

The Role of Training Program for Employees: Learning and Application

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ABSTRACT

Training is considered as one of the significant progress in the human resource management function in the organization. Training and development programs for employees can act as a key driver of the implementation of strategic activities, which can be a support in the achievement of organizational goals. This program should be planned and implemented well, where it will increase the human resource planning and supporting the strategic direction of the organization. Based on this explanation, this paper attempts to describe the role of the implementation of training programs on employees in an organization, in order to improve their capability and managerial skills. This paper attempts to point out the importance of the relationship between input and output of training. The input of training intended is trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment, while the output of the training is learning and transfer of training. Transfer of training is the application of training materials in the workplace. This paper also attempts to identify the significant pathways of training input to the learning and application. The explanation for the first track is trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment on the learning and application, and then describes the path of trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment and learning as well on the application. The accomplishment of trainees transferring the knowledge and skill developed during training in their job is an important factor to measure the successfulness of training.

Keywords: *training input, trainee characteristics, training design, output training, learning and application*

INTRODUCTION

As known, human resource is a unique competitive advantage resource. It is unique because of the role of human resources is difficult to imitate, compared with other resources such as natural resources, technology and other resources. Furthermore, the practice of human resource management is seen as a source of value creation. Human resource system that is managed well is a hidden asset that can create a value when it applied in enterprises operating system (Becker & Gerhart, 1996: 781-782). Therefore, the training of human resource in every organization is indispensable, for the organization existence and supporting in winning competitive advantage for human resources that cannot be imitated.

Recently, training plays active role to develop employees' behavior, skills and knowledge in the promptly changing business world (Seyler, Holton III, Bates, Burnett & Carvalho 1998; Tan, Hall & Boyce, 2003). The training and development programs for employees can act as a key driver of the implementation of strategic activities. In other words, the training programs an organization can be a support in the achievement of organizational goals. If the program is planned and implemented well, it will increase the human resource planning and support the company's strategic direction (Tannenbaum & Woods, 1992: 65). Consequently, assess the efficiency and effectiveness of training increasing simultaneously (Santos & Stuart, 2003; Russ-Eft, 2008), especially during economic contractions, when the need for accountability and control is higher (Tannenbaum & Woods, 1992; Taylor, O'Driscoll & Binning, 1998), or when training is outsourced (Gainey & Klass, 2003).

Training is considered as one of the significant progress in the human resource management function in the organization. Training plays a critical role in maintaining and developing the human resources in an organization, as individuals and the organization as well and the contribution to the process of organizational change. Based on the

above, this paper attempts to describe the role of training program for employee in an organization.

The responsibility of development employees in an organization cannot be left entirely to them, but there should be a concern of all components of competent parties. On the other hand the development efforts will not give optimal benefits when programs are overlap, not applicable and without proper coordination. Hence, one of the efforts to advance or promote them could be done through guidance in the form of training program that the ultimate goal is to enhance their capacity of knowledge, skills and behaviour in the achievement of organizational goals.

The training provided is not useful if it is not applied in the business activities or workplace. Transfer of training in the workplace is being widely realized the importance, but what skills, knowledge and attitudes of participants who received the training can be applied in the workplace is not an easy thing.

According to Burke and Baldwin (1999) and Facticeau et al. (1995) investigates that 40% of the skills developed through the training progression are instantaneously transferred at work, 25% continue for a six month time duration and only 15% continue for a year (Burke & Baldwin, 1999; Facticeau et al., 1995). While Hoffman (1983, in Broad & Newstorm, 1996: 7) estimates that only 10% of the costs incurred in training will resulting in a change of behavior in the workplace.

Previous researchers report high failure rates on training transfer (Anthony & Norton, 1991; Garavaglia, 1993). The term "generalization" refers to whether the employee applies the new knowledge, skills and behavior to a range of different situations occurring outside the training program (Adams, 1987). Study of Nikandrou, Brinia and Bereri (2009) was found that almost all of trainees did not manage to transfer the training to their work, contrary to what it was expected, the persons who said that they were thinking during training of how to apply what they were learning to their work finally transferred only a small percentage or even nothing at all. Even the persons who mentioned that they wanted to transfer their training to the companies they intended to start, never did start them. In those

cases, trainees' initial motivation to learn was high but direct transfer was not realized due to personal and market barriers (financial and family problems). The ineffectiveness of the implementation of the training in their workplace indicates that the training has not been implemented on target. Therefore, this paper attempts to explain how training program can be run effectively and can reach the target and goals of organization, and also to provide management direction for better training program in the future.

