Developments in Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 9, 1982

TRAINEE V. TRAINEE SUBORDINATES EVALUATION OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Lane Kelley, University of Hawaii

ABSTRACT

Student evaluations. They are “objective”. The professor’s mean response on “how useful the material covered is for career preparation” is 3.21 on a numerical scale of 4.00 which is, significantly different than the colleges mean of 3.11 at the .01 level of significance. Is this really significant? In our experiential courses, we are probably evaluating our courses by this same method - the student evaluation. The purpose of this paper is several fold. Primarily it is to address the questions of evaluating training and secondly to describe a training model which seemingly is appropriate within an organizational behavior context. The research design illustrates the weakness of student/trainee evaluations and the evaluations of others. It also shows the necessity of pre and post measurements of change with control groups.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of a three-day session using an integrated didactic and experiential approach for training in interpersonal skills for supervisors. The integrated didactic and experiential training model is outlined in Toward Effective Counseling and Psychotherapy: Training and Practice by Charles B. Truax and Robert R. Carkhuff and also in Truax’s “The Training of NonProfessional Personnel in Therapeutic Interpersonal Relationships,” American Journal of Public Health, October, 1967. The objective of this training is to increase the trainees’ communication of accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth, and genuineness, The three central elements in this training approach have been summarized by Truax as (1) a therapeutic context in which the trainer communicates high levels of accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth, and genuineness to the trainees themselves; (2) a highly specific didactic training using research scales for “shaping” the trainees’ responses toward high levels of empathy, warmth, and genuineness; and (3) a quasi-group therapy experience which allows the emergence of the trainee’s own idiosyncratic therapeutic self through self-exploration and consequent integration of his didactic training with his personal values, goals, and life styles.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of a three-day session using an integrated didactic and experiential approach for training in interpersonal skills for supervisors. The integrated didactic and experiential training model is outlined in Toward Effective Counseling and Psychotherapy: Training and Practice by Charles B. Truax and Robert R. Carkhuff and also in Truax’s “The Training of NonProfessional Personnel in Therapeutic Interpersonal Relationships,” American Journal of Public Health, October, 1967. The objective of this training is to increase the trainees’ communication of accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth, and genuineness, The three central elements in this training approach have been summarized by Truax as (1) a therapeutic context in which the trainer communicates high levels of accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth, and genuineness to the trainees themselves; (2) a highly specific didactic training using research scales for “shaping” the trainees’ responses toward high levels of empathy, warmth, and genuineness; and (3) a quasi-group therapy experience which allows the emergence of the trainee’s own idiosyncratic therapeutic self through self-exploration and consequent integration of the didactic training with personal values, goals, and life styles.

The two trainers who conducted the session had considerable experience with the training model. Both trainers also had experience in rehabilitation services and counseling. A questionnaire administered at the end of the training to the trainees indicated that the trainers satisfied the requirement of communicating high levels of the therapeutic triad.

In order to evaluate the training, the Barrett-Lennard “Relationship Inventory” was administered to the subordinates of the trained and untrained supervisors before and thirty and ninety days after the training. The “Relationship Inventory” is designed to gather data and provide measuring scales for four variables: empathic understanding, level of regard, unconditionality of regard, and congruence. The trainees also evaluated the training in terms of its ability to increase the three behavioral objectives.

THE TRAINING MODEL

The training model for this study was constructed by Truax and Carkhuff and is described at length in their text, Toward Effective Counseling and Psychotherapy: Training and Practice. The three central elements in this training approach have been summarized by Truax as (1) a therapeutic context in which the supervisor communicates high levels of accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth, and genuineness to the trainees themselves; (2) a highly specific didactic training using research scales for ‘shaping’ the trainees’ responses toward high levels of empathy, warmth, and genuineness; and (3) a quasi-group therapy experience which allows the emergence of the trainee’s own idiosyncratic therapeutic self through self-exploration and consequent integration of his didactic training with his personal values, goals, and life styles.

Since the purpose of training for interpersonal relationships clearly involves attitudinal and behavioral change, the variables found to be effective in psychotherapists are logically applied to trainer-trainee relations. This means that the trainer should provide the conditions of empathic understanding and non-possessive warmth for the trainee in a relationship characterized by genuineness.

The didactic training places emphasis upon the direct teaching, structuring, or shaping of the thinking and responding of the trainee. Learning and training of the therapeutic triad takes place within a structured situation using the “Accurate Empathy Scale,” the “Genuineness Scale ,” and the “Non-Possessive Warmth Scale.”

The aim of the quasi-group therapy experience is first to give the trainees experiential meaning for their role and by their own participation. The second purpose is to provide an opportunity for self-exploration of their own goals, values, and experiences. It is hoped that this encounter will allow the trainees to move toward integrating their personality, values, and goals with the didactic and cognitive learning. This experience is not aimed at uncovering deep emotional problems, thus the term quasi-group therapy.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The research for this study involved a pre-training, post-training (thirty days after), and follow-up (ninety days after) administration of the “Relationship Inventory” in order to determine the effectiveness of the Truax-Carkhuff Training Model for a three-day training session. The “Relationship Inventory” was administered to subordinates of trained and untrained supervisors. The training session was also evaluated by the trainees.

The symbols for each test were specifically, F = empathy, UR = unconditionality of regard, LR level of regard, and fl genuineness mean scores. “A” denotes the experimental group and “B” the control group. The number “1” stands for the pre-training test, “2” for the post-training test, and “3” for the follow-up test.
Empathy. There were no significant difference between the experimental and control group empathy scores for pre, post, or follow-up testing. There was change in the experimental scores between the pre, post, and follow-up period but when you compare the change in the experimental versus the change in the control, it is not a significant change.

Level of Regard. There was no significant difference between the experimental group’s level of regard scores and the control group’s level of regard scores before or thirty days after the training. There was a difference ninety days after the training. This change was also evident within the experimental group and the change was significant with the experimental group showing positive change the control group negative change.

Unconditionality of Regard. The experimental and control groups unconditionality of regard scores were not significantly different for the pre, post, or follow-up measurements. The changes within groups and changes versus change measurement also were not significant.

Genuineness. There was no significant difference between the genuineness measurement of experimental group and control group for the pre, post, or follow-up tests. There was no significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group, but the difference between the experimental group’s pretest and follow-up scores was significant at the .05 level. The experimental supervisors were perceived as being more genuine ninety days after the training.

The statistics for testing the difference in the change in means of the experimental versus the change in means of the control group are presented in Table 1. The change in scores was significant at the .05 level of confidence.

A questionnaire was completed by the trainees so that there could be a comparison between the “trainees” assessment versus the changes in behavior as assessed by subordinate - the ultimate objective of the training. The trainees assessment was that it was effective in terms of changing behavior for all three variables and perhaps a little more effective for genuineness than empathy or communication of warmth.
and feel about the world and others. Third, it forces the question of the objectivity of trainee evaluations. Previous research by this author indicates that the relationship of the trainer-trainee effects the trainee's assessment of the training. Given that most training is evaluated by the trainees, instructors/trainers must be aware of the impact of that relationship and their training success.

REFERENCES


