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UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Goal setting to enhance training transfer

An investigation among participants, customers and vendors in engineering training

Master of Science thesis

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ABSTRACT

Transfer of training to performance has historically been and is still today an issue for organisations wanting a return on training investments. This study investigated whether training vendors should consider working with goal setting as a method to enhance customer training transfer and how they could do it. Three research questions were formulated to support the study's aim: (1) Is goal setting perceived as a viable method to enhance customer training transfer? (2) How could training vendors work with goal setting to enhance customer training transfer? (3) What are the possible difficulties using goal setting as a method to enhance customer training transfer and how could you overcome them?

The evidence presented in this report suggested that goal setting is perceived as a viable method to enhance customer training transfer to some degree. Training professionals and others that had worked with goal setting extensively for this purpose were more positive than those who had not. A goal setting process was suggested including setting of common training goals based on an organisation's required performance specification and gap analysis. The process also included setting of individual training goals to challenge each participant. Difficulties suggested by the evidence presented were categorised to difficulties concerning leadership, the process of goal setting, the buyer-seller relationship, lack of resources, individual characteristics of the training participants and match between training and participant. Solutions to overcome this difficulties were also suggested.

Training vendors are advised to consider using goal setting as a method to enhance training transfer, keeping the suggested difficulties in mind when adapting the proposed goal setting process. The goal setting process is recommended to adapt to each organisation and evaluate to ensure enhanced transfer of training. Goal setting is suggested to be happening in all organisations, whether formal on paper or informal in people's minds. Therefore it is concluded that it is not really a question whether goal setting should happen or not, but how to do it most effectively. This thesis has contributed with suggestions regarding how to use goal setting effectively in the training context.

Key words: Training, transfer, goal setting, stakeholder involvement, performance.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the master thesis project is to be presented, beginning with a background introducing the subject and why it is relevant to study further. The study's aim, research questions and delimitations will then be presented, ending with a description of the thesis layout.

Employee training more and more becomes a crucial element in organisations striving to keep up with the market. Companies annually spend millions of dollars on training interventions to improve results, but are left unsure whether their investments result in improved performance. This *transfer problem* has been an element of research for many years but there are still uncertainties to what really affect training effectiveness and transfer (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010).

Transfer was originally defined as “the extent to which learning of a response in one task or situation influences the response in another task or situation” (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010, p. 1067). Today when talking about transfer of training you usually talk about two dimensions: generalisation and maintenance. Generalisation refers to the extent new knowledge and skills from the learning context are applied in the work context, and maintenance the process in which the knowledge, skills and behaviour persevere over time (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010).

The most common division of factors affecting transfer of training is into the three categories: trainee characteristics (individual factors), training design (situational factors) and work environment (environmental factors), first introduced by Baldwin and Ford (1988). One of the factors falling into the training design category, with much support in the existing literature, is goal setting (to be defined in the section 2.4) (Burke & Hutchins, 2007). Burke and Hutchins write in their literature review (2007, p. 273) that “Goal-setting has been found to help individuals regulate their behavior by directing attention and action, mobilizing energy expenditure or effort, prolonging effort over time (i.e., persistence), and motivating the individual to develop relevant strategies for goal attainment [...]—all behaviors necessary for transfer.” On the other hand, a more recently made meta-analytic review of transfer studies (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010) showed little support of this method.

Today many companies are working to increase training transfer and get a return on their training investment. This results in higher demands on training vendors that today have to, at least more than earlier, prove that their trainings give results. The question is, how can training vendors increase training transfer for their customers? Is goal setting, that has been shown to be a common method today, a viable method to do this? And if so, how should they work with goal setting and what difficulties do they need to overcome?

1.1 AIM OF STUDY

This thesis aims to investigate whether training vendors should consider using goal setting as a method to enhance training transfer for their customers, and how this goal setting method to enhance training transfer could look like.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To support the project's aim, the following research questions have been formulated.

RQ1: Is goal setting perceived as a viable method to enhance customer training transfer?

RQ2: How could training vendors work with goal setting to enhance customer training transfer?

RQ3: What are the possible difficulties using goal setting as a method to enhance customer training transfer and how could you overcome them?

1.3 DELIMITATIONS

The study do not set out to provide a general truth about applying goal setting to increase transfer in every type of context. The main focus will be on training vendors in Sweden. However, some parts of the study might be applicable in other organisations and contexts. Generalisation will be discussed further in the methods and discussion chapters.

The study will provide general guidelines and recommendations, not clear instructions for how to work with goal setting. Each organisation or company is different and therefore needs to adapt the conclusions in this thesis to their particular situation.

The difficulties with working with goal setting laid out in this thesis will not be ranked by severity, how common they are or the likes, but rather described as how the interviewees and respondents portrayed them.

1.4 THESIS LAYOUT

This section describes the content of the thesis.

1. *Introduction*

In this chapter the master thesis project is to be presented, beginning with a background introducing the subject and why it is relevant to study further. The study's aim, research questions and delimitations will then be presented, ending with a description of the thesis layout.

2. *Literature review*

This chapter presents current theory regarding training, transfer of training and goal setting. The literature review serves several purposes; to introduce the reader in the subject, to define terms used in this thesis and to serve as secondary data when answering the three research questions. The term training will be defined first. Performance and training transfer will be discussed second and third. The chapter ends with a section about goal setting and its relationship with performance and training transfer.

3. *Methodology*

This chapter explains the methods used in this study, starting with a description of the research layout, moving on to how the data collection and analysis were carried out and ending with a discussion regarding trustworthiness, validity and reliability of this study.

4. *Results*

In this chapter, the study's results are presented, structured by the three research questions. Results regarding whether goal setting is perceived as a viable method to enhance training transfer first, followed by results regarding how to work with goal setting and finally a section regarding difficulties when working with goal setting.

5. *Discussion*

This chapter will discuss the results found in this study, separated in the three research questions where significant results will be highlighted, results will be interpreted and compared with previous research. A discussions of limitations of the study and recommendations for future research ends the chapter.

6. *Conclusions*

This chapter concludes the thesis by reflecting on the thesis' purpose, the three research questions and the contribution of this study.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents current theory regarding training, transfer of training and goal setting. The literature review serves several purposes; to introduce the reader in the subject, to define terms used in this thesis and to serve as secondary data when answering research questions. The term training will be defined first. Performance and training transfer will be discussed secondly and thirdly. The chapter ends with a section about goal setting and its relationship with performance and training transfer.

2.1 TRAINING

Training is according to Business Dictionary an “organized activity aimed at imparting information and/or instructions to improve the recipient's performance or to help him or her attain a required level of knowledge or skill” (BusinessDictionary Training, 2015). This can be contrasted to Kyndt's and Bart's definition of formal learning as “the engagement in formal and informal learning activities both on and off the job, whereby employees and groups of employees acquire and/or improve competences (integrated knowledge, skills, and attitudes) that change individuals' present and future professional achievement (and eventually also their career) and organisational performance” (Kyndt & Baert, 2013, p. 275). Formal learning refers to learning with defined learning objectives, context et cetera, usually in the form of a course provided by internal or external education or training institutions. Informal learning on the other hand is less defined, not planned in the same manner as formal learning activities and can happen both on and off the job (Kyndt & Baert, 2013).

In this thesis, training will be defined in accordance with Business Dictionary and Kyndt's and Bart's definition excluding informal learning happening off the job. That is as formal and organised learning activities, designed by internal or external training institutions, aimed to change employees' behaviour and/or attitudes to improve their and the organisation's performance.

2.2 TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE

In today's work climate, with for example increasing global competition and intensified technological change, the demands of organisational performance are constantly rising. Demands that organisations have difficulties catching up with (Broad, 1997). Performance here refers to “(t)he accomplishment of a given task measured against pre-set known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed” (BusinessDictionary Performance, 2015). According to Broad (1997), training is the most frequently used method to improve organisational performance. The problem is that training often falls short in delivering performance results, which is sometimes referred to as the transfer problem (Brown & Warren, 2009; Broad, 1997; Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010).

Broad (1997) mentions in ‘Overview of Transfer of Training’ six factors that are essential for effective performance: clear performance specifications, necessary support, clear consequences, prompt feedback, individual capacity, and necessary skills and knowledge. The last one represents the training institutions' role working for performance. Broad suggests this factor has had too much focus from human performance professionals stating: “Unfortunately, training alone seldom achieves the desired performance. Unless managers recognize their essential role in supporting other performance-related factors besides training, they assume that lack of effective training is the reason for lack of improved workforce performance” (Broad, 1997, p. 10). Broad also suggests a model for ensuring performance that is presented below in figure 2.1.

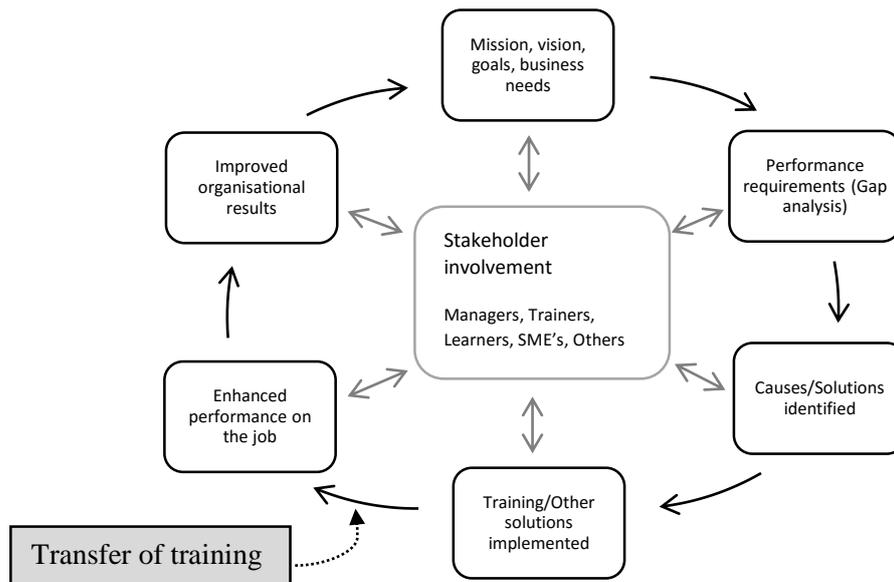


Figure 2.1 Performance development systems approach (Broad, 1997) with clarification of where transfer of training happens.

The process starts with the organisation’s mission, vision, goals and business needs that demand certain performance requirements. These requirements might result in gaps between where the organisation is and where the organisation wants to be. Causes and solutions to the performance gap are then identified, leading to training or other solutions being implemented, that optimally would result in enhanced performance on the job, and later improved organisational results. An arrow connecting ‘improved organisational results’ with ‘mission, vision and so on’ shows that this is a never ending loop. The arrows connecting the process with the stakeholders in the middle represents the need for stakeholder involvement in all stages of the process (stakeholders will be discussed further in section 2.3.2). The process of turning training into performance, referred to as transfer of training (marked in figure 2.1), is essential for this process to work. Section 2.3 will define and investigate transfer of training further.

2.3 TRANSFER OF TRAINING

As mentioned in the introduction, transfer is defined as “the extent to which learning of a response in one task or situation influences the response in another task or situation” (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010, p. 1067). Transfer of training is usually defined as consisting of two dimensions, generalisation and maintenance. Generalisation refers to the extent new knowledge and skills from the learning context are applied in the work context, and maintenance the process in which the knowledge, skills and behaviour persevere over time (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010; Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Another definition, containing the two dimensions generalisation and maintenance, is offered by Broad (1997, p. 8) citing Broad & Newstrom that state that transfer of training is “the effective and continuing application, by trainees to their jobs, of the knowledge and skills gained in training”. In this thesis, transfer and transfer of training will refer to this definition.

2.3.1 Factors affecting transfer of training

In Baldwin’s and Ford’s review of transfer of training in 1988, they presented a model to explain the transfer process. This model has become the most commonly cited model of transfer of training (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010). Baldwin and Ford proposed that certain training inputs, divided into trainee characteristics, training design and work environment factors, creates certain outputs, learning

during training and retention after it, which lead to conditions of transfer, generalisation and maintenance in the work context, as seen in figure 2.2 below (Baldwin & Ford, 1988).

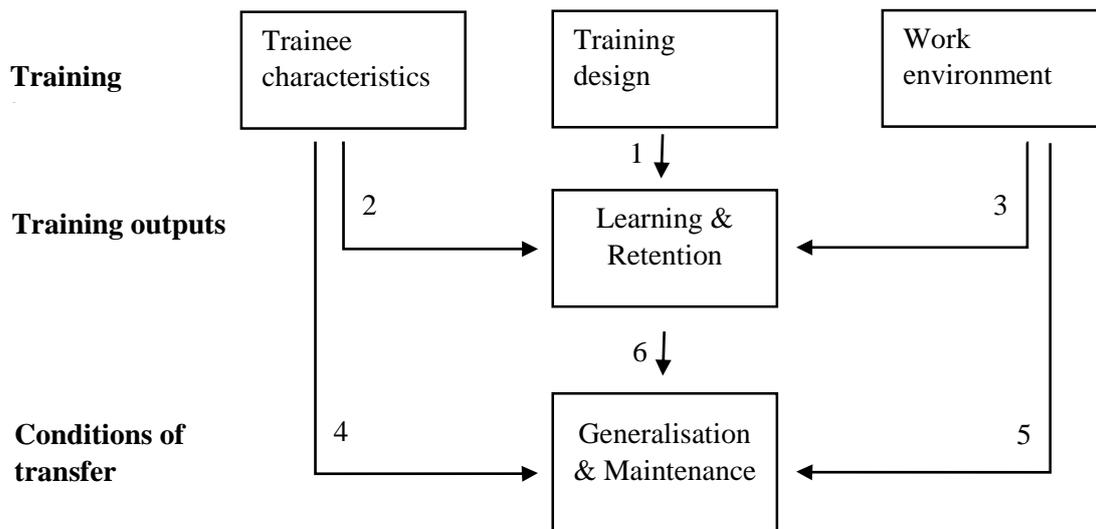


Figure 2.2 Adapted model of transfer process based on Baldwin's & Ford's (1988) Model of the transfer process

The model shows that trainee characteristics and work environment factors have both a direct and indirect effect on transfer. Direct in the sense that generalisation and maintenance are affected by for example a trainee's motivation (linkage 4) or supervisory support (linkage 5). Indirect in the sense that they affect what and how well knowledge and skills are being learnt and retained during the training (linkage 2 & 3), which in turn affect level of generalisation and maintenance in the work context (linkage 6). Training design factors, on the other hand, affect transfer in an indirect manner, through affecting learning and retention (linkage 1), which in turn affect transfer to job (linkage 6).

The different factors falling into the three training inputs categories trainee characteristics, training design and work environment have been a topic of research since the model was presented (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010; Burke & Hutchins, 2007). Still, there are varying and conflicting findings of what affects transfer (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010). Below, a selection of factors that can be found in the transfer of training literature are to be presented.

2.3.1.1 Trainee characteristics

Trainee characteristics that have been found to influence transfer of training include cognitive ability, skill, pre-training motivation, negative affectivity, perceived utility of training by the trainee, personality factors as openness to experience, self-efficacy and organisational commitment (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010; Burke & Hutchins, 2007). Self-efficacy refers to the trainee's judgement of his or her competency to perform a defined task (Bandura, 1982).