The paper is organized as follow: section 2 contains review of previous studies on the role of training program for employees. Followed by research method and method of training techniques will be discussed in section3. Furthermore, Transfer system framework, generalization of new knowledge and skills, A trainee characteristics, training design, work environment, learning and application, transfer problems in training and evaluation of effectiveness of training will be explain in section4. Finally, research will be conclude in section5

LITERATURE REVIEW

Training

One of the definitions of training is proposed by Faustino (2000: 197), which is the effort to improve the performance of duties in a particular job that was his responsibility, and or a duty that he has to do with. Dessler (1993: 246) defines training as a necessary basis for new/ junior or senior employees to carry out their work.

More specifically Siswanto (1984: 140) gives the sense that training is a process to support the employees to gain effectiveness in their current job or future, through the development of habits of mind and action, skill, knowledge and proper attitude“. Definition of training according to Nitisemito (1998: 53) also suggested the same thing, which is an activity that is intended to improve and develop the attitude, behavior, skills and knowledge of its employees in accordance with the goals of the organization.

So it can be concluded that training is a continuous process in order to improve the ability, skills and abilities as well as efficiencies and

effectiveness of employees, in order to achieve organizational goals which in this case is to improve employee performance.

There are several conditions or situations where training is needed (Syatri, 2002: 17), *the first*, a condition in which less skilled workers. *Second*, a condition when there is recruitment of new employees. *Third*, where there is the saturation of work. *Fourth*, changes in laws or regulations that fundamentally, which requires a special socialization. *Fifth*, on condition occurs innovation and technology transfer, the operation requires special handling. *Sixth*, the training can also be done in the framework of career development. *Seventh*, there is also a company that organizes special training, to equip employees who will enter retirement age, knowledge about entrepreneurship.

The conditions above are describing when a training program is required and the results of the identification of conditions and situations when training is needed are the determinants of training needs.

There are two types of training objectives: 1). Knowledge centered objectives and 2). Performance centered objectives. The first type usually associated with the increase in knowledge or change in attitude. While the second type, including the specific requirements that revolve around the methods or techniques, assessment requirements, calculations, repairs and other requirements (Faustino, 2000: 206). Here is an overview of the purpose and methods of training.

Tabel 1:

Linkages of Objective and Training Methods

Objectives of Training	Training Methods
Work orientation leaflet:	Lectures, films, letters
Skills work:	Demonstration
Human skills:	Group discussion and role play
Management skills:	Group discussions and case studies
General education:	College, work papers, books, home studying

Source: Faustino (2000: 207)

Bernandian and Russell, classifying training methods into two categories, which are cited by Faustino (2000: 207) as follows:

1. Informational Methods

This method typically uses an approach or a one-way delivery of information. This method is used to teach things factual, skill, or a certain attitude. The participants are usually not given the opportunity to practice or engage in the things that are taught during the training. Techniques used include lectures, audio-visual presentation and self-directed learning. Training with this method is often called traditional training, which is training that is directive and oriented teachers.

2. Experiential Methods

This method of communication is more supple, flexible and dynamic. Instructors and participants are practicing using the tools available. This method is usually used to teach knowledge and skills, and abilities both software and hardware. Techniques used include, group discussions, case studies and games (simulation), which is a technique that is purely used to engage the participants and internalize the learning process.

The Determining of Training Needs, Objectives and Benefits of Training

The conditions or situations where training is needed by Syatri (2002: 17) has been described in the literature review. The results of the identification of conditions and situations when training are needed that is the determinant of training needs. Determination of training needs in essence is to gather as much relevant information to determine whether a training program is needed. All of the information that revolves around these things, according to Faustino (2000) will be obtained through analysis of the level of organization, the job and the level of the individual/ employment.

So far, the training event analysis of training needs less attention. A training program is done only to meet the agenda of the annual work

program or just based on the formal requirements as a condition for occupying certain jobs or ranks. As a result of training needs analysis, then the training objectives can be set. In other words, determination of training objectives is formulated from the requirements of determination analysis. Thus, the determination of the purpose of a training program will describe the results that would be obtained after a training program was held.

