THE DIVIDE BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND BUSINESS PRACTICE. EXPLORING TRAINING EVALUATION PRACTICES AND THEIR PERCEIVED VALUE IN CORPORATE SOUTH AFRICA.

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PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work, from conceptualisation to execution. To the best of my knowledge this dissertation contains no material written by another person, except where due acknowledgement has been made. I have not previously submitted this dissertation in its entirety or in part to this university or to any other university.

Signed by candidate

Signature

27-04-2018

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved boy,

Rooney Montgomery.

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ABSTRACT

While theorists and evaluation experts argue about the importance of evaluating training as a key business and training function, the practice around the globe has for many years been limited to the collection of reaction-level data (trainee satisfaction). Despite this trend, a chapter on training evaluation is still included in the most recent training and human resource development textbooks. Additionally, the practice of training evaluation still forms part of undergraduate and postgraduate human resource curricula. Yet we know little about the state of training evaluation in the South African context and its practical relevance in modern day corporate environments. This research therefore aimed to investigate a) the extent to which South African corporates are engaging in systematic training evaluation and what these practices are; and b) the extent to which South African corporates recognise the importance of, and use, training evaluation as a vehicle for organisational learning and change. Results indicate a disconnect between academic and business practice. South African corporates are highly committed to training due to their legal obligations and incentives to upskill employees but the same commitment for training evaluation does not exist. The corporates sampled are not interested or willing to perform training evaluations to determine the effectiveness of their training and development investments. These results raise the question of whether or not training evaluation, in its theoretically positioned conceptualisation, is still relevant in the highly demanding corporate environment. Based on the empirical findings, this thesis proposes a substantial shift in how training evaluation is conceived and conducted in order for organisations to engage meaningfully with the effectiveness of their training interventions and not waste opportunities for organisational learning and change.

Keywords: training evaluation, corporate, South Africa, organisational learning, change

Chapter One: Introduction

The rationale for this thesis was borne out of my education as a training evaluator as well as my work experience after graduating. By way of introduction, a brief history of my experiences and how this thesis topic developed, is presented below.

My interest in training and development had been sparked by an Organisational Psychology course presented in the third year of my undergraduate degree. In 2007, the University of Cape Town (UCT) established the first specialised honours (4th year) degree in training evaluation in Africa. It was marketed as a niche honours degree that aimed to address the lack of training evaluation competencies amongst Human Resource (HR) professionals and practitioners in the country. As a then recent graduate, enthusiastic about training and development, and the potential benefits of being able to determine the effectiveness of such corporate interventions, I registered for the one-year honours degree. I was taught a full syllabus dedicated to training evaluation, from planning an evaluation to the calculation of the Return on Investment (ROI) for a training programme. The course included several training evaluation models and theorists, such as Kirkpatrick, Phillips, Kearns, Stufflebeam, Warr, Bird, Rackham, and Brinkerhoff.

Six months into the degree, I was employed as a trainer and HR consultant. It was exciting to be working in the Human Resource Development (HRD) field and to practically apply the knowledge gained in lectures to the “real” world. Part of my role was to draft tender proposals for training interventions. Each proposal included the training intervention as well as a plan for training evaluation. During the two years spent in this job (2007 – 2008), every client asked to have the training evaluation plan removed and the budget readjusted to include only the provision of training.

This was a disappointing and unexpected disjuncture from what I had learned constituted best practice in HRD implementation. In the postgraduate degree, I had developed evaluation skills and competencies and was eager to demonstrate the value of post-training reflections for both individual and organisational learning.

Despite my strong motivation to include training evaluation as part of the client's package, not one corporate was interested. This lack of interest was attributed to the fact that training evaluation was a relatively new discipline in South Africa and I assumed that with time its necessity and advantages would be acknowledged and subsequently practised.

In 2009, I began my academic career at UCT in the Section of Organisational Psychology. One of my key responsibilities was convening and teaching on the honours programme in training evaluation. To date, I teach a module on organisational learning and training evaluation. Each year, however, alumni report that while they are able to obtain employment in training and development, they are unable to implement training evaluations. Despite their best efforts, their employing organisations do not acknowledge the need for training evaluation and are not interested in the practice.

As an academic, this is a particular concern because I stress the importance of training evaluation in my lectures. In the most recent training and development, and HR development, textbooks (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013; Bhattacharyya, 2015; Coetzee, Botha, Kiley, Truman, & Tshilongamulenzhe, et al., 2012; Erasmus et al., 2015; Noe, 2016) each still dedicates a chapter to training evaluation, positioning the practice as an important final phase in the training process. Yet in the corporate reality, training evaluation seems to be shrugged off as unnecessary. This disconnect between theory on one hand and experience and practical reality on the other stimulated this research.

The problem with a reluctance to evaluate training is that it deprives an organisation of the opportunity to learn and adjust. Knowledge acquisition through training and development is a starting point in the organisational learning cycle (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999; Huber, 1991; Pawlowsky, 2001). The evaluation of training and development interventions provides the necessary feedback loops to complete the learning cycle (Alavi et al., 2014; Curado, 2006; De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Kim, 1993; Knipfer, Kump, Wessel, & Cress, 2012; Levitt & March, 1988; Lipshitz et al., 2007; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000; Senge, 1990; Wang & Ahmed,

2003). Thus, organisational learning, training evaluation and change are intricately interlinked.

The volatile nature of today's internal and external corporate environments requires modern day organisations to continually learn and change (Alavi, Abd. Wahab, Muhamad, & Arbab Shirani, 2014; Haase, Franco, & Félix, 2015; Pantouvakis & Bouranta, 2017; Seo, Lee, & Moon, 2016; Waddell & Pio, 2015; Za, Spagnoletti, & North-Samardzic, 2014). This ability has become increasingly necessary for organisations to remain relevant, improve productivity and efficiency, be innovative, gain competitive advantage, and ultimately survive (Chen, Lin, & Chang, 2009; Hu, Wu, & Shi, 2016; Lee & Lee, 2014; Standing, Jackson, Larsen, Suseno, Fulford, & Gengatharen; 2016; Tam & Gray, 2016).