2.3.1.2 Training design

Factors affecting transfer falling into the training design category include learning goals/objectives, content relevance, learning principles such as multiple training techniques, opportunities for practice and feedback and behavioural modelling, meaning descriptions and/or demonstrations of key behaviours (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010). Learning objectives are in this thesis defined as "statements describing the changes in behavior or performance that are the desired outcomes of trainee and instructor activity and interaction" (Tracey, 1971, p. 82), which should be compared with definitions in section 2.4.3 where learning goals refer to goals focusing on something the person working towards goal attainment should learn. The definition proposed by Tracey is considerably broader,

containing goals focused on both performance and learning. It is therefore important that the reader sees the difference between talking about learning goals in traditional transfer research and in goal setting research (presented in section 2.4.3).

2.3.1.3 Work environment

Work environment factors that affect transfer include transfer climate, support from supervisors and peers, and constraints on and opportunities to perform new behaviours (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010; Bhatti, Battour, Sundram, & Othman, 2013). Transfer climate has according to Blume et al. (2010) been defined by Rouillier and Goldstein “as consisting of two categories: situational cues and consequences. Situational cues consist of things such as manager goals, peer support, equipment availability, and opportunity to practice trained skills. Consequences consist of punishment, as well as positive and negative feedback from both managers and peers when trainees attempt to apply the skills they learned in training” (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010, p. 1068).

To conclude this section, it could be stated that “there are no magic bullets for leveraging transfer” as Blume et al. writes in their meta-analytic review (2010, p. 1096). Multiple strategies are needed and recommended. They conclude with the following statements: “the most promising avenues seem to be more proactive selection of training cohorts, a focus on increasing the motivation of trainees, and finding ways to induce higher levels of supervisor and peer support in the work environment. Learning outcomes are also related to transfer, suggesting that to the extent that the training program can increase post-training knowledge and self-efficacy, the more likely trainees will be to transfer the training” (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010, p. 1096) and “The challenge is not how to build a bigger and more influential transfer support system; it is how to make transfer a more integral part of the existing organizational climate” (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010, p. 1096).

2.3.2 Stakeholders and responsibility for transfer

Figure 2.1, presented by Broad (1997), suggested managers, trainers, learners, subject-matter experts and others as stakeholders in the ‘performance development systems approach’, where transfer of training were an integrated part. In this section stakeholders will be discussed further together with possible challenges when involving stakeholders in the training process.

Managers at all levels, from supervisors and team leaders to the highest executives, are stakeholders mentioned in literature (Broad, 1997; Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Petrella, 2002). According to Broad (1997), managers need to provide clear performance specifications, necessary support, feedback, establish clear consequences and select appropriate training participants. In this thesis, the terms manager and supervisor will be used interchangeably, where supervisor refers to the training participants’ closest manager and manager refers to managers at all levels, which could include supervisors as well.

A second key stakeholder is training participants, also known as learners or trainees in the literature (Petrella, 2002; Broad, 1997; Baldwin & Ford, 1988), since they are the ones being trained and wanted performance from. A trend today is to “assign high priority to learners as full stakeholders in the design and implementation of the learning intervention and the support of transfer” (Broad, 1997, p. 11), suggesting their growing influence and responsibility in the training and transfer processes. Yamnill and McLean (2001) argues for making training participants full stakeholders as well, and suggest that they could be responsible for setting training goals, and design and plan for transfer of training into performance, by for example assessing learning needs and developing action plans. However, Broad also writes that responsibility for transfer “has usually been left at best to the energy and determination of the trainees, and at worst to chance” (Broad, 1997, p. 8), calling for more stakeholder involvement.

Trainers are another key stakeholder, having the main responsibility for designing and implementing the training initiative (Broad, 1997). Training vendor is another stakeholder suggested in this thesis, which either refers to the training vendor as a whole with trainers, sellers, administrators et cetera, or to the seller/vendor of trainings at that external or internal training organisation. According to Petrella (2002), previous research suggests that trainers or training vendors should take the primary responsibility for transfer, since the training is not really finished until transfer has occurred, meaning that if training vendors claim to provide effective training they need to determine transfer of training as well. Broad (1997) also states that trainers should take the lead, but emphasizes the importance of other stakeholders' involvement: "Trainers must convince all stakeholders, starting with managers and trainees, that their collaboration and support are essential in reaching performance goals. Without this collaboration, training efforts are doomed to failure. With effective stakeholder collaboration to support transfer, many organizations are achieving the levels of workforce performance that are essential to their survival and success in today's competitive environment" (Broad, 1997, p. 13).

Subject-matter experts (SME) refer to individuals exhibiting the highest level of expertise in a particular field, for example performing a particular task or skill (iSixSigma, 2015), and is another suggested stakeholder (Broad, 1997).

Other stakeholders mentioned by Broad (1997) that can be relevant to involve in certain situations include co-workers, union officials, customers, suppliers and community members.

To get the strong stakeholder involvement that for example Broad (1997) and Yamnill & McLean (2001) calls for, Broad reports two challenges that trainers need to address: to shift to a performance focus when it comes to training and to coach managers "in their necessary but unfamiliar roles as stakeholders in performance improvement" (Broad, 1997, p. 20). These challenges demand new roles, attitudes and behaviours including (Broad, 1997):

- The trainer becoming more of a management partner that uses the same business terms as managers, understands their resource issues, strategy, products and so on, and analyses their workforce.
- To see training as a performance support and investment, not a cost.
- To design trainings focusing on a few strategic priorities, not have a standard menu of trainings.
- To evaluate learning, transfer and organisational impact (Level 2, 3 and 4 in Kirkpatrick's model presented in section 2.3.3), not just participant reactions to trainings (Level 1 in Kirkpatrick's model).
- To educate and coach managers in the performance improvement (training) process, not just leave them on their own.

Broad also writes that a well carried out prototype effort with full stakeholder involvement that transfers content in training to performance on the job could lead to a positive spiral, where the trainer gets more recognition as an organisational performance developer.

2.3.3 Evaluating training and transfer of training

When talking about training evaluation, Donald Kirkpatrick's 'four-level training evaluation model' is the one most frequently mentioned. The four levels in the model include: level 1- reaction to training, level 2 - learning from training, level 3 - transfer of training to the job, and level 4 - impact on organisational results. A level 1 evaluation of participants' reactions to the training has become a standard in trainings today, level 2 evaluations are less common but still used relatively much, but evaluations of transfer of training and organisational impact (level 3 and 4) are far less applied

(Brinkerhoff & Apking, 2001). Brinkerhoff and Apking argue that this is a result of organisations seeing these evaluations as difficult and expensive, and therefore choose to skip them.

Kirkpatrick’s model have been criticised by several researchers in the field, such as Brinkerhoff and Apking (2001) and Holton (1996) for example. Both Brinkerhoff & Apking and Holton suggest other methods for evaluating training, emphasizing evaluation of transfer of training and performance. For more reading about training and transfer evaluation, the reader is referred to for example Brinkerhoff & Apking (2001), Holton (1996) or literature by Donald Kirkpatrick and his successors.

2.4 GOAL SETTING

A goal is in this thesis defined as “the object or aim of an action” as defined by Locke and Latham (Goal Setting Theory, 1990, 2013), which encompasses the term objective as well. Goal setting refers to a “(m)otivational technique based on the concept that the practice of setting specific goals enhances performance and that setting difficult goals results in higher performance than setting easier goals” (BusinessDictionary Goal Setting, 2015).

Goal setting theory was originally presented by Edwin A. Locke and Gary P. Latham in 1990. Their research concluded two core findings: that it exists a linear relationship between a goal’s difficulty and performance, and that a specific and difficult goal yields higher performance than no goal or a vague goal (Locke & Latham, Goal Setting Theory, 1990, 2013). Since then, the theory has been researched and developed further (Locke & Latham, Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation, 2002). Figure 2.3 below captures the current state of goal setting theory.

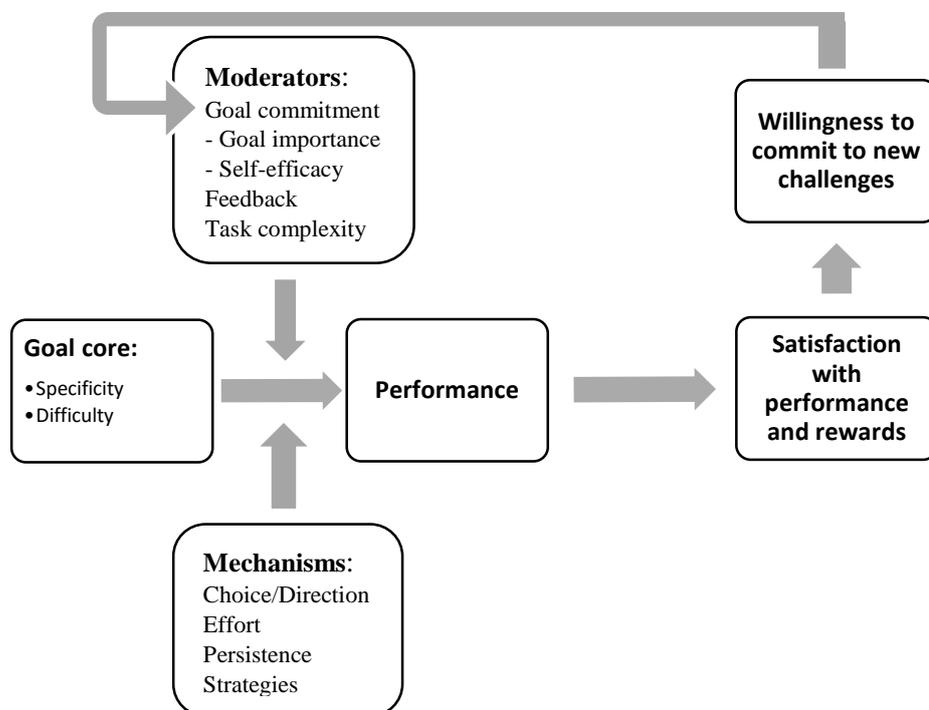


Figure 2.3 Essential elements of Goal-setting theory and the high-performance cycle (Locke & Latham, Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation, 2002, p. 714)

The model in figure 2.3 portrays the process of goals turning into performance, and variables affecting it. Goals have two core elements, level of specificity and level of difficulty, which affect performance.

Goals affect performance through the mechanisms direction, effort, persistence and strategies, described further in section 2.4.1 below. The process of goals affecting performance is moderated by three variables, goal commitment, feedback and task complexity, which will be portrayed in section 2.4.2. If goals affect performance positively, the satisfaction with performance and rewards could affect the moderating variable goal commitment through an ‘increased willingness to commit to new challenges’, as seen in the model (Locke & Latham, Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation, 2002).

Goal setting theory also discusses different types of goals, like learning and performance goals, distal and proximal goals, assigned, participative and self-set goals and the effects of multiple goals. Findings regarding these matters will be presented in sections 2.4.3-2.4.6. Possible mistakes working with goal setting given in the literature will be reported in section 2.4.7, and findings regarding goal setting as a method to increase training transfer will be presented in section 2.4.8.

2.4.1 Mechanisms/Mediating variables

Mechanisms or mediating variables for goal setting described in the literature include direction, effort, persistence and task strategies (Locke & Latham, Goal Setting Theory, 1990, 2013; Locke & Latham, Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation, 2002; Locke & Latham, Goal Setting Theory: The Current State, 2013), all explained below.

- A goal have a directional effect by orienting effort and attention, both cognitively and behaviourally, to activities relevant for goal attainment, and away from activities that are not relevant for goal attainment.
- A goal affects effort and energy, where a challenging and difficult goal is more effective than an easier goal.
- A goal affects persistence in working to attain a goal. For example tight deadlines can increase persistence and make the individual work faster, while loose deadlines can increase persistence in the manner of being able to work for a longer period of time.
- A goal also affects task strategies in the sense that it “may simply motivate one to use one’s existing ability, may automatically “pull” stored task-relevant knowledge into awareness, and/or may motivate people to search for new knowledge” (Locke & Latham, 2006, p. 265). This mechanism is more cognitive than the ones above, being more motivational.

2.4.2 Moderating variables

Moderating variables include goal commitment, feedback and task complexity (Locke & Latham, Goal Setting Theory, 1990, 2013; Locke & Latham, Goal Setting Theory: The Current State, 2013; Locke & Latham, Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation, 2002). Other moderating variables that are sometimes mentioned are the individual’s ability and situational constraints (e.g. not enough resources) (Locke & Latham, Goal Setting Theory, 1990, 2013). Descriptions of the three most documented moderating variables are presented below.

Goal commitment strengthens the goal-performance relationship and is defined, as recommended by Klein, Cooper and Monahan, as “a volitional psychological bond reflecting dedication to, and responsibility for, a particular target” (2013, p. 67). Causes for this include factors that make goal attainment important and factors that make an individual confident that the goal can be attained, also known as self-efficacy. Importance can be influenced by making the goal public, supportive and inspiring managers, participative goal setting to some degree, and economic incentives if used correctly. Self-efficacy can be affected by a well carried out training that provides success experiences, by finding

role models to identify with, and by confidence yielding communication from others, for example a trainer or manager (Locke & Latham, 2002).

Feedback affects performance by making the individual able to track his or her progress, and thereby adjust direction, effort and strategies for goal attainment. Research has shown that goals combined with feedback is more effective than goals on their own (Locke & Latham, 2002).

Task complexity is a third moderator of the goal-performance relationship. Research has shown that straightforward and simple tasks have a larger effect size on goal setting than complex tasks (Locke & Latham, 2002).

2.4.3 Performance and learning goals

Goal setting theory make distinctions between goals focused on performance, known as performance goals, and goals focused on learning, known as learning goals. An example of a performance goal is to 'attain a decrease in lead time of 10 % at the end of the year', while an example of a learning goal is to 'attain four effective strategies to decrease lead time'.

Learning goals have been shown to be more effective than performance goals in situations where the task is perceived as complex by individual and the individual lack sufficient knowledge and skill to attain a specific performance goal, but also when the individual receive negative feedback while performing a task or if task is considered a threat. Performance goals have been shown to lead to worse performance than asking the individual to do-your-best if the task is complex for the participant, but when the individual have gained sufficient knowledge and skills, performance goals can be set (Seijts, Latham, & Woodwark, 2013; Locke & Latham, Goal Setting Theory: The Current State, 2013). Seijts, Latham and Woodwark explain: "Learning while performance goals are pursued is often contradictory because learning and performance effectively use the same pool of attentional resources. The higher the performance goal when learning to perform the task, the higher the demands on the common pool of attentional resources, which may lead to giving up learning and 'scrambling' unsystematically in an attempt to perform effectively. As a result, setting a specific, difficult goal can lead to lower performance than no goal setting or setting a vague goal. Recent research reveals several solutions to this problem: One is to set specific, high learning rather than performance goals [...]; another is to set proximal goals rather than distal goal alone" (Seijts, Latham, & Woodwark, 2013, p. 179). Proximal and distal goals will be discussed further in section 2.4.5.

2.4.4 Multiple goals

Multiple goals have been shown to work, since the individuals are able to prioritise and work towards attainment of several goals at the same period of time by planning when to do what. Multiple goals have been classified into three categories: (1) multiple separate goals that the individual can work towards simultaneously or at different times, (2) sequentially interdependent goals where a goal contributes to the next one and so on, for example proximal goals leading to distal goals, and (3) reciprocally interdependent goals where the multiple goals influence each other in both directions (Sun & Frese, 2013; Locke & Latham, Goal Setting Theory: The Current State, 2013).