The purpose about behavior has been defined well according to Dessler (1993: 248), shows clearly the things to do by instructor or trainees after attending a training program. Thus, according to him, the goal was to provide a focus of efforts, need to be done by instructor and also as a benchmark to evaluate the success of a training program.

Training is not only useful for employees, but also useful for companies who implement, as defined by Strauss and Sayless (1997: 200) “the efficiency of any organization depends directly on how well its members are trained. Efficiency is much depends on the efficiency of human element that does the job and serves the working tools. Thus, when the employees of a company get a good training then the employee will be skilled and able to work well”.

As mentioned by Simamora (1997: 349), that the benefits of training and development programs are followings:

1. Increasing the quantity and quality of productivity.
2. Reduces the working time of employees to learn in order to achieve the performance standards.
3. Creating attitude, loyalty and cooperation to be more profitable.
4. Meets the needs of human resource planning.
5. Reducing the number and cost of accidents at workplace.
6. Assisting employees in improving their personal development.

The benefits of this training can help employees and individuals and organizations, as an effective training program is a very significant support for career planning and advancement of a company. Training programs have the potential to improve some situation if the aforesaid program implemented appropriately and correctly.

Methods and Training Techniques

If training is the best solution, it should be decided the right training program and how it should be run. The accuracy of the method depends on the specific training objectives to be achieved. Dessler (1999), emphasizing the principles of learning on training techniques, because training is primarily a learning process. Then it would be beneficial if understood in advance of teaching and learning theory. First, it is easier for trainees to understand and remember the material. Second, make sure that it is easy to transfer new skills and behaviors from the training to the workplace. Third, motivate the trainees.

Apart from the various existing methods, any form of the method chosen, according to Faustino (2000: 208), the method must meet the following principles:

1. Motivating the trainees to learn new skills.
2. Shows the desired skills to be learned.
3. Enables for participation to be active.
4. Provide opportunities to practice skills and expansion.
5. Must be consistent with the content, for example; using an interactive approach to teach interpersonal skills.
6. Provide the feedback on performance during training.
7. Encouraging a positive displacement of training to workplace.
8. Must be cost effective.

DISCUSSION

Transfer System Framework

The several empirical and theoretical studies (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Geilen, 1996; Huczynski & Lewis, 1980; Kontoghiorghes, 2004) investigate the issue of training transfer. These studies divide factors affecting training transfer into three different categories:

1. Factors regarding the trainee;
2. Factors regarding the training and the planning of the training program; and

3. Organizational factors affecting the transfer as well as the training and the trainee.

Meanwhile Baldwin and Ford (1988) define the training transfer in terms of two factors:

1. Maintenance of new knowledge and skills in time; and
2. Generalization of new knowledge and skills.

To examine the transfer of training requires a clear understanding of what is meant by transfer and to identify the factors that affect the transfer. Based on the study of the transfer of training, Baldwin and Fords (1988: 65) build a model of training transfer process, which is a model of direct and indirect relationships between input, output and transfer of a training condition. Training input consists of a trainee characteristics, training design and work environment. While the output of the training and transfer conditions respectively are learning and application.

According to Baldwin and Fords (1988: 65), trainee characteristics, training design and work environment will determine how much the trainees learn (learning). Furthermore, the results of the learning itself together with trainee characteristics and work environment will determine how far the trainees were able to apply what they learned in training (application).

A. Trainee Characteristics

Trainee is the figure of individuals who have different backgrounds, including work experience and needs, which in turn gives certain traits on each individual. With regard to the characteristics of the trainee, Thoha (1992: 34) argues that the individual brings to the organization's ability to order, personal trust, esteem needs and past experiences. It is everything that belongs to the individual characteristics, and these characteristics will be entering a new environment, the organization or other.

According to Baldwin and Fords (1988: 66), the trainee characteristics consisted of skills/ abilities, motivation and personality, which is an

important factor either directly or indirectly, affect the success of the transfer. Trainees who have a desire to excel are likely to apply what he gained from the training. Likewise with the skills and personality indicate a significant relationship with a transfer problem. Other elements that exist on the trainee characteristics that effects the success of a transfer, among others, is self-confidence, a desire to succeed in training, the ability to understand the material training and experience the benefits of training (Broad & Newstorm, 1996; Mondy & Noe, 1996; Marwansyah & Mukaram, 2000).