Organisational learning is essentially about reflection, about learning from both data sources and individual experience (Preskill, 2017). Torres and Preskill (2001, p. 388) define organisational learning as "a continuous process of growth and improvement that uses information or feedback about both processes and outcomes to make changes". Through the evaluation of policies, practices, and processes, organisations can obtain feedback about the effectiveness of their work, which can result in learning and growth. Evaluation of training provides one avenue by which an organisation can learn. Organisational learning may take place without evaluating training. However, training evaluation enhances the process of learning by investigating individual employee learning and is therefore an important training and business practice.

The data obtained through training evaluation enables organisations to assess whether a) the training has been successful for employees in acquiring new knowledge, skills, and abilities; b) the programmes implemented require improvement or adjustment; c) employees are engaging in transfer of learning; and d) the individual employee's learning is being shared collectively in the organisation to promote organisational change and learning (Applebaum & Gallagher, 2000; Basarab & Root, 2001; Casey; 2006; Griffon, 2014; Fulmer & Keys, 2005; Kraiger, Ford, & Salas, 1993; Levitt & March, 1988; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000; Phillips,

2006; Sackett & Mullen, 1993; Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger, & Smith-Jentsch, 2012; Torres, Preskill, & Piontek, 2005; Topno, 2012).

Within the context of South Africa, organisations are mandated to train and upskill their employees, based on the country's history and subsequent skills development legislation[1]. If management expect individual learning, facilitated through training, to result in organisational learning, there is a need to assess whether the training has been effective. As outlined above, anecdotal data suggests that few organisations implement training evaluation practices. No systematic research has, however, been conducted on the current state of training evaluation in South Africa and whether corporates are learning from their training and development interventions. Thus, this research aimed to investigate the following research questions:

1.) To what extent do South African corporates engage in systematic training evaluation and what are the evaluation practices employed?

2.) To what extent do South African corporates recognise the importance of training evaluation and use it as a vehicle for organisational learning and change?

Chapter Two of the thesis provides an overview of the theoretical framework of the research, which is situated in organisational learning. This is followed by two consecutive literature review chapters on training evaluation. Chapter Three is a descriptive review of training evaluation models and frameworks and Chapter Four presents training evaluation trends and practices around the globe. The methodology of the research is provided in Chapter Five, followed by two results chapters. The thesis concludes with Chapter Eight, within which the key results and implications for business practice are discussed.

[1] Appendix A provides international readers with a brief history of apartheid education and training as well as the South African legislation implemented post-1994 to redress apartheid's inequalities in both education and work opportunities for different population groups.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework: Organisational Learning

A dominant message in today's globalised world, characterised by rapid advances in technological development, is that only organisations that adapt quickly, innovate and change continually, will survive the fourth industrial revolution (Alavi et al., 2014; Haase et al., 2015; Pantouvakis & Bouranta, 2017; Seo et al., 2016; Waddell & Pio, 2015; Za et al., 2014). It is well-known that the need to change in response to external environmental expectations and pressures requires an organisation not only to adjust its structures, products and services but also its manner of thinking and acting (Casey, 2006; Hasse et al., 2015; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000; Waddell & Pio, 2015). This adaptive capability is referred to as an organisation's intrinsic way of operating. The capacity to perform this adaptability lies in organisational learning.

Lessons from practice in the field of organisational learning suggest that the rapid pace of change can surpass the ability to learn. As such, organisations need to improve their learning capacity so that the learning occurring inside the organisation equals or is greater than the level of change outside the organisation (Edwards, 2009; Gronhaug & Stone, 2012; Marquardt, 2011; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000; Waddell & Pio, 2015; Za et al., 2014). The quality of learning and the speed at which learning occurs influences the extent to which an organisation can compete in the international market.

Research suggests that slow-learning companies will cease to exist (Applebaum & Gallagher, 2000; Edwards, 2009; Gronhaug & Stone, 2012; Hasse et al., 2015; Marquardt, 2011). It is for this reason that organisation-wide learning is a core competency that contemporary, forward-thinking and competitive organisations are striving to attain.

This chapter outlines organisational learning theory as the frame in which this thesis is based. It provides the reader with the theoretical argument about the link between organisational learning and sustainability, and how the evaluation of training plays a key role in this relationship. The chapter is presented in seven sections. The

first section provides the foundational theories of how employees learn in the workplace, as organisational learning is assumed to result from individual learning. The second and third sections details the process of how individual employee learning leads to organisational learning. The fourth section of the chapter discusses how organisational learning and knowledge generation are parallel processes. In the fifth section, the conditions necessary for organisational learning to occur are presented. The sixth section details the importance of learning for organisational growth. The chapter concludes by discussing the need for training evaluation as an important parallel practice for organisational learning because even with a learning culture, organisational learning is unlikely without the transfer of learning taking place.

1. How Humans Learn

Many theorists have attempted to explain how individuals learn. From classical theorists such as Plato around 400 BC, to behavioural psychologists like Skinner and Pavlov, to cognitive psychologists like Piaget. Each sought to explain how human beings interpret stimuli, construct meaning and ultimately learn. Consequently, there are a host of complex learning theories that deal with learning, including those by Vygotsky, lleris, Jarvis, Wenger, and Bloom. As this thesis concentrates on organisational learning and learning in the workplace, it is outside its scope to delve into the educational and development theorists. The content provided in this section is therefore limited to the work of three researchers who, after a thorough review of workplace learning specifically, were identified as seminal theoreticians[2] in the field, namely: Argyris (1976), Argyris and Schön (1978) and Kolb (1984). As such, the literature presented below details how individual learning in the workplace context was originally conceptualised. This is followed by a discussion of how individual learning can result in organisational learning.

