



Measuring and Evaluating the Impact of L&D within Law Firms

A Strategic Paper

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1 OVERVIEW

You are reading this paper because:

- You are working in a law firm, probably in a learning and development capacity
- You are interested in the whole area of evaluating and measuring the impact of all learning activities
- You may be intrigued with the link we have made with embedding learning
- You want to learn more about works success in other law firms
- You are curious about the 5 key success factors that can be the difference that makes the difference in getting this part of L & D right

Whatever your motivation for reading this strategic overview, you are most welcome. Our hope is that this paper will add value to your own learning and development strategy and that it may begin a communication between you and us at RTPLegal.

2009 - these are tough times. Training budgets have been hit, there have been redundancies in business services support in law firms and there are often long discussions before projects get the green light. This is just the time to find ways of proving the success (or failure) of your L & D initiatives! Because the partnership are likely to be asking you awkward questions!

There is no doubt that there is a growing interest in evaluation – it is high on the agenda of many HR/L&D professionals we work with. Increasingly, and rightly in our view, investment in people development is being questioned in terms of – what is the payback or return to the organisation? More businesses and firms are beginning to view people development as a key source of competitive advantage – certainly within law firms it is one significant way to secure and retain talent.

We have just worked with a very large law firm delivering a programme on fee negotiation. We put in some measures on the impact of the training around fees realised. Within 1 week a new partner reported that they had managed to win some work with agreed fees that were 43% above the initial expectations of the client. A measurable success!

Our goals in this paper are to address some questions that you may have about people development and evaluation and to contribute to the thought process from an external perspective, with RTPLegal having some insight into what is happening right now in law firms.

We want to add some real value by challenging assumptions, by defining some real benefits to evaluating and measuring the impact of learning events and by contributing some practical ideas about what might be possible, given the constraints of working and delivering learning in a law firm.

Here are some of the questions that may be formulating from your perspective:

- how does evaluation and measurement work in other organisations?
- what specifically is happening in other professional service firms? Is there such a thing as good practice?
- what are the benefits of developing a strategy? Is it really worth it?
- if it is worth it, what measures can we easily put in place that will work?
- how do you build commitment to idea of measuring? How do you get buy in interested parties internally?
- where do we start?

And there may well be other questions....

We have sought to address some of these and to give you a flavour of what is happening in the real world. In addition to our own ideas we have sought input from a number of other sources – the latest academic research, and also the views and thoughts of other L & D specialists in the professional services world, from both law firms and consultancies. If you are interested in discussing any aspect further, then please contact us...either Jeremy Cassell or Tom Bird will be delighted to speak to you.

2 WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW IN LAW FIRMS?

With regard to evaluation and measurement of the true impact of L&D, you would not be reading now unless you recognise that it is important and that there should be more evaluation carried out.

We spoke to a number of magic circle firms, other law firms and some consultancies in order to identify what is happening right now in terms of measurement and evaluation.

Here is a summary of the important feedback we got from the research:

- fairly standard participant evaluation forms which are completed at the end of each programme are used on almost 100% of programmes of the law firms we spoke with
- there is some post workshop evaluation done either face to face, through questionnaires or online
- in some practice groups the L&D managers will sit down with participants who have returned from a course and get their feedback
- in some of the programmes participants are asked to reflect on learning points at the end and talk about what they will put into practice upon returning. These personal development plans are sometimes followed up
- some practice groups are starting to use Microsoft Live Meeting as a way of sharing technical training/knowledge updates that are taking place in one location, with those in other locations and Live Meeting is also being used pre- and post-course for some programmes
- there are specific programmes (such as business development and negotiation skills) in which there is a clear link to business impact (level 4 of Kirkpatrick's levels)
- 1-1 coaching is incorporated into some programmes

How does this compare with you law firm? Are you doing more or less?

Many law firms have some mechanics for both embedding the learning and also measuring the impact. What we found to be much more rare is the identification of a formal strategy in place and so the follow up and evaluation at present appears piecemeal in many organisations. So what are some the challenges of focusing on evaluation as part of your L & D strategy?