2.4.5 Distal and proximal goals

Distal goals refer to long term goals focused on an eventual outcome, while proximal goals refer to short term goals or benchmarks that the distal goal can be broken into (Brown & Warren, 2009). Research has shown that if the distal goals are relatively short term and simple, distal goals are as effective as proximal goals, but if the distal goal is relatively long term and complex, distal goals plus proximal have been yield more effect than distal goals alone. The setting of proximal is beneficially set by the participant her- or himself to increase motivation and performance (Sun & Frese, 2013).

2.4.6 Assigned, self-set and participative goals

Goals can either be self-set, assigned or participative, and all methods have been shown to affect performance positively (Locke & Latham, *Goal Setting Theory: The Current State*, 2013). Heslin and Caprar writes the following about participative goal setting: “participation increases performance by building commitment better than curtly assigned goals, though not significantly better than goals that are explained and sold [...]” (2013, p. 221), and that this probably is dependent on culture. This would mean that if the person assigning goals are good at selling them, assigned or participative goals would not make a difference. However, if that is not the case, participative goal setting is preferred.

2.4.7 Possible mistakes working with goal setting

Goal setting has been shown in the literature to have a very reliable effect on performance. Locke and Latham state in their article ‘Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation’ (2002) that failure when using this method is usually a result of errors. Mistakes they suggest include lack of feedback, lack of goal commitment, not matching the goal to the performance measure and setting the wrong type of goal (e.g. performance goal instead of learning goal when complex task).

Other possible pitfalls in goal setting are suggested by Latham & Locke in ‘Potential pitfalls in goal setting and how to overcome them’ (2013). The goal being perceived as a threat or a goal that produces fear of failure, stress or anxiety (for example by setting too many goals or too difficult goals), setting goals for the wrong things (resulting in important thing being overlooked), non-achievable goals, using monetary incentives in the wrong manner, unclear goals and setting conflicting goals are some of the issues portrayed there.

2.4.8 Goal setting related to transfer of training

Goal setting has been argued to be important for human research management as a theoretical framework, and training is one of the elements that it is particularly true for (Locke & Latham, *Goal Setting Theory: The Current State*, 2013). The literature depicts both goals as having a positive relationship with transfer of training, and that this relationship is relatively weak. Overall it could be stated that more research is needed to investigate this relationship, as suggested by for example (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010) as well. However, some of the research conducted so far will be presented below.

Several studies have concluded a positive effect for goal setting on transfer of training. Brown and Warren (2009) argue that training professionals should limit leaving training participants on their own with a ‘do-your-best’-request working toward transfer of training, if the training professionals want to maximise transfer. “Rather, practitioners should consider emphasizing the importance of using various forms of goals (i.e., learning, behavioral outcome, proximal plus distal) when implementing goal setting” (Brown & Warren, 2009, p. 279). Yamnill and McLean argue in their article ‘Theories supporting transfer of training’ (2001) that if the theories they present in the article are valid, training professionals should encourage managers to make what their employees are expected to do clear by setting and providing performance goals, give sufficient support, feedback and resources, and establish clear incentives to ensure transfer of training. Burke and Hutchins state in their literature review, as cited in the introduction as well, that “Goal-setting has been found to help individuals regulate their behavior by directing attention and action, mobilizing energy expenditure or effort, prolonging effort over time (i.e., persistence), and motivating the individual to develop relevant strategies for goal attainment [...]—all behaviors necessary for transfer” (Burke & Hutchins, 2007, p. 273).

Another study carried out by Lee and Pucel (1998) showed that “as a person’s perception of the importance of a training objective increases, so does her or his perception of the amount of training

transferred relative to that objective” (Lee & Pucel, 1998, s. 57). They explained this by suggesting that if an individual deem a goal as important, they probably pay more attention to that, yielding more self-feedback and therefore leading to higher (perceived) transfer. Lee and Pucel also showed that a supervisor’s perception of a goal affects his or her perception of transfer as well, possibly explained in the same manner as above where perceived importance results in more attention and feedback that yields higher performance or transfer.

Blume, Ford, Baldwin and Huang conducted a meta-analytic review of transfer of training studies in 2010. Their study showed a “relatively small effect of goal setting on transfer, with very wide confidence and credibility intervals” (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010, p. 1092). This is quite interesting given the many positive findings from other researchers. Therefore, it is difficult to say whether goal setting has a positive effect on transfer. Research has yet to determine the relationship.

3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methods used in this study, starting with a description of the research layout, moving on to how the data collection and analysis were carried out and ending with a discussion regarding trustworthiness, validity and reliability of this study.

3.1 RESEARCH LAYOUT

The research carried out was of a qualitative nature with some quantitative parts. Qualitative research is more focused on participants' point of view and suitable when the research aims to gain understandings of an issue and generate ideas, hypotheses or theory (Bryman, 2008). Quantitative research on the other hand focuses on quantifying data and test already existing theory (Bryman, 2008). Since this study's focus is on investigating and compiling theory and developing guidelines regarding how to work with goal setting to enhance training transfer, qualitative research was chosen as the main method for all research questions. However, research question 1, considering whether goal setting is perceived as a viable method to enhance customer training transfer, was investigated by a mixed methods approach, both quantitatively and qualitatively (see section 3.3.1 for further description).

The overall research layout for all research questions can be seen in figure 3.1.

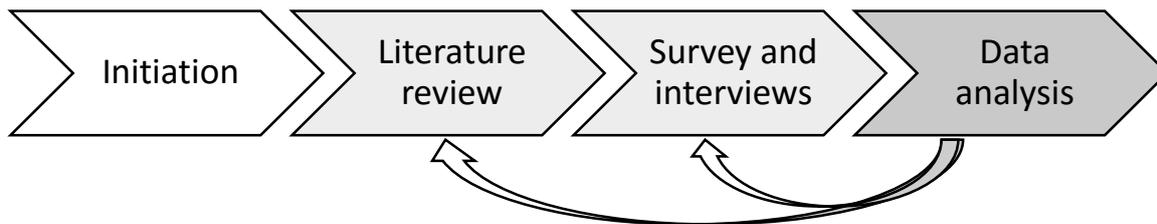


Figure 3.1 Research layout

The study began with an initiation phase where the subject of interest was introduced by literature and a few interviews with people knowledgeable in the area, which led to the formulation of research questions and the design of method. After the initiation phase, data collection commenced with a literature review and continuing with planning and implementation of a survey and interviews (described in more detail in section 3.2). All this data were then analysed and compiled by methods described in section 3.3.

The two loops connecting data analysis with the data collection symbolises two sampling methods used as guidelines in this study: theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation. Theoretical sampling “is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45). Theoretical saturation refers to the process where you continue sampling theoretically until a category has been saturated with data. “This means, until (a) no new or relevant data seem to be emerging regarding a category, (b) the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variation, and (c) the relationships among categories are well established and validated” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 212). Since this study is limited by aspects as time and budget, these two sampling methods have not been strictly followed but rather have been seen as guidelines during the research process. Data have been collected, compiled and analysed, to then suggest where to look for new data to get variation and the whole picture. The loops in figure 3.1 continued until the data were considered saturated, which in this case was three loops.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

An overview of the data collection can be seen in figure 3.2 below. The methods for data collection have been divided into primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to data collected in this study, for this particular purpose, while secondary data refers to data collected for other purposes and have been reused in this study (Hox & Boeije, 2005).

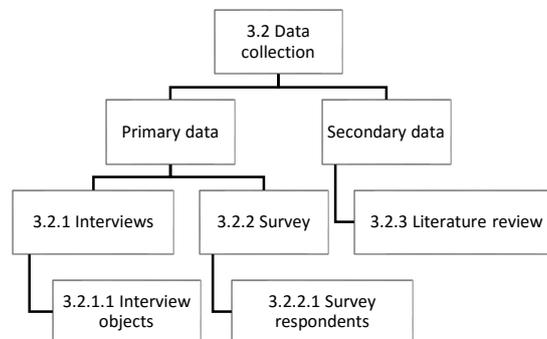


Figure 3.2 Data collection layout

Sources of primary data in this study were interviews and a survey, which are described in more detail in sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. In these sections interviewees and survey respondents will be presented as well. Four groups were targeted in the primary data collection:

1. trainers,
2. training participants,
3. HR managers and
4. training professionals (people working with selling trainings or people that serves as experts in the field).

Trainers, HR managers and training professionals were interviewed, while training participants were given a survey.

Sources of secondary data were literature acquired in databases, libraries and the internet (see section 3.2.3 for further description).

3.2.1 Interviews

The interview is the most common source of data in qualitative research (Bryman, 2008) and this study is no exception. The interviews conducted in this study were of semi-structured nature. Semi-structured interviews have an interview template with topics and questions that the researcher wants answers to, but leave room for spontaneous questions and follow-up questions (Bryman, 2008). This fits well with the investigational nature of the study. In Appendix I the interview templates can be seen. The data collected from these interviews were used to answer all the research questions.

3.2.1.1 Interviewees

In total, 11 interviews were held with interviewees sorted into the groups: trainers, HR managers and training professionals. The distribution of interviews in respective group can be seen in table 3.1 below.

Group	Quantity
Trainers	6
Training professionals	3
HR managers	2
Total	11

Table 3.1 Distribution of interview objects

Four of them were female and seven male. The interviewees were of a range of ages, in their thirties up to sixties, and had varied experiences, new in the field to working with training for decades. All of the trainers worked at the same firm when the interviews were held, but several of them had worked as trainers at other companies as well.

The three training professionals all worked at different companies where two of them were external training vendors and one a corporate training vendor. These three companies had varied experience working with goal setting as a method to increase training transfer. One of them have been working with goal setting for several years, another implemented a system involving goal setting quite recently and a third wanted to but had not yet implemented a system for goal setting.

The two HR managers worked at separate companies as well. One manager worked at a middle sized manufacturing company and was just starting out as head of training. The manager had a long experience working with human resource questions in a large corporate earlier as well. The other HR manager worked in a small to middle sized education company and had been working there for over a decade responsible for trainings among other things.

3.2.2 Survey

Surveys or self-completion questionnaires were used to reach training participants in this study. Advantages with this method over interviews are reaching more respondents, easy administration and absence of interviewer effects. On the other hand the researcher cannot probe respondents to elaborate answers, respondents often become anonymous and the researcher cannot collect additional data if that is the case. This result in a greater risk of missing data (Bryman, 2008, pp. 217-219). However, limitations in this study made the advantages with a survey to training participants larger than the disadvantages.

The survey had two purposes, first to investigate RQ1 quantitatively by letting the respondents rate statements that were given in the survey on a Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5. The second purpose was to collect the same type of qualitative data from training respondents that were collected by interviews from trainers, HR managers and training professionals. This was done by adding open questions in the survey and giving the respondents opportunities to comment all of the answers. The survey can be seen in Appendix II.

The survey were given to respondents and collected at the end of their training sessions. They were filled in by hand and the respondents were able to ask questions to the researcher during the completion.

3.2.2.1 Survey respondents

The survey was completed by 36 training respondents spread out in three trainings (k, l and m in table 3.2 below). Training participants in training k and l all worked at company A which is a large corporation with a since long implemented system regarding trainings and with extensive experience working with goal setting in the company. Training participants at training m worked at company B which is a middle sized manufacturing company with a limited system regarding trainings and limited experience working with goal setting in the company. Table 3.2 presents the distribution of respondents in the respective trainings.

Training	k	l	m
Company	A	A	B
Number of respondents	10	19	7
Total	36		

Table 3.2 Distribution of survey respondents

Out of the 36 respondents, 28 were male, 7 female and 1 did not respond to what gender. The training participants had different roles in their companies extending from machine operators to managers of different kinds. The distribution of the respondents' ages can be seen in figure 3.3, showing that the majority of respondents were in their thirties.

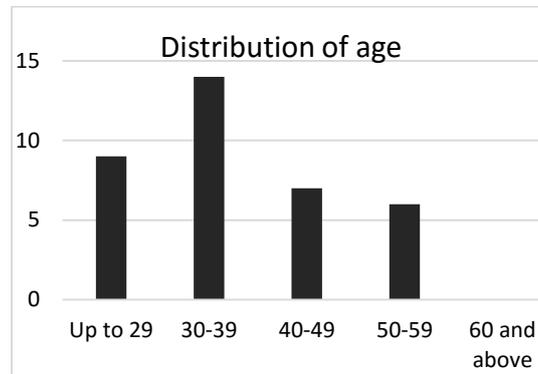


Figure 3.3 Age distribution of survey respondents

3.2.3 Literature review

The literature review had four functions. First of all to get knowledge in the field and to develop research questions. Second to help design the research methods and data collection, for example the interview templates. Third of all as data to answer the research questions (RQ2 and RQ3) and forth and lastly to serve as a comparison when discussing the results acquired in this research.

The literature review was mainly conducted in the initial stages of the study, in the initiation phase and the beginning of the data collection, but continued during the whole study in a smaller scale. The theory used were presented in section 2 and all the literature used can be seen in the list of references at the end of the report.

3.3 ANALYSIS

In this section the methods used to analyse the data gathered will be described. The descriptions are categorised in the three research questions since their methods of analysis varies.

3.3.1 RQ1: Is goal setting perceived as a viable method to enhance customer training transfer?

Research question 1 was as earlier described investigated with a mixed methods approach that is both qualitatively and quantitatively. The methods of analysis of these two different types of data are described separately below.

The qualitative investigation used the data gathered in the interviews and in the survey as primary data. No secondary data were used. The analysis were based on two key pieces of information:

1. If the interviewees and respondents mentioned goal setting as a method to increase training transfer on their own initiative.
2. What the interviewees and the respondents said about goal setting as a method to increase training transfer when they were asked about it.

The data regarding these two matters were transcribed on post it-notes, categorised and compiled. Also a number were given on how many interviewees and respondents that mentioned goal setting on their own. The results are reported in section 4.1.2.

The quantitative data from the survey were compiled in Microsoft Excel, where means and standard deviations were calculated. There were some variations in how respondents in the two different companies rated the statements, so means and standard deviations were calculated for the respective trainings and companies as well as for the whole sample. Results are reported in section 4.1.1.

3.3.2 RQ2: How could training vendors work with goal setting to enhance customer training transfer?

Research question 2 used data from the interviews, where the interviewees were asked what they thought were important to achieve training transfer, how they work with trainings today and how they use goal setting, how they would like to use goal setting and work with trainings in the future and specific questions about goals (see Appendix I), and the survey, where the respondents were asked about their training process, whether they worked with goal setting (see Appendix II), as primary data and literature as secondary data. Results from the literature review are reported in section 2.

To analyse the primary data, the interviews were transcribed from recordings and statements were put on post it-notes. Answers and comments from the survey were also written on post it-notes and all of them were then categorised and compiled. The results are reported in section 4.2. These results together with results in the literature review were combined to form a goal setting process, presented in section 4.2.6. Broad's presented model 'Performance development system approach' served as a base for the goal setting process. This model was originally developed for the Federal Aviation Administration's Aircraft Certification Service and, where the rectangles represent a simple form of the instructional systems design (ISD) model. The ISD model have been highly researched historically, but since this was not the topic of this study, the model have not been discussed thoroughly. Whether that is suitable or not could be discussed, also whether there are models better suited to use as a basis for the goal setting process. However, it has been chosen to do this demarcation and assume that the model presented by Broad is effective.

3.3.3 RQ3: What are the possible difficulties using goal setting as a method to enhance customer training transfer and how could you overcome them?

