

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**A descriptive study of training products and practice,  
using a field test of the Evaluation of External  
Training (EET) Tool.**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Business Studies in Human Resource Management at  
Massey University, New Zealand.**

**Lance Ian Gray**

**1996**

658.312404

Qra

DC 20

---

## ABSTRACT

The growth of the National Qualifications Framework since its inception in 1993 has seen a corresponding increase in training products entering the market as competition for the training and education dollar increases. What tools do public and private enterprise managers have, to differentiate between good and poor training products?

The purpose of the present study is to design, implement and formatively evaluate a tool for assessing the quality of external training products. The tool would be piloted as a field test in the context of a prospective training purchaser evaluating a training product for possible purchase.

Using "snowball" sampling, seven informants: five females and two males, provided training products of their choice for evaluation using the Evaluation of External Training (EET) Tool. Informants represented central and local government; small and medium sized private enterprises.

The present study was divided into two distinct stages: a background interview and the evaluation interview. The background interview used the qualitative technique of a semi-structured, in-depth interview that allowed the informant to discuss a variety of topical issues without the constraint of predetermined answers.

From the background interviews a typology of informants was developed; building on existing research by McMorland (1990). Informants in the present study were differentiated by training context: internal or external to the organisation; and employment type: primary or secondary. Using McMorland's typology three internal trainers were further differentiated to training manager, training coordinator and training consultant. Informants came to training indirectly from other careers where their talent for training was recognised; a lack of a first qualification in training has seen many seek qualifications to support their new career.

---

A typology of informant issues was developed showing the competing demands placed on managers and trainers by the issues of resources and accountability. The fundamental resource issue for informants was time to develop employees to a standard; this was balanced against the managers desire for continuous production. The issue of accountability for informants was stark: accountability ended at the delivery of objectives; transfer of training to the workplace was seen as management's responsibility.

The second stage of the present study was a field test of EET (Evaluation of External Training) to the informant's training product. Using a structured interview format all informants were asked to provide evidence of 18 training outputs provided under the four components of needs analysis, design, implementation and evaluation.

Four of seven training products passed the threshold of 75% over the 18 outputs as quality training products. Three products that failed to reach the threshold shared similar deficiencies: poor needs analysis and evaluation outputs. These were outputs informants in the present study were not generally required to provide, or rewarded for providing. For the growth of training as a profession it is suggested trainers build relationships with managers that allow for the maximum leverage from the training dollar.

EET as a tool was used more in a developmental context than in the purchasing context as proposed because ultimately informants realised their product was not up for actual purchase. The strength of EET is in identifying key outputs of training products; a weakness is that users need training knowledge to be able to converse effectively with trainers. A formative evaluation of EET identified confusing output and quality descriptions which were amended as part of the present study. Throughout the present study there existed a gulf between the language of academic training and the informant's or practitioner's experience with the researcher continually re-phrasing and clarifying "terms".

---

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To acknowledge those who have supported my studies for the year ignores the support I received in years previous. I especially thank my friends at Whenua-it Trust and Nelson Polytechnic for giving me the opportunity to return to Massey University. I would like to thank Mum & Dad for their support in my continued learning; and to Fiona who has shown me life outside study. Special thanks to Barbara Nunn who provided transport from Wanganui and debate along the way; and, Anna Jameson who I have shared an office and much company over the year. I would also like to thank Dr Philip Dewe, Head of Department of Human Resource Management; Dr Lesley Frederikson, my advisor, for her confidence in my research ability; and Philip Ramsey, my supervisor, for his unbounded optimism in the idea this research report is based upon.