3 SOME CORE QUESTIONS

A good way to start if you are going to review the way you evaluate, measure and embed is to ask yourself some questions and decide some answers in your teams. Here are some killer questions which will allow you to focus on the right areas:

- Evaluate what? What do we want to evaluate? – trainees, trainers, L & Department? A certain set of materials? Training in general?
- Why are we going to evaluate? What is the purpose for our firm? Do we want to change behaviour? Shape attitudes? Enhance quality?
- What will it cost? What are we trying to find out? For whom?

4 CHALLENGES IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FIRMS OF ADOPTING AN EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT STRATEGY

Let's be honest if it were easy, you would probably be doing it now! Law firms are busy places, and you are probably under a lot of pressure to perform and get things done. But what are you actually focusing your time on?

There are some inescapable issues that relate to adopting a focused approach to evaluation and measurement, some of which apply across all organisations, some of which are specific to professional service firms. Here are some that spring to mind:

4.1 Time

Lawyers are busy and if they going to be part of any evaluation they will inevitably be asking whether it is worth the time investment. Their main focus is on making money and achieving utilisation rates. So time is of the essence – there are so many other things that may seem to be more important.

4.2 Resources

We mean here specifically in the L&D team. Do you have enough resources at present to deal with any additional work that will certainly be there if you concentrate on evaluation? Focusing on evaluation certainly does involve more work, although the benefits can be important in supporting the strategic nature of learning and development departments. In terms of financial resource, some studies indicate that adopting a formal evaluation and measurement of impact strategy can cost between 2% and 5% of the overall spend on L&D although this is often more than offset by the rewards that are realised.

4.3 Partners' view of L & D

To what extent are you seen in L & D as an integral part of achieving the long-term business goals of the firm? In some firms L & D is seen as necessary but not strategic. If evaluation is to be taken seriously it should be thought of as a strategic initiative.

4.4 Motivation

Is there the motivation either within the practice or the L & D team? Any decision to develop a measurement strategy will have to be sold internally and there may well be some resistance – what's the point? What will it give us? How is this linked with your own goals as a law firm? So, overcoming a sense of inertia on this specific issue may be a real challenge.

Within the L & D team there may be a feeling that evaluation would be a bureaucratic exercise and in addition there may be some cynicism about the extent to which Partners would really support evaluation as an integral part of L & D strategy. In addition there may be a lack of skills around this area and so some additional development for your L & D team may be necessary.

We know law firms can be conservative places where decision-making takes time – is it really worth the effort to put evaluation on the map?

So - how do you build commitment to the idea of measuring?

What are the benefits of developing an evaluation and measurement strategy?

5 STRATEGIC BENEFITS OF FOCUSING ON EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT

'What can't be measured can't be managed', once a mantra, has now become a bit of a cliché. However it still has resonance even in the world of L & D in which it is notoriously difficult to measure the impact of many learning events. Indeed we spoke to a large professional services firm recently that had invested over £4million in a 3 year programme and had no measures in place and therefore were unable to provide Partners with definitive evidence about the impact of a modular programme. In addition we know of a law firm in which a large investment in technical training is not supported by evaluation measures. Equally we know of a media business that spent £5 million on a leadership development programme, sent 300 employees to a business school and was unable to provide evidence of the impact of its programme.

In order to really make a difference in your role, there are four strategic areas that should be at the heart of an L & D strategy of you want to plan, measure and support learning initiatives – alignment, effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency.

5.1 Alignment

To what extent are you aligned with the strategic goals of the firm? There are now some HR heads that are part of the executive in law firms – good news!

This presupposes that you know what the goals for the firm are – do you? If you want to play a major role every major learning initiative needs to be aligned in some core way with business goals. Find out what these are for different practice areas as well as the firm and make sure the goals are reflected in the outcomes for any programme and how they are measured.

5.2 Effectiveness

Evaluating training is not just about whether new skills have been learnt or performance has improved. To get meaningful information, you need to measure what has improved and in what ways. We highlight some key areas in this paper.

5.3 Sustainability

In order for L & D to be seen as strategic its efforts on programmes need to be long-lasting. What sort of sustainability tools do you put in place to allow this to happen? Introducing blended learning and getting stakeholder (often partner) support is critical here. All too often we have seen programmes in law firms that are just one off events which may paper over some cracks and offer some skills insight or improved short term motivation by are just not sustainable.