Research question 3 used, as research question 2, data from the interviews, where the interviewees were asked about possible difficulties and how you could overcome them (see Appendix I), and the survey, where respondents were asked for the main inhibitor for goal attainment among other things (see Appendix II), as primary data. No secondary data were used.

The data were analysed in the same manner as the data in RQ2; transcribed and written on post it-notes that were categorised and compiled. The results are reported in section 4.3.

3.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS

To determine trustworthiness or validity and reliability in qualitative studies, like this study mainly is, there are several suggestions from multiple researchers (Bryman, 2008). LeCompte and Goetz talk about external and internal reliability and validity, while Lincoln and Guba talk about trustworthiness as a function of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Bryman, 2008).

Credibility, or internal validity, refers to the extent of "truth" in the research findings. To make sure that this happens Bryman (2008) suggests to make sure that the research is carried out according with good practice and respondent validation by sending the results to respondent for validation before submitting the research. Respondent validation has not been done to the full extent in this research. Partly because of the surveys being anonymous but also because of lack of time. However, the interviewees are to be invited to the presentation and will receive the full report. Thereby they will have a chance to validate

or contradict what has been reported before publication. Another method to ensure credibility is triangulation, using several methods or sources of data. In this study, triangulation has been done by interviewing and giving out a survey to four different groups of individuals: trainers, HR managers, training participants and training professionals.

Transferability, or external validity, refers to whether the findings “hold in some other context, or even in the same context at some other time” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). To establish transferability Bryman (2008) suggests thick descriptions, that is describing cultures and situations in detail so that readers can decide whether or not results can transfer to their context. Descriptions of respondents, contexts and situations in this research are therefore described as thoroughly as possible in this report.

Dependability can be seen as corresponding with reliability that is whether findings are consistent and that the same method would give the same results if repeated. To secure this Bryman (2008) suggests keeping full records of the research, and letting peers audit the research. Records in this study have been kept and the study will be audited before publication.

Confirmability or objectivity refers to the researcher’s responsibility to be as objective towards her/his research as possible. Also a job for the auditors to control.

A discussion regarding trustworthiness, reliability and validity of the research will follow in the discussion, section 5.2.

4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the study's results are presented, structured by the three research questions. Results regarding whether goal setting is perceived as a viable method to enhance training transfer first, followed by results regarding how to work with goal setting and finally a section regarding difficulties when working with goal setting.

All quotes in this section are translated by the author.

4.1 RQ1: IS GOAL SETTING PERCEIVED AS A VIABLE METHOD TO ENHANCE CUSTOMER TRAINING TRANSFER?

This question has been investigated, as further described in the method section, both quantitatively by giving out a survey to training participants and qualitatively by interviewing trainers, training professionals and HR managers and giving training participants opportunities to comment and answer open questions in the survey. The quantitative results will be presented first, followed by the qualitative.

4.1.1 Quantitative results

This section presents the quantitative results of the survey given to training participants in three different trainings, where the participants in two of the training worked at Company A and the participants in one training worked at Company B. In total 36 participants replied. 29 of them worked at Company A, where 10 attended training k and 19 training l. 7 out of the 36 participants worked at Company B and attended training m. Company A and B differ in several ways. Company A is a larger company which historically has worked more extensively with goal setting than Company B. Company A has a large system for training, which Company B has not. To be able to later discuss how they differ, the results given in this section will be divided into the companies the participants worked at together with a mean over all participants.

The survey respondents considered claims regarding learning and performance goals leading to higher usage of knowledge, scoring the claims from 1 to 5 where 1 represents 'not agreeing at all' and 5 'totally agreeing' with the statements. The results can be seen in table 4.1 below (statement A and B). 12 participants, 10 from Company A (2 from training k and 8 from training l) and 2 from Company B, claimed to have set goals for this training as a preparation, and therefore considered statement C as well.

Statement	Company A			Company B	Total
	k	l	k and l	m	
A. I believe that goals regarding what I am supposed to learn would have helped me get more use of the training in my work.	3.62 (1.26)	3.90 (0.94)	3.80 (1.04)	3.50 (0.55)	3.75 (0.98)
B. I believe that goals regarding how I am supposed to use what I have learnt would have helped me get more use of the training in my work.	2.92 (1.37)	3.90 (1.00)	3.56 (1.24)	3.83 (0.75)	3.61 (1.17)
C. I feel that these goals will make sure that the new knowledge will be used once I come back to work.	4.50 (0.71)	4.62 (0.50)	4.60 (0.52)	3.50 (0.71)	4.42 (0.67)

Table 4.1 Means (standard deviation) of results for participants attending trainings k and l working at Company A and B and participants attending training m working at company B. Scores range from 1 to 5.

The means in table 4.1 above show that goal setting is perceived to increase usage of knowledge to some extent, getting scores above 3 (with one exception with the score 2.92), but not considerably so. Learning

goals are seen as a bit more useful than performance goals, compare means 3.75 with 3.65. Standard deviations vary around 1, which suggests that the results are widely spread and could be argued to not be that reliable.

The scores concerning statement C, where participants that had set goals as a part of their training preparation scored whether they felt that the goals would lead to increased usage of training, are somewhat more unanimous with standard deviations below 0.71. The means for this statement are also significantly higher than for statements A and B, at least for employees at Company A. This would suggest that they who had actually worked with goals understood the point of them and found them useful. It is also interesting to note that participants from Company A scored a lot higher than participants from Company B, compare 4.60 with 3.50. Could this be because of the historically more extensive use of goal setting in Company A? For further discussion see section 5.1.

4.1.2 Qualitative results

The qualitative results to RQ1 given by interviews with trainers, training professionals and HR managers together with comments and written answers from training participants will be presented in this section. As mentioned in the method section, research question 1 will be based on two aspects: whether respondents mention goal setting as a method to increase training transfer on their own, and what they say about goal setting as a method to increase training transfer when asked about it. Results regarding both matters will be laid out here. Also notice that from here on, respondents could refer to either respondents to the survey or respondents to the interviews.

Eleven interviews were held with different people working with training. Out of these interviewees, four of them mentioned goals as important to increase training transfer: one trainer, one HR manager and two training professionals. One respondent stated that goals are needed to get the training participant aware of the bigger picture, what the training is going to result in, both for the participants himself or herself but also for the company as a whole. Another respondent mentioned that they were just launching a new system for trainings extending over two days' time, where goal setting plays an essential role. The two training professionals talked about already implemented systems with goal setting on different levels. One of them stated that they increased their transfer rate to 80-90 % working with the system involving goal setting, according to the training expert Brinkerhoff (mentioned in section 2.3.3), in comparison with common transfer rates at 15-16 %.

Other respondents did not talk about goals per se but acknowledged the importance of a well carried out procurement with a clear specification of needs, base participation in trainings on actual business needs and asking participants to formulate training purpose and expectations before training sessions. Remaining respondents, three in total, did not mention goal setting or anything resembling goal setting on their own initiative.

When asked how they perceive goal setting as a method to increase training transfer the majority saw it as something positive. One respondent claimed that it would be good to have goals and a plan for what to learn. Another stated that goal setting is "never wrong" and thought it would lead to greater usage but should not be forced upon customers. A third talked about increased usage/transfer when participants feel that their participation in the training adds value and is meaningful to them and their company, increasing motivation. A training participant stated that without goals it is hard to know where to put focus.

Some trainers were sceptical to the viability of goal setting. One respondent believed that it could be used for longer trainings, but not trainings as short as a few days since there are not enough time and the respondent did not believe that customers will pay extra for it. A second said that she/he had tried

methods like this earlier and had come to the conclusion that it does not work. A third pointed out that we (training professionals) have our theoretical world and the customers their real world where they have a totally different time pressure, so she/he did not think that it would work in practice.

4.1.3 Conclusion RQ1

So, did they perceive goal setting as a viable method to enhance customer training transfer? The answer to that question is vague yes. The majority believed that goal setting could increase training transfer, but if it was a viable method differed between interviewees and respondents somewhat. One respondent had bad experiences with goal setting and other did not believe that the customers would pay extra for the expanded training process.

Interesting to note is that people that had been working with goal setting for this purpose were a lot more positive than those who had not. For example, training participants that had set goals for training, strongly believed that the goals would make sure that the knowledge gained in training would be used coming back to work, rating 4.42 out of 5. The two training professionals that had worked with goal setting for their training initiatives were very certain that it yields and would yield positive results, and one of them even gave numbers on rates of training transfer (80-90 % transfer compared with 15-16%). Whether these numbers were a result of goal setting or a combination of many factors were not answered, which should be taken into consideration. Maybe it is not goal setting in itself that brings a higher rate of transfer, but the processes it brings like stronger supervisor support et cetera. In section 5.1.1 the discussion will continue.

As a conclusion, the majority perceived goal setting as a viable method to enhance customer training transfer but there are several difficulties that need to be addressed for it to work. Research question 3 investigates these difficulties further.

4.2 RQ2: HOW COULD TRAINING VENDORS WORK WITH GOAL SETTING TO ENHANCE CUSTOMER TRAINING TRANSFER?

Research question 2 were investigated qualitatively by interviewing trainers, training professionals and HR managers and by letting training participants answer open questions and comment in the survey. During the interviews two different types of goals were mentioned. Some respondents mentioned both and some just one or the other. The first type is goals common for all the participants in the training initiative, while the second is individual goals to each participant. This section describes what the respondents have mentioned about how to work with the two different types. When goals should be set, directions for what kind of goals and who should set them will also be reviewed.

4.2.1 Type 1: Common training goals

Goals that are identical for all participants in the training initiative are mentioned by two training professionals, but trainers and the two HR managers also talked about this type of goals, even if they did so more implicitly. For example one trainer said that the use of training is a procurement issue, meaning that the training vendor needs to specify the needs of the customer in detail. The two HR managers, among others, talked about training rooting in business needs in an organisation. These needs and lack of competence in the company in those areas form gaps that the training initiative is supposed to fill.

Several respondents talked about how to identify these gaps and acquire knowledge needed to set goals. One respondent suggested that the training vendor should help the customer to visualise their entire goal chain and “ask the right questions” to get the customer to present important information. Other

respondents also talked about “asking the right questions” or business related questions as one respondent put it. Examples they gave were: Why do you need training? What problems are you having? How should the training support your organisation? What do you want to achieve? When are you supposed to be there? What resources do you have to get there? Another method that came up to identify gaps was to visit the customer, see the surroundings and talk to the people involved. The knowledge gotten from this is then used to set goals for the training.

This analysing stage is the most important according to one respondent. It is where wanted and/or required performance is defined and what you are supposed to evaluate in the end. “Start at the end”, as another respondent stated it and explained that goal setting should be done early in the process. The goals set up are then used to design the training delivery and to “make everybody focus their energy in the right direction”. Another respondent explained how the goals are used to design the training initiative more explicitly. After goals have been set for the training initiative, KPIs (key performing indexes) are defined that later on can be evaluated to see if the goals are attained. Situations where the KPIs can be affected are then identified, you look at best practices in these situations, to then get a list of training content. This is the way to design trainings if you want to assure performance and organisational results from the training according to the respondent.

4.2.2 Type 2: Individual training goals

The second type of goals is individual goals, which respondents stated is being used to challenge each training participant on his or her own level and making the training more individualised. The setting of individual goals should be based on the trainings common goals according to two training professionals. A way to make sure that all the individual goals pull in the right direction, one respondent suggested to break out a few categories from the common goals that the individual goals need to be directed towards.

Two respondents (that can be said working for Company X and Y) use this type of goals in their systems today and one respondent (Company Z) had just developed a system using individual goals but had not yet put it in practice. These three systems will be further described below to serve as examples of how an individual goal setting process could look like.

An example of the process at Company X can be seen in figure 4.1 below. The process start with a preparation section where the training participant has a meeting with his or her closest supervisor. For this meeting they are provided with a meeting agenda that is specific for that particular training. In this meeting they usually discuss expectations and set 3-5 SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) individual goals for the training. The preparation section also includes reading preparing material and doing e-learnings for example. Then the participant attends classroom training and after that he or she puts the new knowledge and skills in practice in the work environment, by for example doing case studies. Directly after training the participant has another meeting with his or her supervisor to evaluate and revise goals. After a while behaviour (and transfer) is evaluated.

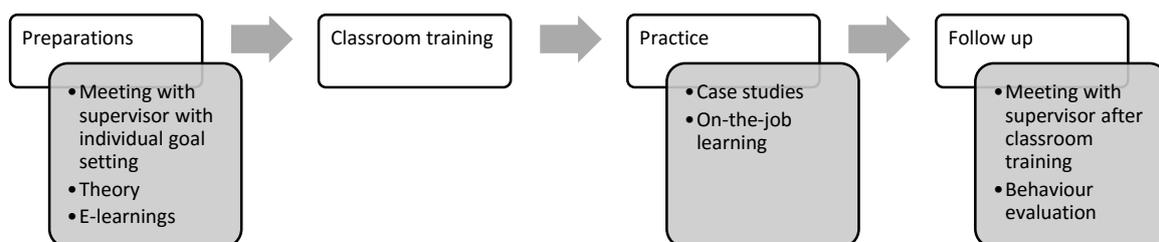


Figure 4.1 Company X's training process

Company Y’s training process can be seen in figure 4.2 below. The process begins with a kick-off where training participants, their supervisors and other managers involved in the training participates. In this 2-3 hour meeting they discuss the purpose and common goals of the training, and give a common ground for everybody involved. In the preparation section, usually extending over 2-3 weeks, the participant have a meeting with her or his closest supervisor where they set 2-3 individual goals and the participant make preparations like reading theory. They use a digital platform where the training participants can visualise their goals and the goal attaining process, and also access training materials among other things. The participants then attend a training session that leads to a practice section where they do assignments, evaluate practice and revise goals together with their supervisors. This can then either continue with another preparation section, training session and practice session, represented by the loop arrow, or move on to a conclusion. In this conclusion the participant and her or his manager evaluate the training and goals in a 1-2 hour meeting.

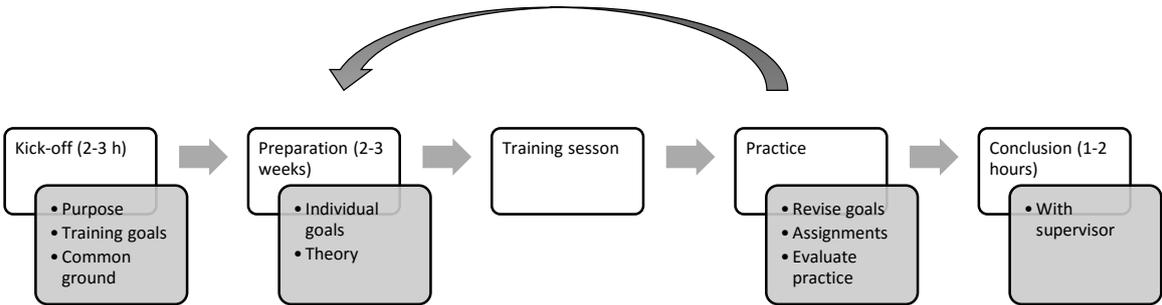


Figure 4.2 Company Y’s training process

The training process in Company Z can be seen below in figure 4.3. This process is new and is meant to be used for trainings extending over more than two days. The process starts with a preparation section where the participant and his or her supervisor meet to discuss expectations, set individual goals for the training and talk about possible obstacles along the way. The participant then attend training and afterwards he or she does a follow-up together with the supervisor where they evaluate expectations and goals of the training. Evaluations are also done over time, for example 3-6 months after and then 12 months after training.