B. Training Design

How the training is designed, it will determine the level of success of the training. The literature of studies in the field of training suggests that there are two factors that greatly affect the design of training (Baldwin & Ford, 1988: 67). *First, the identical elements.* The transfer will take place properly or is not affected by how much training is designed in accordance with the work situation that will be used after the participants finished the training. *Second, the general principles and variability stimuli.* Based on this principle a practical training will be effective if given along with an explanation of the concept or theory behind them.

Variations in methods of teaching, practice and administration of concept or theory, training place and competence of the instructor are also the elements that must be considered in designing training (Broad & Newstorm, 1996; Mondy & Noe, 1996; Marwansyah & Mukaram, 2000).

C. Work Environment

The prevailing organizational climate concerning new knowledge and skills greatly influences whether the transfer will be made or not (Rouiller & Goldstein, 1993; Tracey et al., 1995). Studies conducted by Brinkerhoff and Montesino (1995: 272), indicate the importance of work environment factors in facilitating the transfer of training. A supportive climate increases the adoption of transfer strategies by the trainees as well as the transfer in general (Burke & Baldwin, 1999).

The characteristics of the work environment that influence the success of a transfer is organizational climate that supports, discussions with the leaders before engaging in training, the opportunity to use the expertise and skills gained from the training, as well as post-training and feedback (Broad & Newstorm, 1996: 8). Corporate leaders and trainees and other employees need to work together to support the transfer of training in workplace.

D. Learning

Learning is the act of acquiring new, or modifying and reinforcing, existing knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information. Dalrymple (1990: 105) argues that learning can be described as a change in the trend of responses in relation to the effects of experience. This learning process occurs when participants respond to stimuli and responses is demonstrated with a sense of satisfaction to the training that has been given. Complacency would be obtained if the training to meet the needs and desires of the participants. The elements that exist in learning, which affect the success of a transfer is the amount of expertise and knowledge gained from the training (Baldwin & Ford, 1998; Broad & Newstorm, 1996).

Rhetorical and relational goal theory argues that instructors initiate and control interactions with students to reach both rhetorical (task) and relational (social) goals (Mottet, Frymier & Beebe, 2006). As a rhetorical process, instructors come to the classroom with the goal of influencing students to learn and develop their specific behaviors and skills. Students also come to the classroom with needs that are met by influencing instructors to help them learn, receive a desired grade, or to reduce the amount of work an instructor requires in a particular course (Frymier, 2005 & 2006). As a rhetorical process, instructional communication tends to be task focused.

As a relational process, instructors and students come to the classroom with goals and needs to connect with each other. Through the use of communication, instructors and students develop and maintain appropriate relationships, and cooperative each other, which meet

these goals and needs (Frymier, 2005 & 2006). As a relational process, instructional communication tends to be emotion and feeling-focused. The goal theory of rhetorical and relational argues that effective instructional environments are those where both instructors and students use the forms of rhetorical and relational of communication to meet their task and relational goals.

E. Application

There are several definitions are given in terms of transfer of training, the opinions among the most representative of the opinions of others quoted in this paper, as follow:

Positive transfer of training is the degree to which trainees effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and attitude gained in a training context to the job (Baldwin & Ford, 1998: 67).

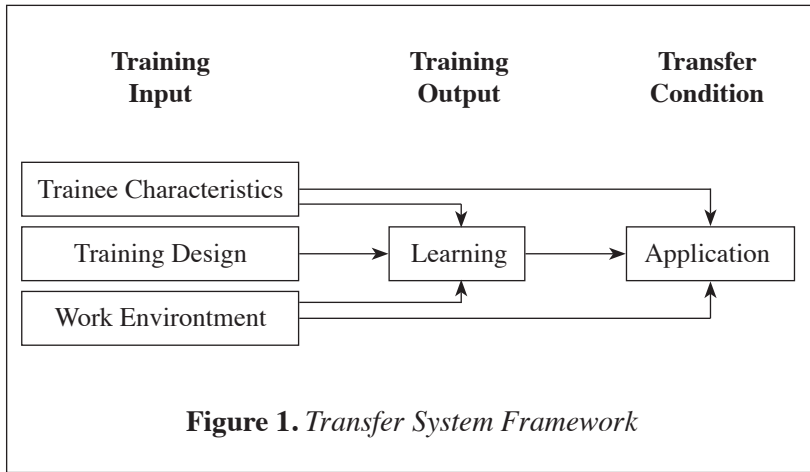
Transfer of training is the effective and continuing application, by trainees to their jobs, of the knowledge and skills gained in training-both on and off the job (Broad & Newstorm, 1996: 6).