5.4 Efficiency

Efficiency is a measure of the amount of learning achieved relative to the amount of effort put in. In practical terms this means the amount of time it takes to complete a piece of training. Efficiency has a direct relation to cost – the more efficient a training method is, the less it will cost. This is one of the reasons 'bite size' training is becoming so popular in some organisations.

Evaluation will take time, effort and resources. Assuming you decide on adopting a well thought out and planned evaluation strategy, will the investment needed be worthwhile?

Working with the assumption that is possible to evaluate and measure the impact of any learning – what are the benefits to the organisation of evaluating?

It is possible to:

- **Demonstrate the impact of your people development activities** on both individual development and organisational performance and to validate training as a business tool. Training is one of many actions that an organisation can take to improve its performance and profitability. Only if training is properly evaluated can it be compared against these other methods and expect, therefore, to be selected either in preference to or in combination with other methods.
- **Directly link people development to your strategic and operational goals** – adopting measurement criteria at the beginning of the design phase can ensure that goals are set in terms of contribution to the firm's organisational performance targets
- **Identify whether any development activity is good investment for the firm** – was the activity a good investment? Or could the budget have been better spent elsewhere? We all know that when money is tight, training budgets are amongst the first to be sacrificed. By thorough, qualitative and quantitative analysis L&D departments can make the case necessary to resist these cuts.
- **Ensure best allocation of resources** – what was the return for the initial investment? (although it is not always possible to put a definitive figure on this)
- **Assess the relative effectiveness of different learning mechanisms & help improve the design of training** – which methods worked best to embed the learning and help change behaviour and improve competency? Training programmes should be continuously improved to provide better value and increased benefits for an organisation. Without formal evaluation, the basis for changes can only be subjective.
- **Motivate participants better** – they can be more committed to the programme if they understand the importance from a personal and organisational standpoint
- **Establish buy in from the top** – if you were able to demonstrate the impact of specific your programmes to decision making bodies and other partners you would get more support for new initiatives and increasing support for key programmes and have even more credibility internally.

6 EVALUATING LEARNING

In this section we combine evaluation criteria with examples of the sort of mechanisms that organisations use to meet the purpose of each level of evaluation. Before looking at a specific evaluation model we summarise different practical mechanisms that we have seen organisations take to the process of evaluation.

Often evaluation is not considered in detail until after a learning intervention has begun and usually after it is finished. This is not good practice. Ideally the evaluation strategy needs to be decided as part of the design and agreed by all stakeholders with a baseline performance measure agreed.

6.1 Perspectives on evaluation

So, what can be measured? Organisations use a variety of evaluation criteria to judge the success of any learning activity, whether it is technical or non-technical training. Here are just a few of the criteria:

6.1.1 Numbers

One way of measuring the success of training is the good old 'bums on seats'. Although by no means a true measure of the effectiveness of training, participant numbers do reflect the fact

that the training is addressing a need and that the design and methodology is meeting expectations.

6.1.2 Direct & indirect costs

Direct costs are those costs that are incurred directly as a result of a training programme – external design and development, consultancy fees, travel expenses and so on. If the programme did not take place, these costs would not be incurred. Many organisations only ever take direct costs into consideration when measuring training costs.

Indirect costs are costs that may or may not be directly associated with a training event, but which would have been incurred anyway, whether or not the training took place. Examples are salaries of in-house trainers and students and the costs of rooms and equipment. Any analysis of the true costs of a learning programme will include both direct and indirect costs.

6.1.3 The extent to which participants mix and learn from each other

A justification often made for training, particularly group events, is that it provides an opportunity for participants who work in different departments to meet with each other, share experiences and make contacts. Because this is a valued outcome of training, it needs to be considered when comparing training methods. We know that this element is always valued on the courses we have run internally in law firms. Similarly, some training may be regarded as a perk, a benefit of some value, even if this is not directly related to learning.

6.1.4 Reactions

Reactions are often what you measure with the 'happy sheet'. Reactions are important because, if participants react negatively to your courses, they are less likely to transfer what they learned to their work and more likely to give bad reports to their peers, leading in turn to lower participant numbers. You need to capture the reaction of trainees, trainers and partners / managers.