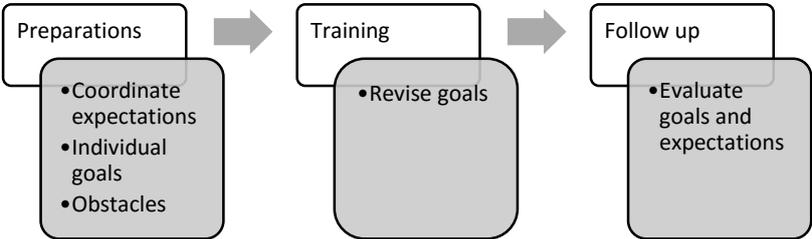


Figure 4.3 Company Z’s training process

4.2.3 When goal setting should occur

The majority of the respondents stated that goal setting should occur before training. Reasons they mentioned for this were that it increases motivation, focus and involvement during training, and you can allocate resources and plan for follow-up beforehand. To have set goals before training means that “you can measure (training transfer) during training as well and make sure that you do not miss the mark”,

said one respondent. Another stated that “you should not participate in a training if you don’t have a clear learning purpose”. When training participants were asked, 31 out of 36 wanted to set goals before training, 4 out of 36 wanted to set them before in combination with after training and 1 out of 36 at the end of training.

Negatives with goal setting before training, that respondents mentioned, included that you can get ‘tunnel vision’ and miss other useful content in the training just because you are so focused on your particular goal, and that it is difficult to get all the participants to actually do it before the training since you have no or very little control as a training deliverer then. The respondents claimed that these two issues could be solved by revising the goals during training to for example include new content and to spend the first hour at the training session to discuss goals and let them that have not done it beforehand set individual goals. Some respondents claimed that there is no time in training sessions to set or discuss individual goals. They would rather see that the goal setting should take place before or in between training sessions so that you can maximise the learning opportunity when you are in the classroom.

Several respondents mentioned that even though goals should be set before training, they should constantly be revised and updated as time goes on. “The organisation and the surroundings change so they (the goals) need to be updated, both during training and after”. One training participant that wanted to set goals before training stated that the goals “need to be updated after training when I know more”. Some respondents mention reconciliations with their supervisor as a mean to do this, where you discuss: Are we going to reach the goals? Do we need to revise goals? Have any obstacles appeared? Do we need to allocate more resources?

After the training some respondents said that it was too late to set goals. What you should do in this stage is to see and measure if goals have been attained, revise them if necessary and decide a new course of action.

4.2.4 Kind of goals

When it came to what kind of goals that should be set, several respondents talked about SMART goals, that is goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound, and specifically about measurable goals. One respondent stated that it is “important with effect to be able to follow up”, you need to know what to measure afterwards to see if the wanted outcome has been reached. One respondent that worked with a system involving goal setting said that they had no guidelines for what the goals should look like but they needed to be measurable.

Regarding learning or performance goals, one respondent favoured performance goals, stating that “it is not that interesting to describe the knowledge you want to gain from the training, but more what you aim to do with it”. Another respondent claimed that the type of goal depends on what you want to accomplish, and did not want to favour one over the other. When training participants that had set goals before training were asked for what type of goals, the majority (two thirds) had set goals focusing on performance.

To set difficult and challenging goals or more easily attained goals was mentioned by one respondent. “It is most important that the training participant and the supervisor discuss what the participant has the energy to do at this period of time, because the goals they set now are expected to be reached. Difficult or easy (goals)? Depends on the situation.”

4.2.5 Participants in working with goal setting

This section presents results regarding who should participate in the goal setting process. Individuals and groups that have been mentioned include the training participant, his or her closest supervisor, the

buyer at the customer company which could be HR or a senior executive, the vendor/seller of training and the trainer(s). What has been said about these different individuals and groups of individuals will be presented below.

The training participants has to take a lot of responsibility stated one respondent. They need to set goals and make sure that the goals are attained.

Several respondents claimed that the participants' closest supervisors have a key role in the goal setting and follow-up process. One respondent stated that a "connection with the closest supervisor is important. We see that on other types of education as well, that it is when that connection exists that stuff really happens, when what they do gets visible and noticed and they feel that their supervisor is with them." The supervisor needs to identify an employee's or a group's needs and contact HR who takes the question forward, said one respondent. "The supervisors need to participate all the way. Set goals before, follow them up afterwards", claimed another. "It is difficult and tough to change behaviour. You need to practice in your daily work and a supervisor that follows up on you. The people that want to change will do it anyway." The supervisor needs to clarify expectations to the training participants, communicate the importance of the training to participants, help them keep focus and motivation, support them and allocate resources. In the individual goal setting process, one respondent stated that it is important to let the employees do it themselves, but that the supervisor facilitates it. Another respondent claimed that it is "very important that the participant gets to meet his or her supervisor soon after training to discuss goals that were set up before the training, how it went, evaluate behaviour change and make sure that he or she can practice what he or she has learnt in their work". Two respondents did not agree with the supposed importance of the closest supervisor. One mentioned that it would be difficult for the supervisor to set goals since she or he does not know anything about the trainings themselves, and another stated that there is no time to let participants set goals together with their supervisor.

The buyer, HR or senior executives need to have a supporting role and map out the needs of the entire organisation to be able to set proper training goals and allocate resources. Another respondents stated that the buyer should set training goals together with the training vendor. One HR manager said that it is great if the training vendor has systems for goal setting et cetera, because "otherwise I'd have to do them and I am not as good at this stuff and I don't really have the same amount of time to think about it either", suggesting that a larger part of responsibility is wanted to lie with the training vendor and not with HR, buyer and senior executives.

The training vendor needs to help the buyer analyse their needs, set goals together with the buyer and do the follow up, "since the customers do not have the time or money to do it themselves", claimed one respondent. Several respondents agree stating that: "We (as training vendors) might have easier to translate a problem to a training. All they see is the problem and not how to solve it, because then they probably would have solved it already." and "If we take more responsibility I think we would get more satisfied customers. Customers might feel that they don't have the time, possibility or knowledge, but we have." Other respondents mentioned that the training vendor should make sure that transfer really happens both in short term and long term, that they should take part in setting realistic goals and become goal setting experts, to ask the buyer the 'right' questions, and to help the customer understand the transfer and training process. Some respondents stated that the training vendor "should not take part in the goal setting process at all since it is the buyer's responsibility" and the training vendor "knows too little about their situation".

The trainers could take part in setting learning goals for the training initiative claimed two respondents. Another said that the trainers should see goals that have been set to adapt training content, but said

nothing about participating in the goal setting process. A third suggested that the trainers should ask participants to set individual goals before the training and bring them to the training session. A fourth did not see the trainer’s part in goal setting and stated that it was “more to guarantee the customer’s return of investment”. Several trainers did mention that they wanted to visit the customer and their work environment before training, to be able to adapt the training content. This would suggest that they want to take more responsibility and have more information beforehand.

When training participants were asked who should participate in the setting of individual goals 29 out of 36 stated that they wanted to set them together with their supervisor, 9 out of 36 wanted to set them themselves, 2 out of 36 wanted to set them together with other training participants and 1 out of 36 wanted the training vendor and the buyer or HR manager to set goals.

4.2.6 Analysis and conclusion RQ2

Analysis of the results from the data collection, both primary data from interviews and survey and secondary from the literature review, resulted in a goal setting process portrayed in figure 4.4. Explanations to each step in the process and motivations are presented below.

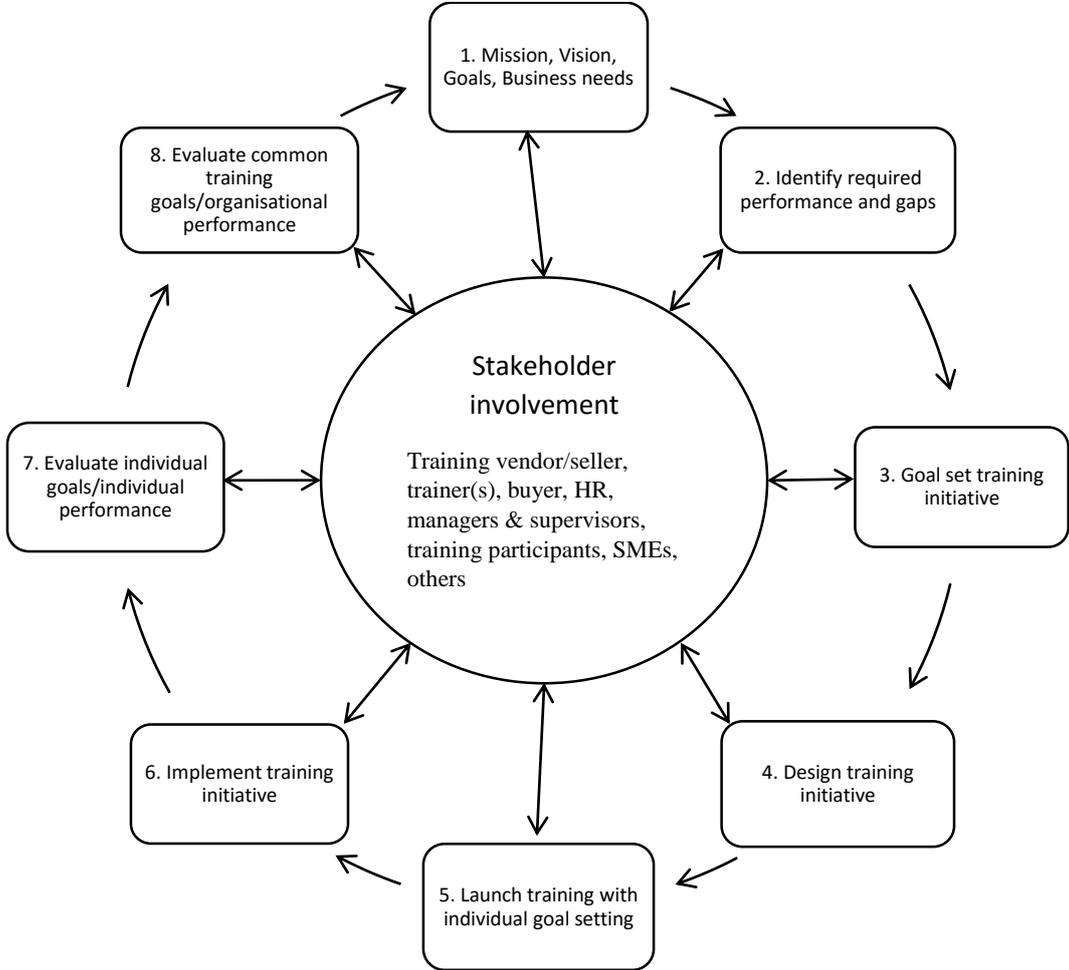


Figure 4.4 Suggested Goal setting process similar to (Broad, 1997)

The process is quite similar to Broad’s model: Performance development systems approach (Broad, 1997) in section 2.2, but with some changes and add-ons based on the results given in previous sections. Stakeholder involvement is, as in Broad’s model, a central part in the process. Stakeholders in the goal setting process above includes seller and trainer(s) at the training vendor, and at the customer organisation: HR, managers and supervisors, training participants and the buyer which could be a person

in HR, a manager or supervisor or someone having another role in the company. Another stakeholder is subject-matter experts (SMEs), which could be provided by the training vendor and/or the customer organisation. Other stakeholders could also be included in the process, as proposed in the theory section 2.3.2, like customers, co-worker and suppliers among others. All stakeholders might not be included in every process and in every stage in the process. Who should be included and how are discussed below together with the steps in the process in figure 4.4.

Like Broad's model, the process starts with an organisation's mission, vision, goals and business needs. This is something suggested by both theory and interviewees in section 4.2.1. Also suggested by theory is that from the organisation's mission, vision, goals and business needs, performance requirements are to be identified and gaps between current and required performance. The next step is to set common goals for the training initiative based on previous stages. The goals set up here should be measurable and specific so that they can be evaluated later on. These goals should clarify where the customer organisation wants to be in the end, which could be a change in behaviour and/or attitudes resulting in higher performance but also that the participants have learned something, suggesting either performance or learning goals, or perhaps both. Setting challenging proximal learning and performance goals that sequentially lead to a more distal performance goal corresponds with theory presented in sections 2.4.3 to 2.4.5, and is therefore suggested. In short, the type of goals needs to be adapted to each situation, keeping research regarding goal types presented in sections 2.4.3-2.4.7 in mind.

These first three steps are mainly the customer organisation's responsibility, but different organisations are probably at different steps in the process and the training vendor could step in to coach the organisation, as wanted and suggested by some of the interviewees, making the linkage between training and strategy in the customer organisation even stronger. The training vendor and/or trainer(s), should at least take part in the goal setting process or to be able to discuss and modify them later on since they have the main responsibility for the next step, designing the training intervention. Several interviewees stated that this is important, see section 4.2.5, while others saw it as less important which will be discussed further in section 5.1.2.

After common goals have been set for the training the design of the initiative commences. This could be done, as suggested by one respondent in section 4.2.1, by identifying key performance indexes, finding situations where these KPIs could be affected, looking at best practices and from this get the training content. Stakeholders that should be involved in this step, suggested by theory in section 2.3.2, is the training vendor and its trainer(s), the customer organisation with managers, HR and training participants, and subject-matter experts.

When the training initiative have been designed, the next step is to launch the training. Now more than ever it is important to get everyone, training participants, managers, trainers, HR and so on, focusing their energy in the right direction. This step could start by organising a kick-off where all the stakeholders meet to get a common ground and to get motivated to execute the training initiative. At this step, individual goals for the training should be set to challenge and motivate each training participant. How many goals that should be set, needs to be adapted in each situation, but 1-4 is recommended. The participant has the main responsibility for this goal setting but should be supported by his or her closest supervisor so that the supervisor can give the right support during the training process. To make sure that these goals support the main goals of the training, the common goals could be broken down into a few categories that the participants need to aim at when formulating their individual goals. The training vendor's role here could be to organise the kick-off together with the customer and provide coaching and material or a learning platform where the individual goals and the training process can be visualised.

The next step is to implement the training initiative. During this phase it is important to constantly evaluate and revise goals so that energy is put in the right places, and provide sufficient resources for goal attainment. The supervisor and managers have an important role here to facilitate and motivate the training participant and provide resources, but the main responsibility lies with the training participant who needs to work towards goal attainment and the trainer(s) who carries out the training initiative and coaches the participants.

When the training initiative ends it is time to evaluate, both the individual's performance and the individual learning goals and later the organisational performance and the common training goals. Stakeholders that should participate here are the same ones as in the setting of the common and individual goals. The training vendor could provide this as a service as well, to measure and evaluate, which would make their participation in the goal setting even more crucial.

After the evaluation of the training and the performance it was set to achieve, a new mission, vision, goals and business needs emerges in the customer organisation and the process start all over again.

4.3 RQ3: WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES USING GOAL SETTING AS A METHOD TO ENHANCE CUSTOMER TRAINING TRANSFER AND HOW COULD YOU OVERCOME THEM?

This section presents what respondents have mentioned about difficulties with working with goal setting as a method to increase training transfer. The difficulties have been categorised in difficulties concerning leadership, concerning the process of setting goals, concerning the buyer-seller relationship, concerning lack of resources, concerning individual characteristics of the training participants and concerning match between participant and training. Solutions that have been suggested by participants are also presented under respective category.

