



## **Reinforcement & Follow-Up:** ***Profiting From an Investment in Training***

The most commonly recognized strategy to improve performance and increase productivity is *training*.

*Training* consists of instructional experiences designed to develop new skills and knowledge that are expected to be applied immediately upon (or within a short time after) return to the job.

Do organizations get full value for their investments in training? That is, is the training they pay for fully transferred to the job? This brings us to a very important definition.

*Transfer of training* is the effective and continuing application, by managers to their jobs, of the knowledge and skills gained in the training.

This means that managers apply all they learned in training to their jobs, at least as well as they could demonstrate those skills at the end of the training program. Full transfer of training also means that with practice on the job, the level of skill with which that learning is applied will increase beyond the level demonstrated at the end of the training program.

**The objective of Reinforcement & Follow-Up** is to help and support managers to effectively apply to the job the knowledge and skills learned and to demonstrate how continuous application will positively impact bottom line results.

### **The Transfer of Training - Problem**

Is transfer of training a problem? A recent comprehensive survey of research and literature on transfer found the following:

There is a growing recognition of a “transfer problem” in organizational training today. It is estimated that while American Industries annually spend up to \$100 billion on training and development, not more than 10% of these expenditures actually result in transfer to the job. Researchers have similarly concluded that much of the training conducted in organizations fails to transfer to the work setting.





One study reviewed analyzed perceptions of HRD professionals on the transfer of content of management development programs. On the average these professionals believed that only about 40% of the content of programs they conducted was transferred to the work environment immediately after training, about 25% was still being applied six months later, and the true bottom line – a mere 15% was still being used at the end of a year.

Major barriers to transfer of training are:

- No post training follow up plan
- Managers discomfort with change
- Absence of reinforcement on the job

### **The Transfer of Training – Solution**

**“Organizations should spend ten times more energy reinforcing the training they have just conducted, instead of looking for the next great learning initiative.”**

**- Ken Blanchard**

The Transfer of Training – Solution involves the following two key components:

- **Reinforcement of Learning**
- **Follow-Up Coaching**

### **Reinforcement of Learning**

Reinforcement of Learning (Knowledge and Skills) will be accomplished with the following:

#### **BreakThroughs, Inc. Webcasts**

Regularly scheduled 40 minute **Webcasts** to review and refresh the material from each of the programs. The overall goal of each **Webcast** is to encourage managers to deepen their understanding of specific skills and knowledge and support them to apply what they have learned.

#### **BreakThroughs, Inc. “Coaching in Action Blog”**

The official **“Coaching in Action Blog”**, located on BreakThroughs, Inc.’s website is specifically designed for managers who are graduates of our programs.



The purpose of the “**Coaching in Action Blog**” is to facilitate communication between BreakThroughs, Inc. and managers and to provide on-going coaching, encouragement and support. The focus will be on discussing coaching problems, issues, sharing Best Practices, and building a support network.

### **BreakThroughs, Inc. Ongoing Updates**

Additional resources will be provided via emails and newsletters which will provide relevant articles and a review of skills, knowledge and tools.

### **Follow-Up Coaching**

Typically training leads to new behaviors and improved results. The staying power of results is minimal without a **Follow-Up Coaching** support system to help the new behaviors stick. Research indicates it takes approximately 30 days to form a new behavior and 60-90 days to break old behaviors and replace with new ones. Without a **Follow-Up Coaching** support system, old behaviors come back and people return to their comfort zones. Coaching provides that support system so new behaviors stick and improve long term results.

*“Xerox Corporation carried out several studies on coaching. They determined that in the absence of **follow-up coaching** to their training classes, 87% of the skills change brought about by the program was lost.” – Business Wire, July 30, 2001.*

*Coaching is the most powerful tool for maximizing an individual’s ability to demonstrate improved performance on the job. Coaching is proven to create sustained increases in employee productivity and is the most effective method for transferring learning from the classroom to the workplace.*

*“Managers who received follow-up coaching delivered an impressive 65.6% greater level of productivity over managers who did not receive coaching! Managers that received follow-up coaching showed an 88% increase in productivity after attending a management training program. After attending the same training program a different group of managers showed a modest 22.4% increase in productivity without follow-up coaching.”*  
– Denver Post

*“A recent independent study found that no matter how good the training is – without good follow-up coaching - 87¢ of every \$1.00 spent is wasted.”*  
- Training & Development Journal



*“Without coaching – only 22% of what was learned was retained over time. When the participants received coaching – 88% of what they learned was retained because they were coached on how to apply new behaviors and skills back on the job. This means without coaching – 66% of what they learned was lost!”* - American Society of Training and Development

### **Follow-Up One-On-One Coaching**

#### **Follow-Up – One-on-One Coaching Session With Each Manager**

A series of One-on-One Coaching Sessions with each manager. Sessions are conducted on-site (face-to-face) and by telephone.

#### **Follow-Up – One-on-One Coaching Session with i.e., Vice Presidents, Directors & Center Managers**

A series of One-on-One Coaching Sessions with Vice Presidents, Directors & Center Managers. Sessions are conducted on-site (face-to-face) and by telephone.

#### **Follow-Up - Meetings with Management Team On-Site**

The On-Site Meetings with all managers is a “**Facilitated Discussion**” to review on-the-job application of skills and knowledge and provide targeted reinforcement applied to real time situations.

### **Bottom Line Results**

Research has shown that **Follow-Up Coaching** improves application back on the job from 20-80%. In addition to providing an accountability component, **Follow-Up Coaching** helps people diagnose, prioritize, and plan a course of action. Most importantly, one-on-one coaching helps and supports managers to consistently implement the knowledge and skills learned during the program.