Trainee – Did this training help me do my job better? Does it enhance my career prospects? Was it useful or a waste of time? Was it effective? How do I know? What will I now do?

Trainer – Were the participants engaged? Did they understand the material? Was there a link between material and real life? What changes have they decided on?

Partner / Manager – Has the training provided value for money? Were the right issues tackled? Do they have an action plan? Will this add / detract from my image / image of practice area? What specific actions have resulted?

6.1.5 Learning

Learning, in terms of new or improved skills, knowledge and attitudes, is the primary aim of a learning event. Learning can of course be measured objectively using a test or exam or some form of assessed exercise although this would be inappropriate in most law firms' 'soft' courses. Another important aspect of learning is the degree of retention – how much of the learning has stuck after the course is over?

6.1.6 Behaviour change

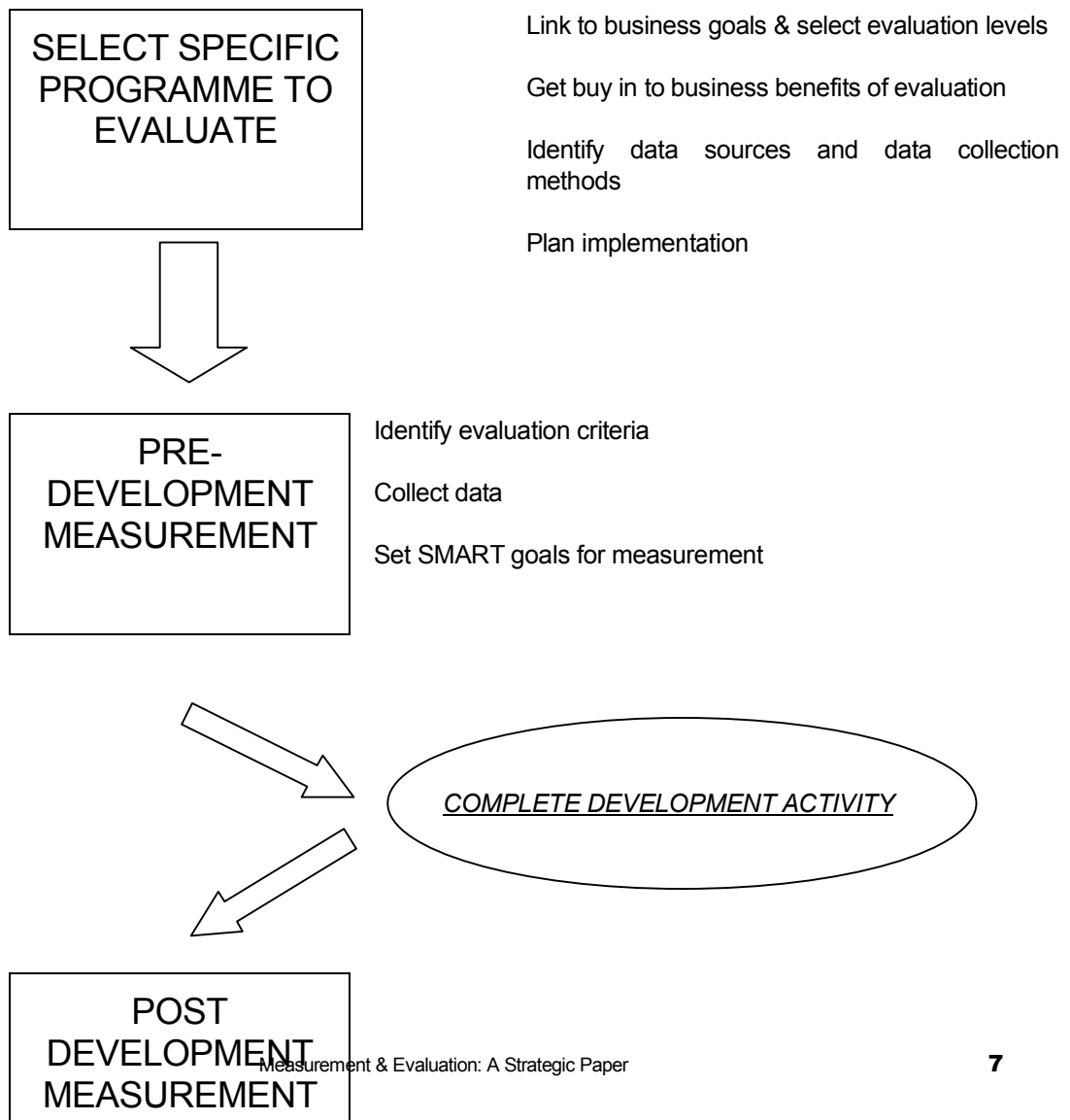
If a participant has learned something from a course, you hope that this will be reflected in their behaviour in their role. If a participant employs what they have learned appropriately, then their work behaviour will meet desired criteria. Behaviour can be measured through observation or, in some cases, through some automated means. To assess behaviour change requires that the measurements are taken before and after the event. Validation is key.