4.3.1 Concerning leadership

Difficulties concerning leadership include supervisors and managers who are unaware of what they need to do to facilitate training transfer and goal setting or why they need to do it, supervisors and managers that know what they need to do and why but do it poorly, and supervisors and managers that are not familiar with the training content and therefore falls short to support the training participant.

One of the main difficulties working with trainings is that supervisors do not know why they send employees to trainings, claimed one respondent. The respondent talked about trainings as “nice to have” or “need to have”, differentiating trainings that stem from an actual need in the organisations and trainings that do not. The respondent also claimed that it is still very common that trainings are seen as rewards, to which several respondents have agreed. One interviewee said that “trainings are often seen as a cost and not an investment, and that's a bit crazy”. Another respondent thought that supervisors today do not have sufficient knowledge and do not think “that strategic all the time, but rather kind of short-sighted”. The respondent suggests that very few people involved in training are aware of that “what supervisors do before and after training are more important then what happens between participants and trainer during training” when it comes to getting real results from training initiatives. A training professional working with transfer and goal setting processes for many years stated that HR-managers often have a lack of understanding of what is at fault when you do not see results of training initiatives and that they very rarely states that it is the lack of leadership that leads to low transfer rates. More often they suggest time and lack of resources. “And if they don't know, how are the line managers supposed to know what to do to succeed with a training initiative?” Another respondent stated that “nobody have an understanding” of the responsibilities of supervisors and managers and that he/she had tried to talk

to them and make them understand why you have to discuss the trainings importance and goals with employees, but with bad results.

The other issue is that supervisors and managers know what to do but they do it poorly. For example the training they send their employees might come from an actual need in the organisation but “they do not set goals or if they do they do it extremely poorly”, one respondent described. Training participants do not know what is expected of them and the trainings importance, they are not actively followed up on and are not given space to practice new skills and knowledge. Several respondents mentioned supervisors’ lack of priority skill. As one respondent put it, “people don’t take leadership. Supervisors do not even spend 20 % of their time on being leaders and if you don’t spend time on it, you don’t get good at it”. The respondent also mentioned that the supervisors probably are responsible for ten people each that maybe attends trainings once a year in total. “Not easy to be good at it then.” One respondent working as a HR manager said that the supervisors are supposed to set goals with their employees at employee appraisals “but they are too bad at it”. The respondent thought that it is a result of unclear organisational goals that are not followed up, but he/she does not see following up goals as a potential problem for trainings since “it’s a matter of discipline”.

One trainer and one training participant mentioned that if supervisors and managers are unaware or unfamiliar with the training content it could become an issue since they cannot support the participant in the same manner then. It could be difficult to set relevant goals and also to support afterwards.

When training participants were asked about what their supervisors could do to increase awareness of what they should learn in training, why they should participate and how they should use it in their work some stated that they wanted to discuss expectations and get more information beforehand. One respondent wanted the supervisor to get more understanding of his or her work and another wanted the supervisor to take more responsibility. Some stated that they had good communication about expectations with their supervisor.

4.3.1.1 Solutions

A solution to these issues that several respondents mentioned were to educate supervisors and managers to employees participating in the training. Teach them how to think, how to lead and make them understand the use of training and the processes that comes with it. Make them understand what is expected of them and clearly state what they should do and how much time they are supposed to spend. “Tell them that what they do is most important, without taking responsibility from the participants.” This can be done in different ways. One company made a brochure that they handed out to supervisors, another offered supervisors to attend a workshop before their employees attended training. A third option was to make this a training to sell to customers, and a fourth was to organise a kick-off for training participants, their supervisors and managers where these type of matters are discussed. To keep contact with supervisors after training was mentioned by several respondents. Some respondents mentioned that it is difficult to get hold of supervisors and managers which can make this solution difficult to put in practice.

Another solution mentioned by respondents was to understand and accept that “everybody is a child in the beginning” and respect that changes take time. A success story was given by one respondent that had managed to change the mind-set in the organisation from seeing trainings as rewards and personal learning to organisational learning, but it took some time to do so.

4.3.2 Concerning process of setting goals

Difficulties concerning the process of goal setting include difficulties with making people set individual goals and difficulties with setting useful goals. These difficulties relates to the ones concerning

leadership, but are more specifically focused on setting goals, not processes around it like follow-up and so on.

A training professional working with goal setting stated that in a good organisation about 40 % of the participants set individual goals for the training. “Many might set them in the beginning and talk about them when all is finished, but they have not worked with them as the training went along.” She/he estimated that up to 90 % want and have the ambition to set goals and follow them up, but somewhere along the way it halts. When respondents that represented different companies were asked if they worked with goals setting in their company some respondents claimed that they worked with goal setting a lot in their organisation while others not at all, making the process to setting training goals a bit further away.

Another difficulty that several respondents mentioned were to set measureable, specific or SMART goals. One respondent estimated that about 2 out of 50-60 goals they had set recently included measurable “numbers”. Explanations for this included that it is an ever-changing world and things change therefore it is difficult to pinpoint a detailed goal to focus on, that it is difficult to put goals in words and formulate them and that it is a rather new and many people are not used to setting specific, measureable, achievable, relevant and time-bound goals.

4.3.2.1 Solutions

To solve the issue of low rates of individual goal setting respondents mentioned solutions like starting simple and accepting that it takes time to change habits. A good first step is to get them to discuss expectations and it does not have to turn into a specific and measureable goal all the time.

To help customers set measureable and useful goals respondents claimed that talking about it, handing out material on how to set SMART goals, train supervisors and having goal setting experts or trainers coach the goal setters would help. One respondent also stated that it is sometimes difficult to talk about money and that it is better to talk about activities you want to see more of. To change “return of investment” to “return on expectations”, and thereby making the goal setting less focused on numbers.

4.3.3 Concerning buyer-seller relationship

Difficulties concerning the buyer-seller relationship include the buyer’s and the seller’s ability to communicate and understand the needs of one another. To design trainings that lead to transfer is “massive work” and “it is a question of having a recipient at the other end that understands”, claimed one respondent. The buyer and seller can “speak different languages” and have totally different ideas of what is to be delivered.

One HR manager thought it would be great if the training vendor came in and told them that they could help them with more than just the training session, analyse their needs and adapt to their situation and budget. Other customers might just want a training session, and question training vendors that try to analyse their organisation and needs. One respondent described that the business side (the buyers) are used to getting what they ask for without being questioned, which can be a problem sometimes for their vendors.

One respondent said that she/he tries to talk to customers about what needs to be done to get transfer and return on investment but that it is difficult. Another respondent talked about one customer that they talk to that “sometimes say they want our help to design a training, but then their managers still sit and decide how it is going to play out and we are left feeling “what are we doing here?”. The communication with buyer can never be 100 %“.

4.3.3.1 Solutions

To solve these problems it is important to have sure instinct as a seller and adapt to every customer's needs, said one respondent. To have a palette and different levels of what the training vendor can do that the customer can choose from claimed another. Sometimes you just sell a training and nothing more, you need to adapt to the situation. "Many customers have their own systems and do this well more or less" said one respondent, but also added that "if customers are not interested in our "digging", you have to accept and only sell a course, but you can still slowly try to take small steps forward in the right direction."

Another solution is to try to persuade the customer and change their behaviour towards training vendors. One respondent said that he or she told customers that he or she could promise that they would like the training and that they would get it (Level 1 and 2 in Kirkpatrick's model), but if they wanted him/her to take responsibility for Level 3 and 4, that is behaviour change and results in the organisation, "we need to look at business needs, best practices, find discrepancies and design the training from that". "We have to get them to understand that it is crucial that we understand their organisation to get a good and valuable training", said another respondent.

4.3.4 Concerning lack of resources

Difficulties concerning lack of resources include lack of time, money and material and employee turnovers.

Lack of time and money are problems in several stages of the training process, and were the most mentioned obstacles among training participants. In the analyse and design stages of training, lack of resources can mean that you do not have time or money to visit, map out the needs of the organisation properly and set training goals. Sometimes the buyer and customer work in different countries and cities which means that visits require more resources that do not always exist. In the implementing stage, lack of resources can mean that you do not participate in the entire training because you need to work, stated one respondent. It can also mean that supervisors do not prioritise to discuss expectations and the training with their employees or do not follow them up during and after training. "Production is number one" and "the economy rules" were statements that were common from respondents. Lack of time can also "kill the fun in it" and thereby lead to decreased motivation and that the training process are seen as a burden.

Lack of material is also a problem according to two respondents stating that participants might not have the standards and regulations they need when they come back to work, making it difficult to change behaviour and get results.

Another issue is employee turnovers. One respondent mentioned that their company had some turnovers in HR which made them not being able to work that much with systems regarding training. Another mentioned that people disappear to new jobs and positions, which can make it difficult to maintain the training and goal setting process.

4.3.4.1 Solutions

One solution to these problems are to clarify time estimates before training so that the customers can allocate enough resources. Several respondent mentioned this and it is important to estimate time needed for all kind of activities, for example time for meetings with supervisor, for reading, for classroom training and for group assignments. "All cards on the table".

Another solution is to make sure that the goal setting process supports the training's main purpose and does not become a burden for the people participating in it. A way to do this that was suggested by

respondents was to link the process with already existing systems in the customer's organisation, for example employee appraisals.

A third solution that was mentioned was as a customer to dare to release time and budget, and also to sometimes say no to a training if the resources are limited and the training cost exceeds the expected training value.

To ask training participants to book a meeting with their supervisor to discuss expectations and to ask their supervisor to lead and follow up on them can also be a solution, since supervisors sometimes do not have the time to think about it, stated one respondent. Also to ask supervisors to update standards and processes for making the behaviour change possible.

4.3.5 Concerning individual characteristics of participant

Difficulties concerning individual characteristics of participant include the participant's level of motivation to learn and change behaviours. It could be that the supervisor wants the employee to attend training but not the employee himself or herself, which leads to a great deficiency in how well he or she is going to succeed according to one respondent. Other respondents mentioned that it is difficult to change behaviour and that you need motivation and support to be able to do it. Several training participants stated that the greatest obstacle for goal attainment would be that the participant did not prioritise it, also suggesting lack of motivation as a difficulty in working with goal setting.

4.3.5.1 Solutions

Solutions to this problem mentioned by respondents are to find what motivates each individual and as a supervisor support the employee in this process. "The training vendor can help by making the customer aware of different incentives", stated one respondent.

4.3.6 Concerning match between participant and training

Difficulties concerning the match between participant and training is something many trainers, training professionals and training participants stated as a problem. It is often the wrong people that attends training. An example of this was people working on the factory floor that attended a training in rhetoric. "Participants are thrown into training and often the wrong ones", stated one respondent. A second explained that "the participant needs to work with it now or in the near future to be able to transfer it to the work environment". "It is important to apply new knowledge after training, and the customers need to be aware of this to allocate time and put the right people in the right trainings", claimed a third.

4.3.6.1 Solutions

Solutions to this problem that respondents mentioned include that supervisors should give employees opportunities to practice what they have learnt, to make the supervisors understand how important that is by educating them, to clarify who the training is meant for to as a training vendor interview participants beforehand to make sure they are in the right place.

4.3.7 Conclusion RQ3

To conclude the results for research question 3, asking for the possible difficulties when working with goal setting as a method to enhance customer training transfer, figure 4.5 was created showing a compilation of the results mentioned above. To better understand the included difficulties and solutions in the figure, the reader is referred to sections 4.3.1-4.3.6. The results are discussed further in section 5.1.2.

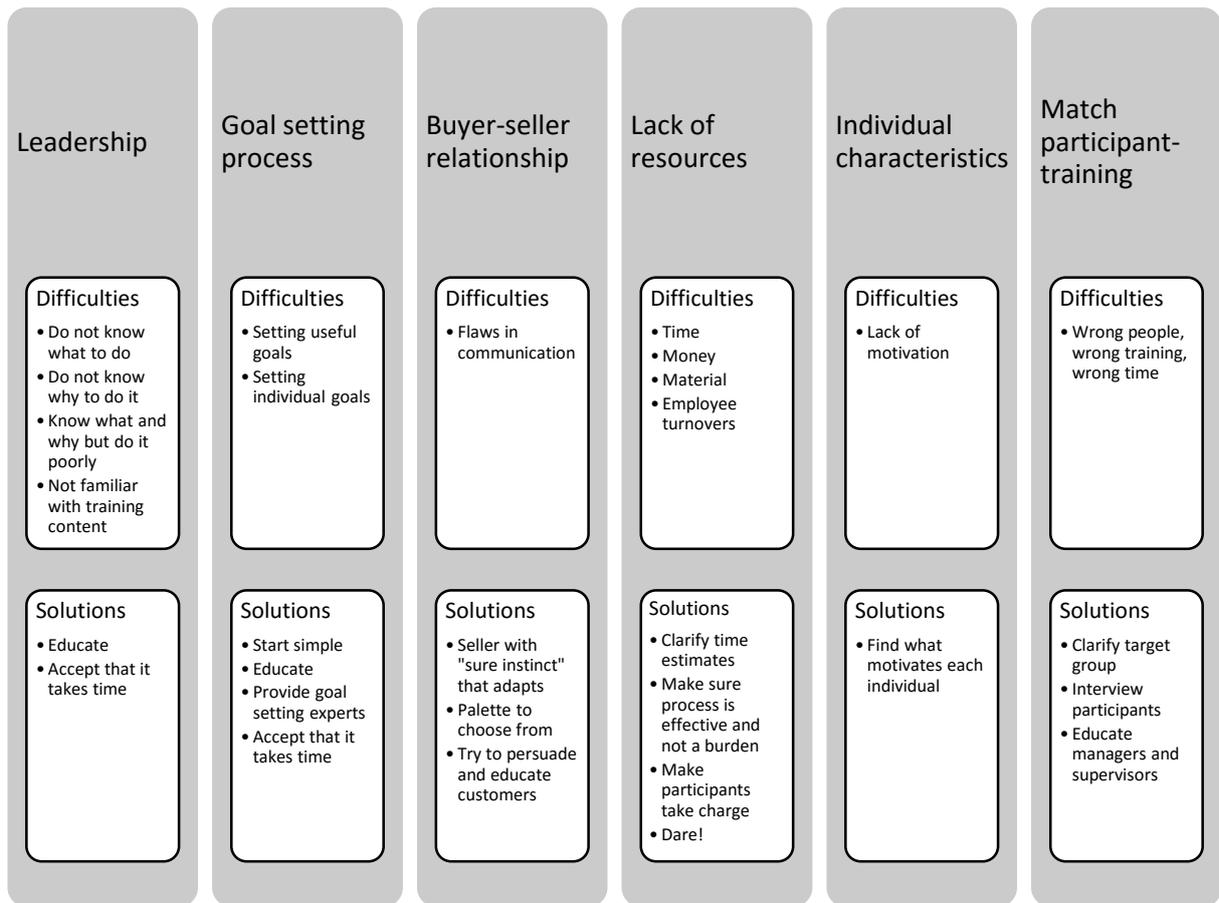


Figure 4.5 Compilation of difficulties working with goal setting process and suggested solutions

5 DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss the results found in this study, separated in the three research questions where significant results will be highlighted, results will be interpreted and compared with previous research. A discussions of limitations of the study and recommendations for future research ends the chapter.

5.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED

In this section, the results for the three research questions are discussed by highlighting and interpreting significant findings and compare with previous research.

