No supervision for skills practice <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of coaching or feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please comment)</p>
<p>Sign-off</p>	<p>Sign-off</p>
<p>Manager:</p>	<p>Manager:</p>
<p>Trainee:</p>	<p>Trainee:</p>

Training **evaluation**

Name (Optional): _____

Please complete this survey before you leave. Your responses will be used to evaluate this training and plan further training. Thanks for your help.

Course: _____

Location: _____

Date: _____

1. List your three main learning objectives in attending this training.

- a)
- b)
- c)

2. To what extent were each of these objectives achieved?

Where your expectations have not been met, why was this?

- a)
- b)
- c)

3. What did you find most useful?

-
-
-

4. What did you find least useful?

-
-
-

5. Please list at least three words to describe the style of training delivery.

6. Please rate the training in terms of the following criteria:

(circle one number only)

	Low	Medium	High
Your participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
Your understanding of the content material	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
Relevance to the content of your job	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
Maintained your interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
Trainer's knowledge of the subject	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
Creation of appropriate learning climate	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		

7. Are there any changes you would recommend should be made to this training?

-
-
-



Te Papa National Services Resource Guides | He Rauemi are published by Te Papa National Services in support of its work with museums, galleries, iwi, and related organisations throughout New Zealand to enhance the museum services offered within communities.

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