6.1.7 Performance change

If, as a result of training, participants are using appropriate behaviours in their roles, then you would expect that to have a positive impact on performance. A wide variety of indicators can be employed to measure the impact of training on performance. It is hard to be sure that it is training that has made the difference without making comparisons to a control group – a group of employees who have not been through the training. It is critical to ensure you have a good grasp of basic questions – what does good performance look like? How would I know if someone was performing well? What would I experience?

6.2 **Process for evaluation**

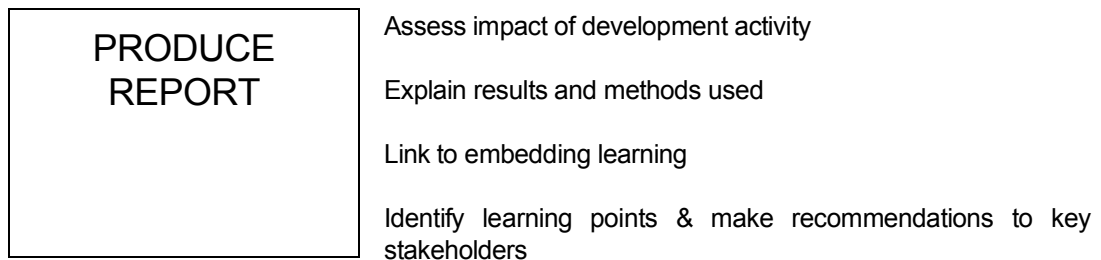
Before we examine a specific model for post-programme evaluation we thought it would be helpful for you to consider a high-level process that takes account of the overall life cycle for evaluation.



Collect data to required level

Isolate the effects of the development in terms of behaviour, performance, and impact on the firm

Link to pre-development data



6.3 A model for evaluation

There are a number of different evaluation models that organisations use. You may well be familiar with some of them. We use a model that is based on the Kirkpatrick levels of evaluation (developed by Donald Kirkpatrick in 1959 and probably the most widely used) and have added in a further level, which includes ROI. Many organisations are now more interested in the ROI – the difficulty comes in identifying which programmes can fit the model and give an organisation a true ROI figure.

We suggest you do identify a model that will work at in your law firm. Using a model for evaluation has several significant benefits, which include:

- Provides the basis for agreeing a consistent approach within and outside L & D
- Enables all those involved in evaluation to understand where they fit into the overall process, and what their responsibilities are
- Ensures all are working to the same standards
- Helps to highlight the source of problems if they occur

We recommend looking at the Kirkpatrick model as a starting point for evaluating success. If you agree with using Kirkpatrick we would make three specific points as follows:

(a) Define pre-development measurement criteria for the specific development activity

In an ideal world it is sensible to spend some time before any programme in deciding how the evaluation will take place post course. The mistake is to only think about evaluation once the learning event has happened. You can focus on appointing an evaluation team, control group measurement, data collection methods, and objective mapping. Here is an example of objective mapping:

Business objectives	Metrics	Performance objectives	Measurement methodology - performance	Learning objectives	Measurement methodology - learning	Enablers / barriers
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(b) Produce an evaluation report and make recommendations for the future.

Here you can explain the results and methods used and identify the core learning points. This can then be used to strengthen L & D's case for future development in the firm

(c) Adding ROI to the standard Kirkpatrick model

We have added a fifth level of evaluation to the standard Kirkpatrick model to specifically look at the Return On Investment from a programme.