The individual learning cycle.

Individual learning in the workplace generally involves two conditions, namely, acquisition and conceptualisation. Acquisition is when an individual acquires a new

[2] Older references are cited when describing seminal texts

skill or new knowledge and conceptualisation is an individual's ability to process and understand how to apply the new skill or knowledge (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Curado, 2006; Elkjaer, 2004; Kim, 1993). Learning occurs when understanding and insights are connected to the performance of certain behaviours (Argyris & Schön, 1976; Argyris, 2003). Experiences, therefore, play a central role in the acquisition of new knowledge and how it is transformed into behaviour.

The role of experience in the individual learning cycle.

Several discipline founders in psychology, including Dewey, Lewin, Piaget, James, and Jung, argued that individual learning takes place when people adapt their way of thinking based on their experiences (Heffler, 2001; Kolb & Kolb, 2008). In other words, when an experience influences an individual's thoughts (and subsequent actions) learning has occurred. This is also known as the cognitive approach to learning. Kolb (1984) incorporated this cognitive approach to learning in his experiential learning theory. His theory is founded on the work of these prominent scholars and, as such, is a popular theory for explaining how individual learning occurs. While his theory was not specifically designed to explain workplace learning, most of the theories of individual learning in the workplace stem from it. Thus Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, depicted in Figure 1, is the foundation for understanding how employees learn. The original theory[3] is discussed below, followed by how it applies to employee learning.

[3] I acknowledge that there have been adaptions of this model by other theorists, but for the purposes of this chapter, the seminal work by Kolb as it relates to the process of individual learning is described.

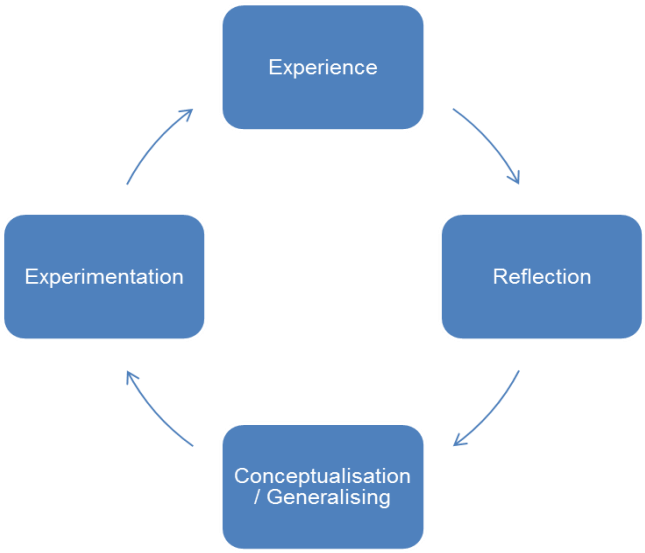

Figure 1. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle.

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory presents the process of individual learning as a four-stage cycle, namely, concrete experience; reflection; abstract conceptualisation / generalising (thinking); and action experimentation (doing) (Drejer, 2000; Heffler, 2001; Kolb, 1984; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000). The cycle begins with individuals experiencing or actively observing an event. The assessment and reflection of this experience enables them to construct an abstract concept or generalisation. The individual then tests the concept by implementing it (performing a behaviour) and this implementation then results in another concrete experience, which requires reflection, and so, the cycle continues (Kim, 1993; Kolb, 1985; Kolb & Kolb, 2008). Thus, the theory characterises individual learning as continuous shifts between action and reflection (Kolb, 1985; Kolb & Kolb, 2008; Ross, Smith, & Roberts, 1995). Memory is an important component of the learning process, because human memory influences how individuals interpret new information or experiences. A criticism of Kolb's experiential learning cycle is that the theory does not account for memory (Kim, 1993).

The role of memory in the individual learning cycle.

Memory would influence the experience component in Kolb's (1984) model because behaviours and responses to experiences are largely based on stored memories. Senge (1990) refers to this as mental models.

Mental models are how individuals understand the world. They determine a person's habitual or typical behaviours, including the way an individual solves problems and approaches tasks (Cassidy, 2004). A mental model can almost be viewed as an individual's operating system. It influences how individuals see the world and how they make meaning (Denzau & North, 1994; Senge, 1990). Mental models assist individuals to understand and explain behaviours and construct expectations of what is likely to occur when a particular behaviour is observed. In addition, an individual's mental model helps them to remember the relationships between various components in their environment (Mathieu, Heffner, Goodwin, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers, 2000). In this way, memory and mental models influence the experience and reflection components of Kolb's cycle.

Argyris and Schön, (1978) hypothesised that mental models are generated through operational learning and are adapted and changed when an individual engages in conceptual learning. These two types of learning are discussed below.

Operational and conceptual learning in the individual learning cycle.

Through operational learning, individuals acquire the necessary information on how to complete a task (the know-how). This type of learning is usually procedural and is memorised as a routine, for example, how to operate a machine or how to drive a specific route to work (Kim, 1993). This routine then becomes part of the individual's mental model which guides their actions and behaviours. Thus, individuals can execute the routine function when necessary, sometimes without thinking about it like when driving a car. Agyris (1976) refers to this as an individual's theories-in-use. Theories-in-use are micro theories of action that individuals use to carry out specific, routine tasks. It is the knowledge an individual relies on to inform his/her behaviour and responses. As the individual knows what to do, they can use their current knowledge structures to perform tasks effectively (Argyris, 1976; Clifford & Thorpe, 2007).

Conceptual learning, on the other hand, is thinking about why a certain function is performed (the know-why). Sometimes, new information or a new experience makes an individual question their mental models. Through critiquing how they think about and perform certain functions, individuals may adapt their

mental models resulting in a new set of behaviours and/or thought processes (Kim, 1993).