Definition of training transfer above indicates the equation that the transfer of the training is effective and sustained activity to apply the expertise, skills, and attitudes gained from the training. However, the first definition refers to the application of the results obtained through training only in the context of the work, while the second definition is not only in the context of the work but also outside in the context of the work. It can be concluded that the transfer of training is an activity/process refers to the extent to which trainees can apply what they have learned from the training and the results of the application of this training.

Based on the framework of the transfer system in the figure 1 shown that the training inputs such as trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment is directly related to how much participants acquire the knowledge and skills during the training (learning). The better the training inputs, namely trainee characteristics capable and willing to follow the training, design appropriate training, and the

support of the working environment will increase the possibility of trainees master the knowledge, attitude and skills of the training.

The transfer system frameworks can be shown in Figure 1. below;



Furthermore, the results of learning itself together with trainee characteristics, as well as the work environment will determine how far the participants were able to apply what they have learned in their respective work environment. Thus there is a direct and indirect relationship between input, output, and transfer conditions.

Transfer Problems in Training

As mentioned in introduction that previous researchers report high failure rates on training transfer. The ineffectiveness of the implementation of the training in trainees' workplace indicates that the training has not been implemented on target. In short it can be said that most of the investment in training does not result in the transfer of knowledge, skills, and full attitudes and sustainable.

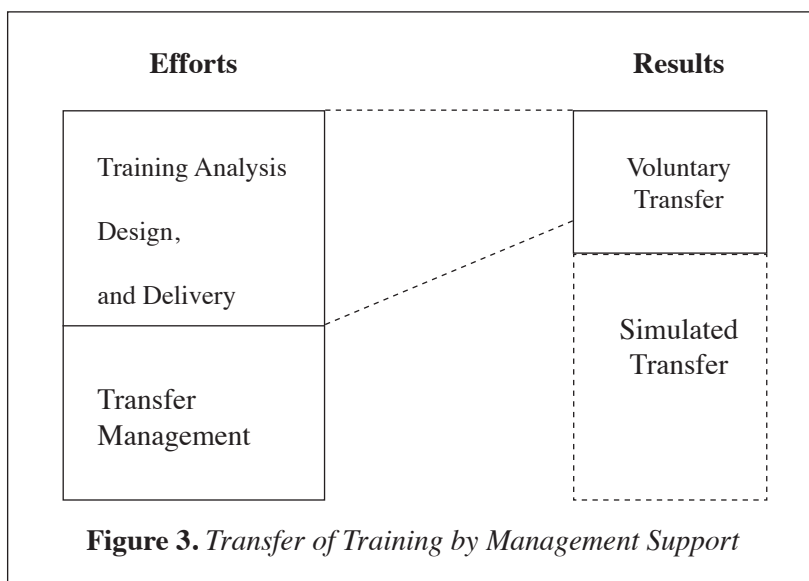
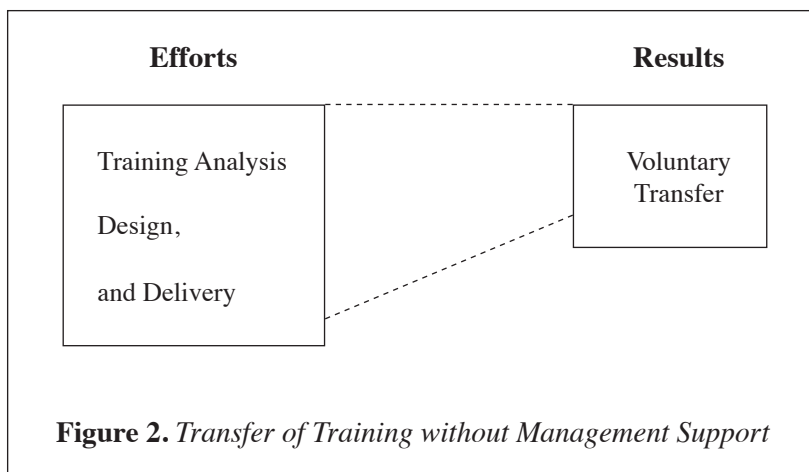
Preliminary studies conducted by Mosel (1957, in Broad & Newstorm, 1996) showed that training often only produce or result slightly changing in behavior. He argues that there are three (3) conditions under which the transfer can be done well, as follows:

1. Contents of training should be applied on the job.
2. Participants should learn the training content well.
3. Participants should be motivated to change his behavior by applying what he has learned.