Levels of evaluation based on Kirkpatrick

LEVEL	TITLE	PURPOSE
1	SATISFACTION	Capture initial reaction to the development activity Were participants satisfied?
2	UNDERSTANDING	Identify new knowledge, and skills learned through the development Did they learn?
3	JOB APPLICATION	Gather evidence of individual development achieved How did they apply what they learnt?
4	BUSINESS IMPACT	Identify & evaluate contribution of development on organisational performance What impact has the learning had on business performance in the firm?
5	ROI	Calculate ROI figure – compares benefit derived (value from level 4 measurement) with the total cost of the development activity What was the financial return for the business?

6.4 Mechanisms to support Kirkpatrick

Here are examples of the sort of mechanisms that can be used at the various levels. Many of these mechanisms can be used at different levels:

LEVEL 1 Satisfaction

MECHANISM	BENEFITS	DOWNSIDE
The happy sheet or reactionnaire	Litmus test for initial impact and particularly helpful on pilots	Trainers can manipulate to get good feedback
Evaluation survey more in depth than reactionnaire – post event	Particularly useful if it is a new development activity	Need resource to follow up

LEVEL 2 Understanding

MECHANISM	BENEFITS	DOWNSIDE
Evaluation questionnaire	Often used for 1-4 levels and particularly good for gathering factual data – easy to administer	
Personal development action planning	Specific to individual and can lay foundation for both development & evaluation	More time and commitment required by both participants & trainer to ensure it happens
Management review	Links development to real life and brings in boss	Do managers / partners have time or inclination?
Tests	Give you objective feedback on current knowledge	Not appropriate for most soft skills courses

LEVEL 3 Job Application

MECHANISM	BENEFITS	DOWNSIDE
On the job observation	Can be done to gather real life evidence of behavioural changes	Lack of objectivity and of real-life opportunities for observation
Implementation workshop (real or virtual)	Good for identifying issues relating to development & provides opportunity for additional development	Takes time and energy
Evaluation interview	Good for experienced interviewers – and for probing	Much more time consuming & need people with good interview skills
Coaching	Focused on self-directed application and review	Takes more time and needs some expertise
Evaluation & surveys	Can capture attitudes & beliefs	Can be seen as bureaucratic

Personal development action plans	Can be used to follow the whole process through	Got to get commitment and buy in from both participants and line manager
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LEVEL 4 Business Impact

MECHANISM	BENEFITS	DOWNSIDE
Performance data reports	Changes and patterns in performance can be identified compared to pre-development	Need to set this up before the development starts
Assessment focus group	More in depth analysis on the impact of the development activity	Will people turn up? Takes time and focus to organise
Management feedback - 360	Raises awareness of all respondees, lots of tools available	Can be too generic so might need to create a specific question set for the skill developed
Peer feedback	Good for anecdotal examples	Will people be honest?

LEVEL 5 Return On Investment

MECHANISM	BENEFITS	DOWNSIDE
Costs vs. Benefits analysis (cost of needs analysis, design, delivery & evaluation vs. business benefits)	Can help firm judge whether a particular activity was a good investment More profile for L & D	Need to think about where this would be possible in the firm – limited application (business development an obvious one, but can be done with coaching)

7 5 KEY AREAS TO FOCUS ON IN LAW FIRMS

You may decide to do some more exploratory work – either internally or using an external consultant such as RTPLegal. However, we have included here some key points that we believe are priorities when looking at the whole area of evaluating and measuring the impact of learning initiatives within a legal environment.

Here are the 5 key things we suggest you think about:

- (a) The link between embedding learning and evaluation
- (b) Focus on some key programmes
- (c) Experiment and monitor before developing your strategy
- (d) Spread the load – use a variety of resources
- (e) Sell the benefits of evaluation internally

(a) The link between embedding learning and evaluation

We think there is a real case for linking the evaluation of a programme with mechanisms to ensure that learning is embedded. In this way you can be more certain of ensuring that you have positive results to measure!