As with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory where learning is an ongoing shift between action and reflection, individual learning also involves a continuous, cyclical process of operational learning that is informed by existing mental models, and conceptual learning that shapes these mental models. As mental models are based on the memory of prior experiences, this supports the idea that memory is an important element which should be incorporated into Kolb's (1984) learning cycle.

The description above was provided as a foundation to understand individual learning. Given that this thesis is grounded in organisational learning, the next section illustrates how the individual learning cycle has been applied in the workplace setting for employee learning.

2. From Individual Learning in the Workplace to Organisational Learning

Within an organisational setting, individual employees may learn via the individual learning cycle as described above. Training as well as error detection have, however, been cited as primary prompts for learning to occur (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Farjad, 2012; Hu, Found, Williams, & Mason, 2015; Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, Senge, & Smith, 2000; Robinson, 2001).

Individual learning through training.

The terms 'learning' and 'training' are often used simultaneously, where learning occurs from the information that is received through the training process. Thus, learning and training go hand in hand (Kleiner et al., 2000). Organisations can use training to advance individual learning (the know-how) and in so doing inform the behaviours of employees (the know-why). Farjad (2012) argues that training is the most pervasive and important strategy to develop individual learning, to upskill employees and to increase individual knowledge capital.

Individual learning through error detection.

Error detection holds true for learning in multiple contexts but has specific resonance in organisational settings. By dealing with errors in a particular way, individual learning can lead to organisational learning. Employees perform their daily roles and responsibilities as part of their job according to shared mental models or a set of assumptions within the organisation. These shared mental models can be viewed as the organisation's memory and routines (rules, procedures and strategies) (Kim, 1993). The routines performed by employees are dependent on history because past experiences and performance have resulted in the routine being practised. It is through these practised routines that the organisation is able to operate (Levitt & March, 1988).

While performing their routine tasks, employees may encounter a new, sometimes problematic situation. Such an instance is referred to as error detection. It occurs when the employees observe a mismatch between what was expected and what was observed because of their actions (Argyris & Schön, 1978). In these situations, employees do not have a clear sense of the correct action to take. Commonly, they will respond to the situation through a thought process, enabling them to conceptualise the problem, i.e. the mismatch, and restructure their activities accordingly (Argyris & Schön, 1978). The way in which they respond to the situation initiates the individual learning cycle in the workplace context. This can either lead to single-loop or double-loop learning.

Single- and double-loop learning.

The introduction of single- and double-loop learning shifted the way theorists and researchers understood human behaviour at work and how employees learn. Single-loop learning occurs when corrective action is used to resolve immediate problems encountered so that the employee continues to remain effective (Al-Abrrow, 2014; Argyris, 1976; Hu et al., 2015; Lawler & Sillitoe, 2013; Vakola & Rezgui, 2000). Through reflection the employee learns to make small adjustments to how they perform a behaviour and this resolves the error (Argyris & Schön, 1978). The reason for the error is, however, not investigated in single-loop learning.

During single-loop learning the employee makes no changes to the underlying assumptions that govern their routine behaviour (Al-Abrrow, 2014; Agyris, 2003; Lawler & Sillitoe, 2013; Tucker, Edmondson, & Spear, 2002). They simply receive feedback that something is not working and make choices to rectify it. Thus, this kind of learning will not result in any improvements or advances for the organisation, although single-loop learning is still essential for the organisation to remain functional (Al-Abrrow, 2014; Lawler & Sillitoe, 2013; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000).

In double-loop learning, when a problem is encountered, the employee will re-examine their prior learning and assumptions and reflect on their values, beliefs and norms (Al-Abrrow, 2014; Argyris, 1976; Argyris & Schön, 1978; Lawler & Sillitoe, 2013; Vakola & Rezgui, 2000). As opposed to the quick solution of single-loop learning, in double-loop learning the employee determines whether there is a better way to perform the function so the error is not repeated (Argyris & Schön, 1978). This may involve the employee questioning the purpose of their corrective actions, whether the knowledge they are using is still relevant, and whether the learned behaviour is the best course of action (Clifford & Thorpe, 2007). Based on their assessment, the employee may develop new solutions, strategies, approaches and norms that they wish to implement as part of their routine. Thus, the error has enabled them to learn and adjust their theories-in-use and mental models.

Double-loop learning may also occur because of training and subsequent knowledge acquisition. When employees learn something new in a training intervention, this knowledge may be used to critique how they perform certain functions and see whether there are better ways to complete their work. Learning from training can therefore also result in employees adjusting their theories-in-use.

Single-loop learning is necessary for an organisation to function effectively, but without double-loop learning an organisation cannot improve and achieve organisational learning. With a focus only on remedy, single-loop learning impedes the possibility of determining the underlying causes of problems, which inhibits further learning. Thus, errors can persist if employees do not use double-loop learning to question the assumptions guiding their actions, and effect change (Argyris, 1976; Drejer, 2000; Tucker et al., 2002). Through double-loop learning, the

employee uses a different set of actions or behaviours based on the feedback obtained, leading to improvements within the organisation, which may result in continual upgrading and change (Argyris, 2002).

Workplace learning researchers argue that it is important for employees to engage in both types of learning, but specifically double-loop learning because this facilitates organisational learning (Argyris, 2002; Drejer, 2000; Levitt & March, 1988; Tucker et al., 2002).

The mere sum of individual learning, however, does not lead to organisational learning (Wang & Ahmed, 2003). Research on organisational learning has revealed that although organisations learn through the experiences and actions of their individual members, the process through which learning occurs at the organisational level is fundamentally different (Kim, 1993). Organisational learning is complex and is discussed in the following section.

Can an Organisation Learn?

In organisational studies, constructs or non-human entities are frequently described as having human capacity. Organisational learning is a prime example of this anthropomorphism as organisations are often characterised as being able to learn like individuals (Lipshitz, Friedman, & Popper, 2007; Stacey, 2003). Whether individuals or organisations learn is a long-queried debate. An organisation is not a living organism and therefore, strictly speaking, is not able to learn. However, in the language of organisational learning, learning is ascribed to organisations.