5.1.1 RQ1: Is goal setting perceived as a viable method to increase customer training transfer?

Results for research question 1 suggested that goal setting is perceived as a viable method to increase customer training transfer to a low degree. There are some matters that need to be discussed: the training participants rating of goals' usefulness, the level of interviewees that mentioned goal setting and the ones opposing the method, differences between different groups of interviewees and lastly the connection between perceived and actual transfer.

Training participants rated statements regarding learning and performance goals' usage, which resulted in means between 2.92 and 3.83, all but one being slightly above neutral (3). Would this suggest that they perceive goals as useful or is the slightly positive rating due to respondent wanting to seem positive? The relatively neutral ratings in combination with a relatively small number of respondents and moderately high standard deviations could mean that the results are not that reliable. To get a complete picture and more reliable results more statements could be added evaluating the same thing but in other formulations. The respondents that had set goals prior to training were more positive, considering a statement regarding if they believed the set goals would make sure that the new knowledge would be used in the job context, resulted in 4.42 in mean value. The results differed a lot between which company the training participants worked at, participants from company A rated 4.60 and participants from company B rated 3.50. Company A has been working more extensively with goal setting than company B and has more experience with training and training processes over all. Is their higher rating due to their previous experience where they have seen that goal setting actually works, or because they are "brainwashed" in believing so? Or is it because the different nature of different trainings, that some training might be more suited to goal set than others? These factors might contribute as well, but the previous experience probably have led to company A being better at using goals in an effective manner and therefore bring more results in the end than participants in company B.

Four out of eleven interviewees mentioned goal setting as a method to increase transfer on their own initiative, which is quite a low number. Four mentioned things resembling goal setting and three mentioned nothing resembling goal setting. Some of them were sceptical to the viability of goal setting as a method. Maybe goal setting is yet another method that is good in theory but difficult to implement. Examples were given by one respondent that had implemented goal setting that had seen a raise in training transfer, but the lack of previous research confirming that goal setting enhances training transfer (see section 2.4.8) can be a reason to doubt its effectiveness and viability. Maybe it is not goal setting in itself that enhances transfer, if that would be the case, but the processes it brings like stakeholder involvement, strategy alignment and so on. Clear specifications about wanted results and discussions regarding goal attainment and need of resources might enable supervisors to support the training participants more efficiently or yielding more motivation to transfer in participants for example, which are factors that have a previous documented effect on transfer of training (see section 2.3.1).

There were differences between groups of respondents regarding perceived viability of goal setting. Training professionals were the most positive. Of the three training professionals, two worked as vendors and one was a learning expert in an internal training organisation. Is their positivity due to their previous experience where they have seen goal setting yielding real results or because they are good sellers? This must be taken into consideration when viewing the results. Trainers were the least positive to goal setting, not all of them but a significant amount. Is it because their closeness to the reality of the situation, close contact with training participants and bad previous experiences or because they have not yet seen good examples and have not used the method in the right way? Also something to consider.

Last of all, how does perceived transfer, that this thesis investigated, relate to actual transfer? Could it be that if the stakeholders in a training intervention really believe that the goal setting would enhance training transfer, their pre-training motivation to transfer and perceived utility of training by the trainee might increase, factors affecting transfer of training described in section 2.3.1.1, and thereby enhance the transfer of training? Maybe an element of future research.

To conclude, many respondents seemed unsure if goal setting enhances training transfer. This might be due to the fact that many of them did not have sufficient knowledge in the goal setting and transfer of training areas. Meaning that they did not know and therefore did not clearly state whether they perceived goal setting as a viable method to enhance transfer of training. This will be discussed further in section 5.2. However, it is a bit surprising if this possible lack of knowledge about goals would exist, since it would seem that even if the training participants have not set formal goals for the training, they must have some kind of purpose attending the training. This purpose could be seen as having set self-set goals that just might not be formal, specific and measureable. The same goes for common goals set for the whole training initiative. There must be some kind of goal with the training, otherwise they would not have started to design it. The question is may not really be if goals should be set for a training, rather how to set goals in the most effective way, leading us to the next research question.

5.1.2 RQ2: How could training vendors work with goal setting to enhance customer training transfer?

This section will discuss the results for research question 2 and especially the suggested goal setting process seen in section 4.2.6.

In the process, goal setting has been chosen to be done before the implementation of the training initiative. Common goal setting before designing the training and individual goal setting after designing the training. This is consistent with what the majority of respondents and interviewees stated in this study. Nevertheless, some respondents mentioned disadvantages with setting individual goals before training, like getting too focused on attaining the goals and miss other useful content, meaning a sort of 'tunnel vision', and that it could be difficult to get the participants to set individual goals before the training (one of the difficulties in RQ3). However, if training is seen as a method to improve specific performance, maybe 'tunnel vision', meaning a strong focus on a particular target, is what you want as the 'owner' of the training initiative. The respondents also mentioned that the first issue could be solved by revising the goals during and after the training, and the second by giving the participants a chance to discuss or even set goals, in the beginning of classroom training for example. In the suggested goal setting process, it is recommended to organise a kick-off for all stakeholders, which could be used to set individual goals. In that way you do not lose time in the classroom training (if that is included in the training). A big part of setting individual goals is to create a common ground for the training participant and his or her supervisor so that the right resources can be allocated and the supervisor can support the participant in the learning and transfer process. If the goal setting was to be done during training, for example in the classroom, it would be more difficult to get this supervisor involvement. To set goals

after training was stated to be too late by interviewees. After training the goals should be evaluated, revised if necessary and worked toward attaining.

In the suggested goal setting process, what kind of goals that should be set are not specified, more than that they need to be measurable and specific, and that it is recommended to consider a combination of distal, proximal, learning and performance goals, since each situation is different. However, goal setting research presented in section 2.4 needs to be taken into account when setting goals since some types of goals might be more effective in some situations. It is left to the practitioner to identify those situations and choose appropriate types of goals.

Stakeholders that are suggested in the goal setting process include the training vendor or seller, trainer(s), managers and supervisors in the customer organisation, HR, the buyer which could be a person in HR, a manager or somebody with a different role in the customer organisation, training participants, subject-matter experts and possibly others like customers, suppliers and so on. Stakeholder involvement is important for the overall effectiveness of this process. As suggested in section 4.2.6 all stakeholders might not need to be involved in every process and in every step of the process. Yet again this needs to be adapted to each situation. However, working with stakeholder involvement is very important and that cannot be emphasised enough. As you will see in the discussion of research question 3 below, stakeholder involvement can prevent several difficulties working with goal setting to enhance training transfer. Stakeholder involvement demands more resources, as some interviewees pointed out, but if it is done correctly it will most likely pay off. How much it pays off is though something that needs to be investigated further.

To be able to determine the suggested goal setting process' effectiveness, pilot studies where transfer of training is measured need to be carried out. See section 5.3 for further recommendations.

5.1.3 RQ3: What are the possible difficulties using goal setting as a method to enhance customer training transfer and how could you overcome them?

Difficulties and solutions found in this study were divided into six categories: concerning leadership, the goal setting process, the buyer-seller relationship, lack of resources, individual characteristics and match between participant and training. The difficulties and solutions were summarised in figure 4.5 in section 4.3.7. In this section these results will be discussed, by interpreting and comparing it with findings in previous research.

Difficulties concerning leadership included leaders unaware of what they need to do to facilitate transfer of training and why they need to do it, leaders that know what and why but do it poorly and leaders that are unfamiliar with the training content and therefore falls short in supporting their employees. These were the most mentioned issues among interviewees and respondents, especially training professionals and trainers saw this as a major problem. It thus seems to be difficult for managers to set goals for training initiatives. Reasons for this could be that they lack competence or lack of time, as suggested by interviewees, but it could also be that the managers do not want to make a mistake when doing this and therefore skip it to not lose face. However, if support from management is lacking, it is very difficult to get any results. To give full responsibility for transfer to training participants might work if the participant is highly motivated and autonomous, but that is far from always the case. Supervisory support and transfer climate are in previous transfer research mentioned as important factors affecting transfer, factors that are the responsibility of management in the customer organisation. If they fail, the chance of transfer of training is affected negatively. Solutions that were mentioned include educating leaders in the customer organisation and accepting that it takes time. Most likely, you have to do both. Educating by providing trainings to leaders or workshops for leaders sending employees to trainings might be a good solution, but as one respondent mentioned it is not easy for managers to be good at something they

do quite rarely. However, performance should be the focus of every manager and it is quite surprising that so many interviewees suggested that managers have no clue to how to get performance out of trainings. Why is that? Maybe because they themselves have never seen or experienced a good example of what an effective training process could look like and therefore deem it as impossible. Or maybe they do not want to get involved and let their employees take more responsibility, which corresponds with the trend presented in section 2.3.2 to let trainees be full stakeholders in the training process.

Another issue is the suggested unawareness among HR personnel about transfer issues. They are supposed to be experts in this field and as one interviewee stated: “if they don’t know, how are the line managers supposed to know what to do to succeed with a training initiative?” Of course there are good examples as well and maybe the best solution is as a training vendor to be the centre of competence regarding training and transfer of training into performance, so that they can coach customers in these processes. The training vendors need to contribute as well if they wish to see a change. Overall it could be said though that management needs to take a larger responsibility in training concerns and be more involved in the entire training process if they wish to see results. Leaders’ mind-set concerning trainings need to change, as pointed out by Broad (1997) as well, see section 2.3.2.

Difficulties concerning the goal setting process included challenges with setting useful goals and making customers set individual goals. The first difficulty, the challenge to set useful goals, can be compared with section 2.4.7 ‘Possible mistakes working with goal setting’, where issues setting the ‘right’ goal in a particular situation is mentioned. Educating the proposed ‘goal-setters’ in theory regarding learning and performance goals, distal and proximal goals, multiple goals and so on could solve or at least lessen the issues. As the training vendor provide tools and coaches knowledgeable in the field that can give feedback are other solutions that could work. The second challenge, making the customers set individual goals could be argued to be more difficult to handle, since it can seem that it is out of the training vendor’s control. One solution that was not mentioned by respondents is to as a training vendor prototype the goal setting process to get a success case and then use this success case to motivate and persuade customers. If they see actual results of the method, they might become more inclined to do this.

Difficulties concerning the buyer-seller relationship included flaws in communication between respective parties resulting in different views of what the training should deliver for example. Solutions that were given include that the training vendor has a seller with ‘sure instinct’ that is able to adapt to each customer’s needs and wants by listening and requesting confirmations so that the parties do not misinterpret each other, and possibly even good at persuading and educating customers as to why goal setting et cetera is important if they want to see performance results. A palette of what you as a training vendor can provide the customer with was suggested as useful in these meetings. After interviewing several salesmen, it seems that these methods work. One respondent gave strong impressions that her or his efforts to persuade customers had yielded results, but as the respondent stated, you have to be patient and take it in small steps. Communication could be argued to always be a potential issue, maybe it is just a matter of bringing your best effort into it since it might be difficult to do it perfectly.

Difficulties concerning lack of resources included lack of time, money and material, and employee turnovers. These difficulties could be seen as connected with difficulties concerning leadership, since managers and supervisors are the ones providing resources. Lack of resources could therefore be translated to lack of prioritising skill in management. Maybe training is not supposed to be provided all available resources, of course, but if management wants to see performance improvements as a result of training, needed resources must be provided. This demands stakeholder involvement in the process, especially in the initiation and design phase so that management have time to plan for delivery of resources. Respondents and interviewees suggested clarifying time estimates early in the process as one

solution, which relates to this. Other solutions that were suggested include making sure that the goal setting process is effective and not a burden to those involved, making participants ‘engines’ in the process and that the customers simply dare to release resources. To make sure that the goal setting process is effective and not a burden, stakeholder involvement in the entire process yet again is important. As mentioned in section 2.3.1, the transfer support systems need to become a more integral part of the existing organisational systems. To do this, management, HR and possibly even the training participants need to be involved when designing the training.

Difficulties concerning individual characteristics of the training participant included lack of motivation. ‘Motivation’ and ‘perceived utility by the trainee’ are factors affecting transfer (see section 2.3.1), which therefore would suggest that if these are lacking the transfer will be affected. Motivation also affects ‘goal commitment’, which is a moderating variable to the goal-performance cycle shown in figure 2.3, meaning that the chance of goal attainment and thereby performance is lowered as well. The solution suggested was to find what motivates each individual and play on that, which might be difficult to achieve but ‘it’s dogged as does it’.

Difficulties concerning the match between participant and training was mentioned by trainers in particular that felt that the wrong people often attended trainings, but also training professionals mentioned this as an issue. They stated that it is no point attending a training if the participant do not work with the training content at a daily, weekly or in some cases monthly basis. Whether this is realistic in the ever changing nature most organisations face today could be argued though. To be able to practice what you learnt is a component of ‘transfer climate’, one of the factors affecting transfer proposed in section 2.3.1 and the factor ‘constraints on and opportunities to perform new behaviour’ sums this up. Solutions to this included clarifying target groups, interviewing participants before training to determine if their participation is appropriate and to educate managers and supervisors about who and when somebody should be sent to training. Stakeholder involvement in the entire process yet again becomes important here. If management, HR and so on are involved in the beginning, it should be more clear who should participate in the training. Also making sure that the training actually stems from a need among employees is important. Historically and yet today many employees are sent to training as a reward or because the organisation have time or money to spare. Sometimes training might not be more than this and that is okay, but if the organisation wants to see certain performance improvements, the question of training must root in their ‘mission, vision, goals and business needs’ like in the process suggested by Broad (1997) in section 2.2. The overall mind-set that training is a reward and a cost need to change into trainings as an investment and a way to improve performance, which might still feel as a long way to go but hope is given by some interviewees that had seen and been of part of companies changing.

5.2 LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations, which include disadvantages with qualitative research methods, the quality of the quantitative investigation, the choice of interviewees and respondents, and not testing actual transfer. Below, all will be discussed.

Qualitative research methods have been thoroughly debated and have some disadvantages that you need to consider. First of all, the qualitative research is very dependent on the skills and supposed objectivity of the researcher. Since it is up to the researcher to interpret a lot of information, the research is very likely, some would even say that it is an absolute certainty, that the research will be inflicted by the researcher’s personal biases and idiosyncrasies. Objectivity is thus an issue. Secondly the researcher’s presence in data gathering can have an implication on results. In this study for example, several

interviewees were known by and knew the researcher, which could cause increased positivism since they might want to be of help. Also the researcher's expressions during for example interviews might yield interviewees to respond in accordance with them. Third and lastly, generalisation is an issue. Qualitative research is often based on a small sample of respondents in their particular environment, making generalisation to other contexts a possible issue and replicating the study wanting to get the same results might be hard to do. In this thesis, triangulation have been used as a method to increase generalisability and transferability. However, it is up to the reader to judge whether the results are applicable in his or her situation.

Another limitation of the study is the quality of the quantitative method to gather data for research question 1. A survey was used that had not been used before, therefore its validity might be an issue. Ranking statements on a Likert scale from 1 to 5 could be an issue since different respondents put different meanings to the numbers. A way to increase validity of the results could be to add more statements and questions that test basically test the same thing so that the results could be compared and validated.