There is plenty of research to support the notion that classroom training by itself is relatively ineffective in changing behaviour or improving skills. A recent piece of research suggested that as little as 13% is retained and as little as 5% of that 13% is transferred into the workplace unless there is some follow up and embedding in the workplace. This can especially be the case in a law firm in which there is a strong focus on billable hours. So we suggest you help embed the learning activity first and then measure and evaluate. The embedding mechanisms you choose to use will enable you to measure and evaluate more easily.

You can choose to embed the learning through adopting a blended approach that might incorporate some of the following ideas:

- pre-course work
- a real focus on action planning at the end of programmes
- follow-up interviews by either L & D or Partner / manager
- e-learning for additional and supportive information
- use of Microsoft Live Meeting to support programme
- coaching and mentoring
- Action learning (we have many examples of when this has been successful)

We have some knowledge about what might be most appropriate in law firms given the constraints you have.

(b) Focus on some key programmes

Evaluating all development activity in law firms is neither feasible or sensible. Part of developing your strategy will be about identifying where to focus the evaluation activity.

Here is a list of factors, which may be helpful when considering which development to evaluate:

- Firm investment in specific development activity
- Degree of interest within the firm
- Extent to which participants could be involved
- Availability of relevant measures
- Content and nature of development activity
- Potential payback for the firm

We suggest you focus initially on some key programmes to both look at embedding learning and evaluating success. These could include the following types of programme:

- negotiation skills for partners and/or associates
- any business development programmes
- coaching programmes

It is also possible to measure the impact of different programmes to different Kirkpatrick levels – only take programmes that have a more obvious tangible impact on the firm's results to level 4 or 5 for example thereby putting the resource to measure where it is most appropriate.

(c) Experiment and monitor before developing your strategy

You are probably already doing some evaluation. Rather than developing a strategy immediately it may well be sensible to experiment with a range of evaluation mechanisms across all levels and model what works best in your firm. Any evaluation strategy must take into account the culture of the firm and professional services firms in general and has to be realistic. There is a chance to develop some compelling case studies in which you have used a variety of embedding tools and evaluation mechanisms and demonstrated that following up on learning activities can have real business benefits.

(d) Spread the load – use a variety of resources

Evaluation takes time and can be a drain on resources. Equally if it becomes simply a bureaucratic exercise then it may not have any real value. To guard against this we suggest spreading the load so you use a combination of resources to evaluate the success of any programme:

- Your own L & D personnel
- Internal partners / managers to both sponsor programmes and also get involved with evaluation
- External trainers / coaches linked to the programme

(f) Sell the benefits of evaluation internally

Many within either L & D or the Partner community may well be sceptical about the benefits of evaluating and measuring or unhappy about any further burden of responsibility that may come their way. So we think you can look at ways of influencing internally so that evaluation is not seen as an added bureaucracy, rather added value. Of course this will be about communicating the success of the learning activities through partner bulletins, decision making bodies and other avenues.

8 RTP ROLE IN DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

It may be that you want to look in greater detail at how you can evaluate and measure in your firm. If you choose to go down this route you may think we can help you.

We believe we can do this in 2 ways:

- work with you in greater detail in developing a strategy for measuring and evaluating impact within your firm or;
- as part of a pilot programme using an existing course that you run in order to better understand how this can work for you in the context of your specific firm

In this section we provide a little more background on who we are, why we think you should work with us and give an example of how we have worked with one firm around the evaluation of a specific existing course as a way of developing practical understanding and a strategy for evaluation.

8.1 Who are RTPLegal?

RTPLegal is a Performance Improvement Consultancy which focuses on law firms. We work with individuals, teams and firms to deliver tangible and measurable improvements in business and personal performance. We do this by focusing on all elements of influencing and personal effectiveness within the corporate environment. We already work with 16 law firm and have delivered over 250 programmes in the last 10 years.

RTPLegal benefits your firm through guaranteeing to deliver mutually agreed, tangible and measurable improvements in the areas of influence and developing the performance of others.

Specifically, we specialise in:

- Personal impact & dynamic presenting
- All aspects of business development
- Negotiating with integrity
- High performance coaching & coaching skills development
- Developing outstanding teams

All of our bespoke programmes focus on reducing or eliminating the interference (such as beliefs skills, activities, attitudes) that prevents an individual realising their full potential.