One possible way around this paradox is to focus on organisational learning as an activity (Stacey, 2003). Individual members in an organisation learn and, based on their learning, changes are made to the intrinsic environment, operations and processes within the organisation. It is under these conditions, researchers argue, that organisations learn. Thus, the term ‘organisational learning’ is the metaphor used when individual learning occurs collectively to result in changes and improvements to organisational functions (Cho, Kim, Park, & Cho, 2013; Curado, 2006; Kim, 2005; Lawler & Sillitoe, 2013; Vakola & Rezgui, 2000).

Henceforth in this thesis, when the term ‘individual learning’ is used, it refers to individual thought processes and actions. When the term ‘organisational learning’ is used, it refers to the changes that have been made within the organisation as a result of individual members’ learning.

3. The Process of Organisational Learning

An organisation can learn in numerous ways however, the dominant view is that organisational learning takes place when individual learning is shared and embedded into the organisational environment (Alavi et al., 2014; Curado, 2006; De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Kim, 1993; Levitt & March, 1988; Lipshitz et al., 2007; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000; Senge, 1990; Wang & Ahmed, 2003). In other words, individual members in an organisation are agents in the learning process. When their learning is shared it can effect change in the organisation and through this process the organisation is able to learn (Knipfer et al., 2012; Lipshitz et al., 2007; Wang & Ahmed, 2003).

Huber (1991) proposed that the organisational learning cycle involves four interrelated processes, namely, individual knowledge acquisition, information distribution (sharing), collective information interpretation and organisational memory. These four processes, or explanations of similar processes, are commonly referred to in the literature on organisational learning (De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Kim, 1993; Levitt & March, 1988; Lipshitz et al., 2007; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000).

Huber’s (1991) organisational learning cycle begins with an individual’s knowledge acquisition. This process maps on to individual learning theory discussed above and entails an employee acquiring a new skill or obtaining new knowledge (Matthews, MacCarthy, & Braziotis, 2017).

Information distribution occurs when individual learning is disseminated to other members in the organisation. Social dynamics are therefore a necessary condition to share individual learning (Al-brrow, 2014; Alavi et al., 2014). Once the individual shares their learning with their co-workers, it enables members of the organisation to connect ideas. The distribution of learning is important because the individual’s learning experiences may prompt a shift or adaptation in the shared

mental models of the collective within the organisation and result in changes being implemented (Cho, 2013; Lipshitz et al., 2007; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000).

Before the individual's learning can be embedded at the organisational level, employees must engage in a process of social reflection, termed 'collective information interpretation'. During this social reflection, members of the organisation may challenge each other's beliefs until ultimately the group creates meaning from the individual's learning experience. As a result of the social reflection, either a) no changes are made to the shared mental model and the individual uses the learning solely for their own purposes, or b) the group chooses to take collective, coordinated action based on the individual's learning (Kim, 1993; Knipfer et al., 2012; Lipshitz et al., 2007). If the latter occurs, the group may, for example, change processes, restructure, reorganise, and/or develop new goals. Presumably any action taken would be thought out and would result in an adaptation to the organisation-wide mental models. This adaptation relates to stage four, organisational memory, in Huber's (1991) model.

The transformation of individual learning to group level and from the group level into organisational action are the key processes of organisational learning. Once organisation-wide action has been taken, organisational learning has occurred (Al-Abrrow, 2014; Cho, 2013; De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Kim, 1993; Knipfer et al., 2012; Levitt & March, 1988; Lipshitz et al., 2007; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000). Employees then integrate the adjusted mental models into their memory and perform in line with these routines until the cycle begins again with an employee acquiring new information (Levitt & March, 1988).

Like Huber (1991), Pawlowsky (2001) describes the organisational learning process as consisting of four steps: a) Generation/Identification: the individual identifies new information; this results in b) Diffusion: the sharing of this knowledge to others in the organisation; c) Modification/Integration: the shared mental models are adapted and new knowledge is integrated into organisational rules, procedures, processes, and routines; and d) Action: individuals act on new routines. Both Huber (1991) and Pawlowsky (2001) assume that organisational learning starts with an individual and thereafter is transferred to the group and organisational level.

Crossan, Lane, and White (1999) developed a framework for organisational learning, known as the 4I's which incorporates the processes outlined by Huber (1991) and Pawlowsky (2001). The framework is presented next because in his meta-analysis research, Curado (2006) found several authors using this framework to demonstrate how learning occurs at the individual, group and organisational level.

Crossan et al.'s (1999) 4I's of organisational learning.

The 4I's framework by Crossan et al. (1999) displays how individual, group, and organisational learning are related. The four I's stand for intuition, interpretation, integration and institutionalisation. The framework integrates Huber's (1991) four processes and Pawlowsky's (2001) four stages but includes distinct feed-forward and feedback loops. It is presented in Figure 2.

