

An Emphasis on Transfer

What can be done before, during, and after training to help ensure that what participants learn during the training actually gets used on the job?

BY BOB PIKE, CPLP FELLOW, CSP, CPAE-SPEAKERS HALL OF FAME



Bob Pike, CSP, CPLP FELLOW, CPAE-Speakers Hall of Fame, is known as the “trainer’s trainer.” He is the author of more than 30 books, including “Creative Training Techniques Handbook. You can follow him on Twitter and Facebook using [bobbikectt](#).

By the time you read this, my newest book, “Bob Pike’s Master Trainer Handbook,” will have been released. It is an updated version of my “Creative Training Techniques Handbook,” which, with more than 330,000 copies sold, is the best-selling train-the-trainer book ever published.

One of the critical things I’ve emphasized in the book is not about design or delivery, but rather transfer. As trainers, we tend to focus, hopefully, on content and process, but often the element we leave out is what are we putting in place to ensure transfer?

Periodically in this column, I remind you that training is a process, not an event. And that the only purpose of training is to produce results. One critical key to getting results is to have a transfer strategy for your training program.

Years ago, two respected colleagues of mine, John Newstrom and Mary Broade, published their “transfer of training matrix.” Their research showed that there were three people critical to ensuring the transfer of training:

In my “Master Class for Trainers,” I find that 90 percent of all the trainers don’t have a transfer strategy built into their design or delivery. Spend time focusing on those transfer strategies.

- The manager sending people to training
- The participants in the training
- The trainer designing, delivering, and supporting the training

There were also three times in the training process when an impact could be made to help ensure training. Logically enough, the three times are before, during, and after the training program. This may seem like a blinding flash of the obvious, but it was actually only obvious in hindsight. It is also not enough to know this—you must act on what you know. As my friend, Margie Blanchard, often says, “The gap between knowing and doing is much greater than the gap between knowing and not knowing.”

So the matrix looks like this:

	Before	During	After
Manager	1	8	3
Participant	6	5	7
Trainer	2	4	9

Source: Newstrom and Broade, “Transfer of Training”

However, the matrix articulates the “what,” but not the how. So in working with several clients, I began to look at what could be done in each of the time periods to help ensure that what participants learned during the training actually got used on the job. Eventually, I identified 155 strategies spread among the nine boxes.

Send your top three strategies to me at:

Bob@ctnewsletters.com

Your reward will be my top 27 strategies—a 9:1 return on your investment!

9 BOX STRATEGIES

In the meantime, here is one strategy for each of the nine boxes:

Manager Before: Have a conversation with the participant about the course and the course objectives. With the participant, select two to three key knowledge or skill objectives to focus on and explain how they

connect to the job. Set a time within 72 hours post-training to review the action plan for implementation that the participant develops during the training.

Participant Before: Make sure that any pre-work required is done.

Trainer Before: Brief the manager on the course objectives and the delivery process. Provide any coaching needed on holding a pre-course meeting with the participant.

Manager During: Ensure there are no disruptions from the job that affect the participant's focus on learning.

Participant During: Develop a 30-, 60-, and 90-day action plan for how you'll apply the new knowledge and skills you're learning.

Trainer During: Follow my IL-PC Process of 90/20/8—no module longer than 90 minutes, no content chunk longer than 20 minutes, and involve participants every 8 minutes.

Manager After: Hold the post-course debrief to go over the participant's action plan. Identify

how you will support implementation of the action plan.

Participant After: Implement your action plan.

Trainer After: Hold a 90-day fish bowl follow-up at which participants and managers gather and hear the results of the action plan implementations with a senior organization executive present.

In my "Master Class for Trainers," when I share these strategies, I find that 90 percent of all the trainers don't have a transfer strategy built into their design or delivery at all. So my challenge to each of you is to take your training to the next level. Spend some time focusing on your transfer strategies. And again, accelerate your ability to do that by sending me your top three, using the word, "transfer," in the subject line and e-mailing me at:

Bob@ctnewsletters.cm

Until next time—continue to add value and make a difference! 

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