8.2 Why work with us?

With the huge choice of training and development companies available to you, why should you partner with RTPLegal?

RTPLegal came about through the experiences of its two senior directors and we think there are a number of reasons why you should work with us.

We believe that:

- *You need...to see a real return on investment*

We strongly believe that, in isolation, training doesn't work. We also think that a return on investment should not be an option, it should be an expectation. We work closely in partnership with you to agree key specific metrics for success and ensure that we deliver on them

- *You need...a proven, repeatable process that guarantees your success*

We work with you to form a Performance Partnership using our powerful EMBED™ methodology. This enables you to clearly define expectations and success measures, align any programme with the needs of your key stakeholders and make any delivery part of a longer-term learning journey.

Our EMBED™ methodology means that we extend our relationship with participants to ensure that they follow through on their agreed actions and reflect on their own performance improvement. This culminates in a detailed report that provides you with before and after comparisons and specific evidence of improvement. We transfer our skills and methodology for success to you in the organisation.

- *You need...to work with people who have a high level of credibility at all levels in your business*

All of our trainers, consultants and coaches have been successful in business at senior management or boardroom level. This means that our programmes are pragmatic, high impact and results focused. We will challenge your assumptions and add value through our experience.

- *You need...to partner with a company that delivers on its promises*

Training and development is too expensive to take risks with your money. Over the last 10 years our clients tell us that we consistently over deliver against their expectations and that our programmes are the very best that they have experienced. Our commitment to excellence will underpin every aspect of our work with you.

8.3 An example of specific course evaluation

Here is an example of how we developed an embedding and evaluation focus to an existing course we currently run in a law firm. This example provides a practical start point for the development of a strategy and takes account of limited resources and a need to build a consensus that evaluation is important within the firm.

Negotiation skills course for practice

EMBEDDING	EVALUATION
Devote more time for personal development action planning and ensure all parties are involved in this process	Focus group with Partners to assess and review applicability of course content and skill required
Use Partner who attends course as sponsor for first 2 months after the course and / or link to partner who has attended partner negotiation course	Create a competency profile related to negotiation skills in the Linklaters context
Use Microsoft Live Meeting as conduit for action learning set and as way of capturing anecdotal evidence for impact of course	Use competence / confidence questionnaire as part of pre-course work and then after the end of the 2 day course
Facilitator send targeted information about negotiation skills as reminder to all participants which reflect the key messages of course	360 degree feedback from participants & partner pre and post course
Use follow on email and telephone call by facilitator to both help challenge action plan and evaluate impact	Introduce tracking sheet for participants which allows them to record successes
	Use manager / partner to help measure impact and

	change in behaviour
	Use follow on email and telephone call by facilitator to both help challenge action plan and evaluate impact
	Facilitator produces summary report after 3 months which includes all the evidence of impact of 2 day course

9 SUMMARY

We have identified what is happening currently in law firms in this field, described some constraints that you may encounter in developing an evaluation strategy and offered the 5 key success factors in developing your strategy. These are:

- (a) The link between embedding learning and evaluation
- (b) Focus on some key programmes
- (c) Experiment and monitor before developing your strategy
- (d) Spread the load – use a variety of resources
- (e) Sell the benefits of evaluation internally

We look forward to discussing in more detail some of the ideas contained in this discussion paper, if you decide to contact us now. We trust that this paper has given you some new information about evaluation and measurement, and some initial thoughts on how to start really focusing on evaluation as a way of demonstrating the impact L & D can have on the success of your firm.

As a performance improvement consultancy, we are obviously particularly interested in this area and hope that you may decide that we can add some depth to this initial analysis in the near future.

Please contact us either by email – info@rtplegal.co.uk or calling us on + 44 1903 813897

10 RESOURCES

We have drawn on a number of resources to create this document. They include:

- our own website – www.rtpc.co.uk
- 6 law firms and professional service firms all of which shared their current thinking
- other websites – notably www.roiinstitute.net
- books – ‘Return on investment in training’ by Jack J. Phillips & ‘Linking learning and performance’ by Toni Hodges

Jeremy Cassell & Tom Bird
RTP - Releasing The Potential
www.rtplegal.co.uk
 2009