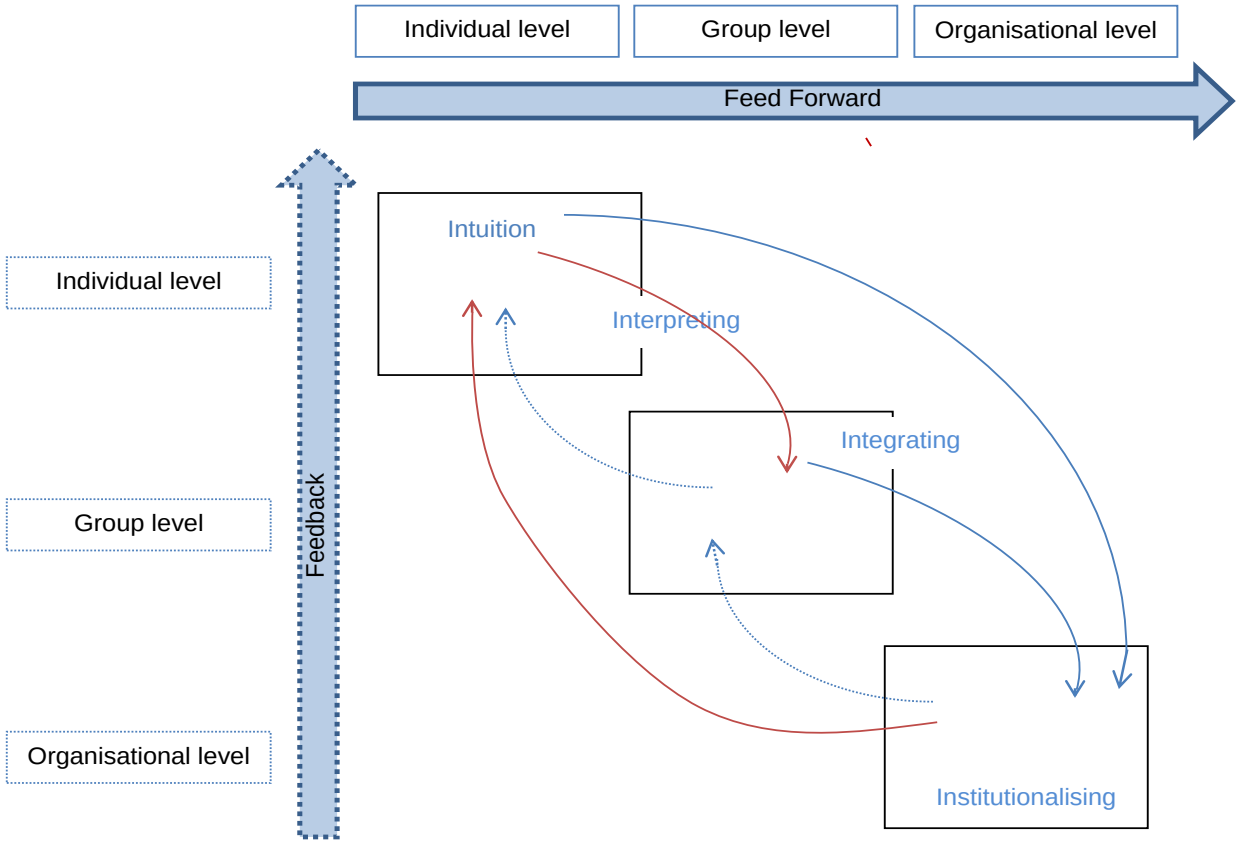

Figure 2. Organisational learning as a dynamic process by Crossan, Lane, and White (1999, p. 532)

The 4I's framework portrays how learning occurs over time and at individual, group and organisational levels (Crossan et al., 1999; Doyle, Kelliher, & Harrington, 2016; Lin & Saunders, 2017; Matthews et al., 2017; Prats López, Berends, Huysman, Soekijad, Causer, Terras, & Grint, 2015). On the individual level, an employee works intuitively (with subconscious learning) and performs their work (see intuition in Figure 2). As the individual works, they develop what Crossan et al. (1999) refer to as cognitive maps of the environment within which they work. When an employee recognises patterns of behaviour in the workplace, these stimuli provide an opportunity for learning. The employee must interpret (see interpreting in Figure 2) the new information obtained and understand the learning stimuli. If the employee decides to initiate action based on the stimuli / information they move towards the integrating phase (Crossan, & Berdrow, 2003; Crossan et al., 1999).

During the phase of integrating the new information at the group level, the employee's understanding of the stimuli and their subsequent learning is shared with members of the group so collective action can be taken if necessary. The group will engage in continual conversations and if required, negotiated action takes place and adjustments are made (see integrating in Figure 2). Through making changes to organisational systems, structures, processes, strategies, and/or routines the individual learning is integrated and embedded into the organisation. As such, the learning is institutionalised and now informs how employees work (see institutionalising in Figure 2) (Crossan, & Berdrow, 2003; Crossan et al., 1999).

This pathway of learning from individual to group to organisation is known as the feed-forward cycle. For example, when an individual responds to a stimulus or new information they may make changes to the way they perform a task. It is important to note that how individual members interpret stimuli, how they perform, and what they do with individual learning is based on their previous intuitive mental models (as discussed previously in the chapter). In other words, they are making use of what has already been learned from their past experiences (Crossan, & Berdrow, 2003; Crossan et al., 1999). When they share their learning with the group, and the group integrates the learning into the shared organisational mental models, a feed-forward pathway has been achieved. Information has been fed forward from the

individual level to the organisational level. Thus, organisational members are engaging in a process of new learning. This institutionalised learning will, from then on, influence how individuals work and how they will interpret future domain stimuli.

The feedback loop occurs when information about actions taken at the organisational level is fed back to the group and individual levels. If, for example, individuals receive feedback regarding positive outcomes achieved through a feed forward process, they will continue to engage in learning. If the feedback is negative, they may initiate more changes until positive feedback and outcomes are obtained. Feedback therefore informs future thoughts and actions (feed-forward). Thus, organisational learning is a dynamic process, because the feed-forward cycle and feedback cycle are parallel processes occurring simultaneously.

Crossan et al. (1999) identified two relationships as being challenging to achieve successfully. These are the interpret-integrate relationship and the institutional-intuitive link (highlighted in red in Figure 2). To successfully transform individual learning to group learning (interpret-integrate), conversation is key. Huber (1991) argues that organisational learning occurs when more and more varied interpretations are developed because these bring about a range of possible changes and potential behaviours. This range of perspectives is important; it enables the members of the organisation to review all possibilities and opportunities and to develop a uniform understanding derived from all interpretations.

The second challenge is for the organisation to ensure that institutionalising does not lead to the hindrance of intuition. In other words, the organisational context must be conducive to learning (Hu et al., 2015); individuals must be able to evaluate and critique norms, routines and practices. If the routines become institutionalised and individual members do not challenge procedures and processes, the status quo will continue and learning will be inhibited (Kim, 1993).