The first of two factors are important factors to the success of the training participants to absorb the expertise or knowledge of training. Meanwhile, in order to motivate trainees to change their behavior after training, Mosel (Broad & Newstorm, 1996: 8) argues that it takes the rewards and punishment, incentive, and a deterrent in the job situation. For example, administration of a promotion or salary for employees who excel, office punishment for poor employee performance, and other management policies imposed by their respective companies.

Based on the discussion of the problems of the transfer of this training, it is likely that the issue of how the trainee can change their behavior, not only related to internal factors, the ability and willingness of participants to succeed in training and want to implement it into the job. Based on studies conducted by the Broad and Newstorm (1996), the problem of how to change the behavior of participants is related not only to the internal factors, the characteristics of the participants in the form of the ability and willingness of participants to be successful in the training (learning), and apply it into workplace (application) . But no less important is the role of external factors, namely the support of management (work environment) to practice what have been acquired during the training. This support is especially an opportunity to practice what has been gained in the training.

The effect of support from management is very important to increase the possibility of transfer of training, because until now still not indicated properly on what kind of training situation so there is no problem in the transfer. This support should not be limited only to the issue of transfer but no less important is the start of an effort to design the training itself, because of how the training was designed to determine whether to allow the transfer. Comparison between support and without support from management to transfer of training is seen in the two figures below.



Source: Broad, Mary & Newstorms, John (1996)

Evaluation of Effectiveness of Training

Training is an activity that is carried out to improve the skills, knowledge, and attitudes in order to improve the current and future performance (Mondy & Noe, 1996: 27). Because of its strategic development training within an organization, hence this activity is seen

as one of the important functions of human resource management. For that reason, it is important for management to determine whether the expected results of the training itself in line with expectations. In other words, it becomes a question of whether the trainees after training can improve their performance and be able to apply the training in the workplace.

Effectiveness of a training refers to the extent to which the training objectives are achieved (Tai, 2006). Training program effectiveness can be measured by whether the target and purpose are reached or not. To be effective, according to Faustino (2000: 211), the training should be an appropriate solution for the problems of the organization, namely that such training should be aimed at improving the skills shortage.

According to Faustino (2000), the evaluation can be performed based on the information that can be obtained at five levels, as follows:

1. Reaction: the information is to find out opinions from the participants regarding the training program.
2. Learning: information to be obtained through this type of evaluation is to determine how much the participants know the concepts of knowledge and skills covered in the training.
3. Behaviors: the behavior of the participants before and after training compared to determine the degree of training influence on changes in their performance.
4. Organizational results: the purpose of gathering information at this level is to examine the impact of training on work group or organization as a whole.
5. Cost effectively: This is intended to determine the cost that spent for the training program and whether the costs of such training is low or high when compared to the costs arising from the problems faced by the organization.

CONCLUSION

The main obstacles faced by employees in an organization are in the field of management. Hence one of the efforts to advance or promote them could be done through guidance in the form of managerial training that the ultimate goal is to achieve their managerial capacity.

The training provided is not useful if it is not applied in the business activities. Most of trainees have passed a lot of training with a variety of subjects, but most of them are not able to implement it. Therefore it is need an evaluation to determine how much training capable to change the behavior of the participants when they returned to their workplace. The effectiveness of the implementation of the training in changing their behavior, indicate that the training has been implemented on target.

The training inputs such as trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment is directly related to how much participants acquire the knowledge and skills during the training (learning). The better the training inputs, namely trainee characteristics capable and willing to follow the training, design appropriate training, and the support of the working environment will increase the possibility of trainees master the knowledge, attitude and skills of the training.

Furthermore, the results of learning itself together with trainee characteristics, as well as the work environment will determine how far the participants were able to apply what they have learned in their respective work environment. Thus there is a direct and indirect relationship between input, output, and transfer conditions. It can be explained that trainee characteristic, training design, and work environment have a direct relationship with learning. Meanwhile, trainee characteristics and work environment have a direct relationship with application, where training design has indirect relationship with generalization, and finally trainee characteristics and work environment along with learning have a direct relationship with application.

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