Choice of interviewees and respondents is another issue. The survey was given out to 36 individuals, where 29 worked at one company and 7 at another. To increase trustworthiness of the results, a larger sample could be argued to should have been used. Distribution of types of trainings however were quite good, having trainings with softer skills and hard skills, and respondents with various work experiences represented. 11 interviews were held where 3 were training professionals, 2 HR managers and 6 trainers. To interview more training professionals and HR managers, and especially to interview supervisors to training participants would have been great to get a larger insight in this field and might had contributed a lot to this study. Talking to supervisors might be an element for future research, since they are portrayed as key stakeholders by several respondents in this study. Another issue might be that all trainers worked at the same firm. It could be interesting to see if trainers at other firms have the same ideas.

A last limitation of the study is that the results of the study is based on a lot of guessing and past experiences of respondents. A lot of vague answers were given, especially regarding the perceived viability in research question 1. Maybe it is because many respondents do not know and have limited knowledge about goal setting and transfer of training. As mentioned in the discussion of RQ1, the training professionals that had been working with goal setting to enhance training transfer were very convinced that this method is crucial to yield transfer of training. Maybe that is a result of them being more knowledgeable in the field. If this study were to be done again, a method to test the knowledge of the respondents before asking if they perceive the goal setting method as viable might be appropriate. Also research question 2 is limited by this since there is no knowing if the suggested goal setting process actually enhances training transfer, leading us to recommendations in the next section.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The first and foremost recommendation is for training professionals, and possibly researchers, to try out the suggested goal setting process in a training case and measure actual transfer of training to determine whether the goal setting process enhances transfer of training. For practitioners wanting to implement this process, it is also important to adapt it to their particular situation and define how they wish to work with each step. A good place to start might be to start small by setting proper common goals for the training initiative and creating methods for evaluating them after training, to then move on to creating methods to set, support and evaluate individual goals, while having the possible difficulties presented in research question 3 in mind. Start small, constantly evaluate and then take the next step forward.

Other recommendations for future research include determining the relationship between perceived effect of goal setting on transfer of training and actual effect of goal setting on transfer of training, investigating the relationship between stakeholder involvement in the goal setting process and transfer of training (or performance), determining the gravity of difficulties working with goal setting as a method to enhance transfer of training, investigating supervisors experiences with training and transfer of training, and lastly to determine the relationship between goal setting and transfer of training. As presented in the literature review, studies to determine this relationship have not yet been consistent, leaving training professionals to wonder whether the method works or not. This needs to be cleared up once and for all.

6 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter concludes the thesis by reflecting on the thesis' purpose, the three research questions and the contribution of this study.

The aim of this study was to determine whether training vendors should consider working with goal setting as a method to enhance customer training transfer, and suggest how this goal setting method to enhance training transfer could look like. To do this, three research questions were formulated and investigated. The evidence presented in this report led to the following conclusions.

Goal setting was perceived as a viable method to enhance customer training transfer by the majority of respondents. Particularly by those that had been working with the method to enhance customer training transfer. However, viability of the method was a concern by some, making it important to address difficulties (see below) suggested in this thesis when adapting the method.

A goal setting process was suggested by compiling data from interviews, survey and literature and is seen below in figure 6.1 (identical with figure 4.4). Stakeholder involvement is a key feature of the process. Yet to determine is whether the process enhances transfer of training quantitatively, which is left to practitioners and researchers to investigate.

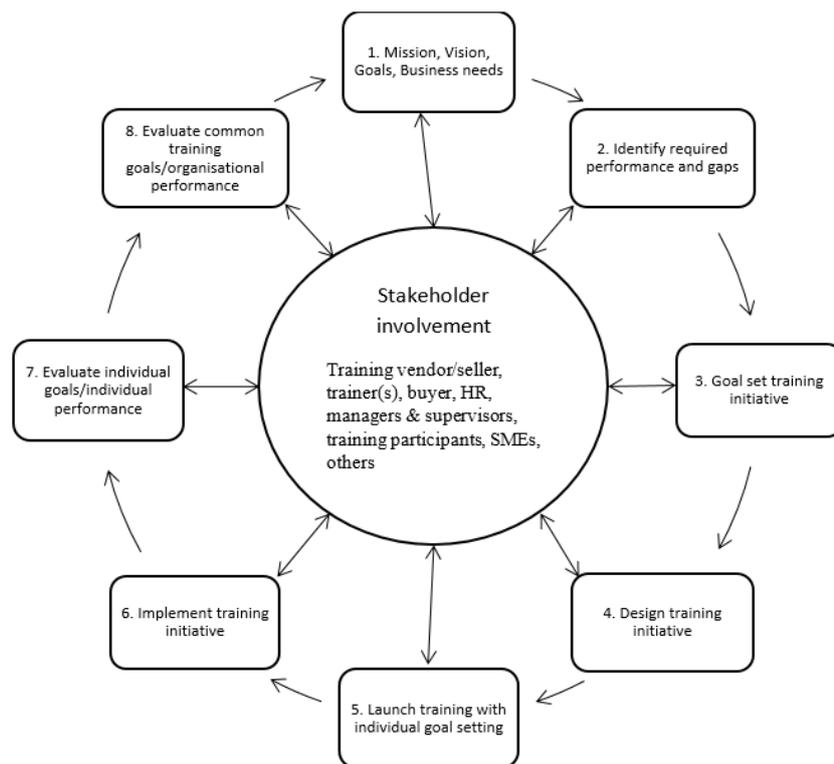


Figure 6.1 (Identical with Figure 4.4) Suggested Goal setting process similar to (Broad, 1997)

Difficulties were identified, categorised in difficulties concerning leadership, the process of setting goals, the buyer-seller relationship, lack of resources, individual characteristics of the training participant, and the match between participant and training. How to overcome these difficulties was also suggested. Figure 6.2 (same as figure 4.5) below was created to compile the results.

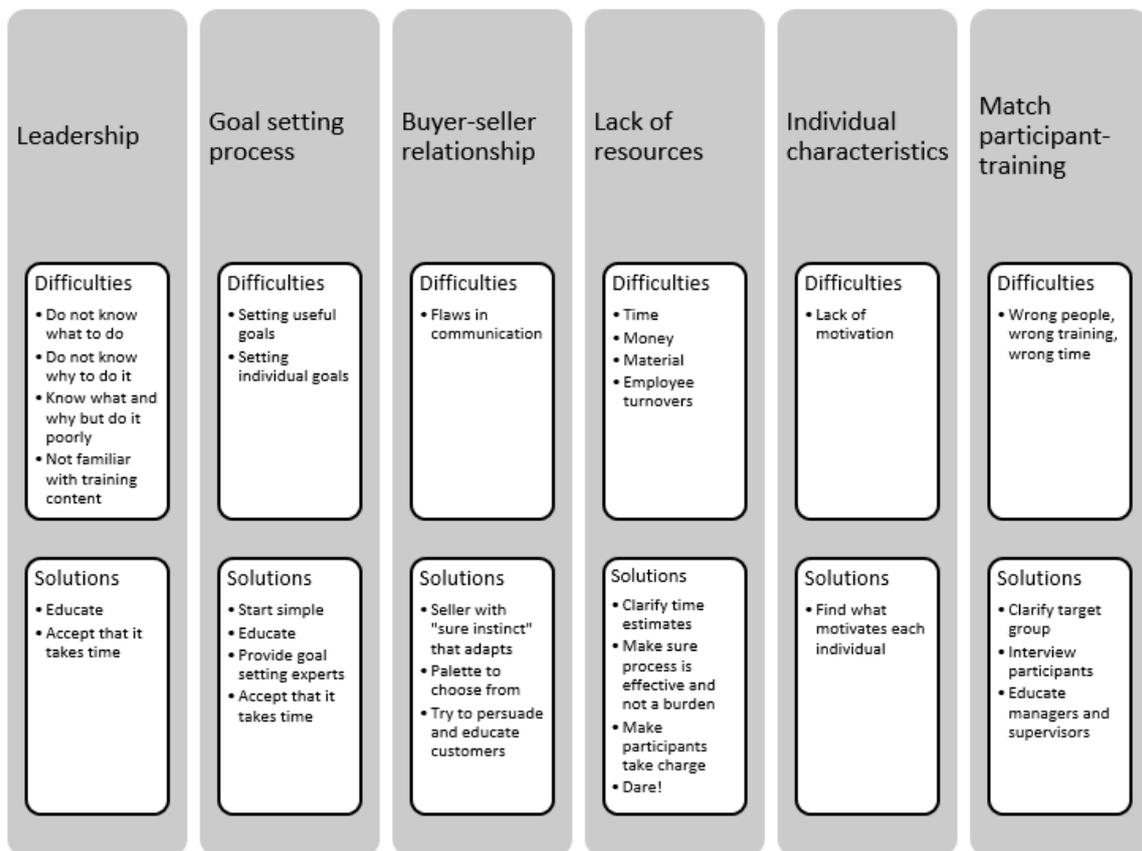


Figure 6.2 (Identical with Figure 4.5) Compilation of difficulties working with goal setting process and suggested solutions

Should training vendors consider working with goal setting to enhance customer training transfer? To quote Locke and Latham: “In reality, all organizations need goals if they are to function at all. It is not a question of if but how.” (Latham & Locke, 2013, p. 577), suggesting that goal setting happen in organisations whether we want to or not, and the same goes for trainings. The question that still needs an answer, and that this thesis has aimed at and has contributed to, is how to do this in the best possible manner.

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APPENDIX I INTERVIEW TEMPLATES

This appendix include the structure and content of the interview templates for the three different groups of interviewees: trainers, HR managers and training professionals. The interviews were conducted in Swedish and will therefore be written in Swedish here as well.

INTERVIEW TEMPLATES

The structure of the interview templates for all three groups of interviewees are seen below. The interviews were of semi-structured nature meaning that the questions below were used to structure the interview but there were room for follow-up questions and spontaneous questions. The templates included three parts: an introduction, the interview and a closing section. The interview questions are listed below in Swedish. The questions are focused on the interviewees background, methods to increase transfer and goal setting.

1. Hur länge har du arbetat med utbildning? Och så vidare.
2. Vad tror du är viktigt för att se till att deltagarna använder sina nya kunskaper/färdigheter när de kommer tillbaka till jobbet?
 - a. Innan utbildning?
 - b. Under utbildning?
 - c. Efter utbildning?
3. Vad gör du/ni idag för att underlätta för deltagares kommande användning av kunskaper/färdigheter?
 - a. Innan utbildning?
 - b. Under utbildning?
 - c. Efter utbildning?
4. Tror du att om deltagarna sätter mål innan/under/efter utbildning kommer det leda till att de använder de nya kunskaperna/färdigheterna mer när de kommer tillbaka till jobbet?
 - a. Varför/varför inte?
 - b. När tror du mål bör sättas? Innan, under eller efter utbildning? Varför?
 - c. Hur tror du att de borde sättas? (av individen själv, tillsammans med chef, av utbildningsledaren eller annan?) Varför?
 - d. Vilken typ av mål? Inriktade mot performance (användande) eller learning (lärande)? Distala (avlägsna) eller proximala (närläggna)?
 - e. Hur bör målen följas upp?
 - f. Vad skulle externa utbildningsleverantörer kunna ha för roll i detta?
5. Arbetar ni med målsättande idag?
 - a. Om ja hur? (Se följdfrågor ovan)
 - b. Om inte, varför?
 - i. Skulle ni vilja göra det? Varför/varför inte?
6. Vad ser du för svårigheter med att arbeta med målsättande som metod för att öka användandet av kunskaper/färdigheter när deltagarna är tillbaka på jobbet?
7. Hur skulle dessa svårigheter kunna överkommas?

APPENDIX II SURVEY

This appendix presents the survey given out to training participants, by presenting the introduction in the survey and the items in the survey. The survey was written in Swedish and will therefore be presented in Swedish here as well.

INTRODUCTION IN THE SURVEY

This introduction was included in the survey. It presents the researcher, the thesis, the purpose of the survey, information about anonymity, voluntariness and how to see results, time estimate of completing the survey, a thank you and contact information to the researcher and her supervisors.

Det här är en enkät som är en del av Kajsa Taylors examensarbete på Chalmers Tekniska Högskola, som görs i samarbete med Göteborgs Tekniska College. Examensarbetets fokus är att ta reda på hur Göteborgs Tekniska College kan utveckla sina företagsutbildningar för att ni kunder ska få större avkastning. Med andra ord, hur vi ska jobba för att ni ska kunna använda kunskaperna ni får på utbildning maximalt när ni kommer tillbaka till jobbet.

Syftet med enkäten är att få input kring hur ni på företaget arbetar idag med förberedelse och uppföljning av utbildningar och hur du skulle vilja arbeta med förberedelse och uppföljning av utbildningar för att få så stor nytta som möjligt av dem.

Enkäten är anonym. I början av enkäten ställs dock frågor om kön, ålder och befattning. Detta har med diskussion av urval att göra, och är ingenting som kommer att publiceras. Det är endast jag och mina handledare på Chalmers och Göteborgs Tekniska College som kommer att ha tillgång till dina svar, och data som publiceras kommer inte att kunna härledas tillbaka till dig.

Enkäten är frivillig. Du är fri att svara på de frågor du vill och att ta tillbaka dina svar fram till publiceringen i augusti genom att kontakta mig.

Resultaten av studien kommer att presenteras på Göteborgs Tekniska College och på Chalmers i slutet av augusti. Är du intresserad av att ta del av resultaten är du varmt välkommen att kontakta mig (se kontaktuppgifter nedan).

Att fylla i enkäten beräknas att ta ca 15 min.

Tack för din medverkan!

För frågor når du mig och mina handledare genom att mejla:

Kajsa Taylor, kajsat@student.chalmers.se

Handledare Chalmers: Jan Wickenberg, jan.wickenberg@chalmers.se

Handledare X: X, x.x@x.com

ITEMS IN THE SURVEY

Demographic questions:

- Gender
- Age
- Position in organisation

Questions and statements to consider, rating from 'not agreeing at all' to 'totally agreeing' (in Swedish):

1. Som en del av förberedelsen satte jag eller blev jag av min arbetsgivare tilldelad mål med utbildningen.
 Ja
 Nej
2. Jag upplever att dessa mål kommer att se till att de nya kunskaperna används när jag kommer tillbaka till jobbet.

Instämmer inte alls Instämmer helt

Kommentar:

Markera på skalan huruvida du instämmer med följande påstående genom att sätta ett kryss.

3. Jag tror att mål kring vad jag ska lära mig hade hjälpt mig att få större nytta av utbildningen i mitt dagliga arbete.

Instämmer inte alls Instämmer helt

Kommentar:

4. Jag tror att mål kring hur jag ska använda det jag har lärt mig hade hjälpt mig att få större nytta av utbildningen i mitt dagliga arbete.

Instämmer inte alls Instämmer helt

Kommentar:

5. Om jag hade blivit uppmanad att arbeta mot mål, önskar jag att de blivit satta...
 av mig innan utbildning
 av mig tillsammans med min chef innan utbildningen
 av min chef innan utbildningen
 av mig i slutet av utbildningen
 av mig tillsammans med kursdeltagare i slutet av utbildningen
 av [utbildningsföretaget] i samråd med mitt företag
 av annan: _____

Varför?

6. Om jag hade blivit uppmanad att arbeta mot mål, tror jag att det största hindret för deras uppfyllnad hade varit...
 att jag fått för lite stöd och uppmuntran från min chef.
 att jag själv inte prioriterat målen.
 att jag inte fått tillräcklig kunskap.
 att det inte avsätts tid.
 att målen varit otydliga och jag därmed inte vetat vad jag ska göra.
 Annat: _____