This model illustrates that the dissemination of the individual learning through a social process is what separates an individual's learning from organisational learning. The sequence of information processing and changes to shared mental models, brought about through information processing, informs new behaviours,

procedures and processes in the organisation. Thus, the learning surpasses the individual level and becomes inferred at the organisational level (Illeris, 2011).

With each learning success, individuals are expected to develop confidence, new skills, and knowledge which may alter how they view the system and may influence their future performance (Senge, 1995). Individuals are also more likely to see connections and how different forces have driven different behaviours. From this awareness they can develop new attitudes and beliefs. This deep learning cycle brings about new awareness and sensibility that is used to improve how they perform (Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000). The more quickly individuals learn in this way, the faster an organisation can learn and move through this deep learning cycle, and the more likely the organisation is to be productive and sustain its competitive advantage.

It is important to note that organisational learning does not just happen. A conscious effort by the organisation's leadership is required in order to promote and support learning at this level. Successful learning must be continual, not an event or once-off occurrence (Fourie, 2014; Hu et al., 2015). Only once learning is integrated into organisational practices, and influences employee behaviour, can an organisation reap the benefits from individual members' learning, growth and development, and engage in a process of change (Clifford & Thorpe, 2007).

From the discussion above it is clear that, through the process of organisational learning, the organisation not only learns but also generates knowledge as a parallel process, which improves organisational performance. Because knowledge is generated as a result of learning and this knowledge is used to enact change in an organisation, an overview of the interplay between organisational learning, knowledge generation and organisational performance is outlined in the next section.

4. Learning, Knowledge Generation and Organisational Performance

The terms 'learning' and 'knowledge generation' go hand in hand (Curada, 2006; Oliver, 2009; Pun & Yiu, 2017). The changes implemented through the processes of individual and organisational learning result in an enhanced knowledge

base within the organisation (knowledge generation). Through continual learning, the organisation generates knowledge that enables it to act and engage in a process of change (De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000). It is through this knowledge generation as well as these new actions and changes that the organisation can achieve enhanced organisational performance and a competitive advantage (Curado, 2006; De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Hasse et al., 2015; Knipfer et al., 2012; Matthews et al., 2017; Menolli, Pinto, Reinehr, & Malucelli, 2017; Oliver, 2009; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000; Tam & Gray, 2016; Tortorella & Fogliatto, 2014; Tortorella, Marodin, Fogliatto, & Miorando, 2014; Tucker et al., 2002).

It is perhaps because of the proposed link between learning, knowledge generation and organisational improvement, that organisational learning has generated so much attention. Table 1 displays the results of research published over the past five years, elicited from the social science literature that assessed the impact of organisational learning. All seven studies found positive organisational outcomes emanating from organisational learning, including company productivity and performance, innovation and agility, and competitive advantage. There are, however, certain conditions that must be present to ensure individual learning is translated into organisational learning. These are considered in the following section.

Table 1

Research Substantiating the Outcomes Achievable from Organisational Learning

Author(s)-date	**Research results (linking organisational learning to company performance outcomes)**
Al-Abrrow, 2014	Investigated organisational learning, intellectual capital and organisational performance in the public healthcare sector in the United Arab Emirates. Results showed that organisational learning and intellectual capital were positively related to organisational performance. Additionally, the research evidenced that organisational learning is related to enhanced intellectual capital.
Alavi, Wahab, Muhamad, & Shirani, 2014	Found a significant relationship between organisational learning and workforce agility in organisations in Iran. The researchers argue that agility is necessary for an organisation to adapt to change and it promotes innovation.
Cho, Kim, Park, & Cho, 2013	Empirical data showed that an organisation's learning ability is associated with service delivery and thus competitive advantage. The research found significant causal relationships and thus the hypotheses were supported.
Feng, Zhao & Su, 2014	Investigated the interactive effect of environmental management systems (EMS) and organisational learning on company performance. Results demonstrated that EMS and the four dimensions of organisational learning, namely shared vision, commitment to learning, open mindedness, and knowledge sharing predict firm performance.
Lee & Lee, 2014	Assessed the variables of total quality management, organisational learning and company performance in Taiwanese insurance companies. Their research demonstrates that organisational learning fosters business performance.
Pantouvakis & Bouranta, 2017	Investigated agility, organisational learning, and customer relationship quality. Results showed that organisational learning is a necessary condition for achieving high customer relationship quality.
Riasudeen & Venkatesakumar, 2013	Assessed organisational learning in the E-publishing industry and found that organisational learning was a predictor of team functioning and productivity.

5. Organisational Conditions Necessary for Organisational Learning

To ensure an organisation benefits from individual learning, the organisational environment needs to be conductive to organisational learning. Thus, there is a need for a learning culture to be established (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004; Lipshitz et al., 2002; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000). Culture is the shared beliefs, values, attitudes and patterns of behaviour in an organisation. A learning culture is one which emphasises learning and knowledge and invites members to test assumptions. Employees should feel empowered to experiment and in turn learn and develop core competencies (Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000).

Arguably the most commonly referred to theorist when discussing learning cultures, is Senge. The term 'learning organisation', coined by Senge in 1990 is synonymous with organisational learning (Lipshitz et al., 2002). Senge (1990) added an enormous amount of the theory of organisational learning by introducing the idea of learning as a skill and art in his seminal text: The Learning Organisation. His research was prompted by the deep complexities surrounding the concept of organisational learning and the gaps in understanding how to achieve organisational learning. Prior to Senge's work, research on organisational learning had been philosophical in nature instead of providing a systematic approach on how to practice organisational learning (Goh & Richards, 1997). Senge's work was prompted by the knowledge that, for the most part, managers understood the importance of organisational learning and of a learning culture, but few knew what a learning organisation looked like (Senge & Sterman, 1992).

Senge's learning organisation.