---

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Abstract</b>		i-ii.
<b>Acknowledgements</b>		iii.
<b>Table of Contents</b>		iv-vi.
<b>List of Abbreviations</b>		vii.
<b>List of Tables</b>		viii.
<b>List of Figures</b>		ix.
<b>1. Literature Review</b>		
1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Definition of Training	1
1.2	New Zealand Training Context	2
1.3	New Zealand Training Research	4
1.4	Trainer Professionalism	7
1.5	Trainer Accountability	10
1.6	Management Accountability	12
1.7	Trainer Effectiveness/ Assessment	13
1.8	Training Evaluation	16
1.9	Benchmarking	18
1.10	Evaluation of External Training Products	20
<b>2. Methodology - Background Interviews</b>		
2.0	Introduction	23
2.1	Purposeful Sampling	23
2.2	Informants	24
2.3	Summary of Informant Training Products	25
2.4	Informed Consent	26
2.5	Background Interview	27
2.6	In-depth Interviewing	28
2.7	Interview Procedure	29
2.8	Processing of Interviews	30
2.9	Data Analysis	30

---

<b>3.</b>	<b>Methodology - Evaluation of External Training (EET) Tool</b>	
3.0	Introduction	32
3.1	Models for HRD Practice	32
3.2	Human Resource Development Outputs	33
3.3	Output Quality Requirements	34
3.4	Design and Development of EET	34
3.5	Construction of EET	36
3.6	Structured Interview	40
3.7	Administration of EET	41
3.8	Processing and Analysis of EET	41
3.9	Quality Threshold for EET	42
<b>4.</b>	<b>Results - Background Interviews</b>	
4.0	Experience and Education	43
4.1	Trainer Employment	43
4.2	Fundamental Training Issues	45
4.3	Accountability	46
4.4	Primary Role as Trainer	48
4.5	Training Model	48
4.6	Training Policies of Organisations	48
4.7	Informant Training Practices	49
<b>5.</b>	<b>Results - Evaluation of External Training (EET) Tool</b>	
5.0	Training Products	54
5.1	Training Outputs	56
5.2	Needs Analysis	56
5.3	Design	57
5.4	Implementation	58
5.5	Evaluation	59
<b>6.</b>	<b>Formative Evaluation of EET</b>	
6.0	Introduction	60
6.1	Revisions to EET	60
6.2	Review of Outputs	62
	6.2.0 Needs Analysis	62
	6.2.1 Design & Development	63
	6.2.2 Implementation	63
	6.2.3 Evaluation	64
6.3	Effectiveness of EET	64

---

<b>7. Discussion</b>		
7.0	Introduction - Background Interviews	66
7.1	Informant Education & Experience	67
7.2	Trainer Roles	68
7.3	Outputs of Internal vs External Trainers	72
7.4	Fundamental Training Issues	73
7.5	Accountability	74
7.6	Public Sector Training Research	76
7.7	Introduction - EET	78
7.8	Needs Analysis	78
7.9	Training Design	80
7.10	Implementation	81
7.11	Evaluation	85
<b>8. Implications for future research</b>		87
<b>References</b>		89
<b>Appendices</b>		
Appendix A. - Information Sheets		97
Appendix B. - Background Interview Questions		98
Appendix C. - Evaluation of External Training (EET) Tool		99
Appendix D. - Informant Training Product Evaluations Using EET		111
Appendix E. - Revised Evaluation of External Training (EET) Tool		153
Appendix F. - Suggested Questions For EET		168

---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASTD	American Society for Training & Development
CRI	Criterion Referenced Instruction
EET	Evaluation of External Training
ETSA	Education Training and Support Agency
HRD	Human Resource Development
IPMNZ	Institute of Personnel Management New Zealand
ISA	Instructional Systems Association
ISD	Instructional Systems Design
ITO	Industry Training Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NZATD	New Zealand Association for Training & Development
NZEF	New Zealand Employers' Federation
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
PTE	Private Training Establishment
RITA	Research in Training in Auckland
TTI	Trainer Task Inventory

---

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 4.1	Typology of Trainers in the Present Study
Table 5.0	Training Product Scores Using EET
Table 5.0.1	Training Products Ranked by Weighting
Table 5.0.2	Example of Scoring Using EET
Table 7.2	Typology of Trainers "Within" the Organisation in the Present Study

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

- Figure 3.2 HRD Units of Analysis
- Figure 3.5.1 Instructional Systems Design (ISD) Model
- Figure 3.5.2 Evaluation of External Training (EET)
- Figure 3.5.3 Outputs for Evaluation of External Training Tool
- Figure 4.3 Typology of Informant Training Issues