Senge (1990) outlined specific disciplines which he argued must be practised within an organisation to allow learning to take place. These disciplines enable organisations to test and amend their norms and assumptions. He maintained that through practising these disciplines an organisation would transform into a learning organisation because each change would bring it closer to achieving its desired state (Sun & Scott, 2003).

Senge's (1990) theory is based on two key assumptions: a) for learning to occur individuals must change; and b) the change / learning must be supported. On a personal level, individuals must develop skills and knowledge and must learn to share and think as

a collective. To support learning at the organisational level, he recommended that a learning organisation be established.

The five disciplines of a learning organisation.

According to Senge (1990), five disciplines make up the necessary components of a learning organisation. These are: commitment to personal mastery, consideration of mental models, a shared vision, team learning and systems thinking. The underlying premise of the learning organisation theory is that through practising these five disciplines, organisations develop a different way of thinking that enables learning, creates patterns of learning and assists the organisation in dealing with change.

Personal mastery is the idea that if employees want to achieve their most desired results they need to learn to expand their personal capacity (Senge, 1990). In other words, personal mastery can be described as being committed to lifelong learning and proficiency. Thus, Senge (1990) argues that employees should focus on developing themselves to accomplish a goal or purpose and that a learning organisation should have an environment or culture that encourages this personal mastery and its development.

Secondly, Senge (1990) explains that mental models need to be acknowledged and scrutinised. As discussed previously in this chapter, mental models are an individual's perspectives of the world; they are deep-seated assumptions that influence how an individual understands the world as well as their actions and decisions. Senge (1990) argues that within a learning organisation, employees should continually reflect on their mental models: critique them, clarify them and improve them through learning (Taylor & Senge, 2014). It is suggested that this reflection leads to greater agility (Senge, 1990). If the organisational culture is rigid and individuals do not challenge their own mental models and others' thinking, the organisation's ability to learn is limited.

Thirdly, Senge (1990) argues that a learning organisation needs to build a shared vision for the future that will foster commitment and entice employees to want to learn and perform towards that goal (Taylor & Senge, 2014). He explains that it is important for all employees to be aware of the vision and know their role in achieving it. This not only affects individual employees' personal mastery but also fosters unity amongst employees, making the organisation more likely to achieve its objectives (Senge, 1990).

The fourth discipline is that of team learning. Team learning is premised on the idea that individuals can think better collectively. Senge (1990) claims that when groups of people converse and learn together it can build more intelligence and develop individual members. When a team engages in a dialogue of ideas and collaborative thinking, individuals in the team grow and learn, making results more attainable.

Lastly, Senge (1990) advocates that the organisation practises systems' thinking. He argues that employees must view the organisation as a system made up of interrelated components or sub-systems that influence and affect each other. By acknowledging the multitude of these interrelationships, employees will be able to analyse and make changes that impact the entire system for the better (Taylor & Senge, 2014).

Theoretically, these five disciplines should assist an organisation to continually improve what it does and how it does it (Fourie, 2014). In other words, they enable the organisation to engage in continual change. Through mastering these disciplines, employees should be able to understand better the internal and external environment within which they operate. Continual monitoring of these environments enables the employees to anticipate change and react appropriately and quickly (Senge, 1995). In this way, the knowledge and skills of the individual members in an organisation can be utilised for organisational development.

Senge's (1990) seminal text emphasises the necessity of collaborating, generating new ideas, incorporating them into behaviour, reflecting on them, learning, and starting the process again. A learning organisation therefore uses collective reasoning and shared intelligence to learn (Starkley, Tempest, & McKinlay, 2005). Conversation, knowledge sharing and discussing opportunities, threats and ideas are all important learning mechanisms that form part of the five disciplines as discussed above. These disciplines should ensure that an organisation is open to change, evolving, flexible and leading the pack. This ethos should, in turn, generate an energised and committed team, in which members work together, develop one another, and grow in their own capacity on a continual basis to achieve the shared vision. Senge (1990) proposes that the more an organisation is able to engage in these disciplines, the better they will master the disciplines (Senge, 1995).

Curado (2006) outlines five benefits that a learning organisation provides. It enables: a) systematic problem solving, which makes it possible to generate solutions to overcome difficulties; b) experimentation to acquire new knowledge and opportunities; c) evaluation to allow members to learn from past experiences; d) reflection to acquire new perspectives from others; and e) transfer to ensure knowledge is shared throughout the organisation.

A learning organisation, as outlined by Senge (1990) has received support by a number of authors over the last 30 years (Curado, 2006; Fourie, 2014; Starkey et al., 2005; Sun & Scott, 2003; Thomas & Allen, 2006), yet, Senge's work is not without criticism as outlined below.

Criticisms of Senge's learning organisation.

The main criticism raised against Senge's (1990) theoretical framework (Caldwell, 2012a; Caldwell, 2012b; Fielding, 2001; Fillion, Koffi, & Ekionea, 2015; Yeo, 2005) arises from the missing linkages between the five disciplines. Each discipline is assumed to develop separately and not as part of an integrated learning process. In addition, Senge (1990) failed to specify how practitioners begin to practise the disciplines, making it difficult for organisations to implement them (Fourie, 2014). There is consequently no consensus on how managers develop or establish a learning organisation (Thomas & Allen, 2006). Senge did, however, provide practical case study examples in his texts to try to address this.

Senge's significant contribution is that it opened a conversation around the importance of learning within the organisation and how to foster support for that learning. In addition, through Senge's (1990) work a number of models and suggestions emerged on how to begin to transform an organisation into a learning organisation. These models identify organisational conditions and contextual factors that are necessary for organisational learning to occur.

Contextual factors that influence organisational learning.

Bapuji and Crossan (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of empirical research on organisational learning published between 1990 and 2002. They narrowed down their initial 707 publications to 95 by only including publications that had been cited two or more times per annum. An additional 28 papers were also included. These had been published

between 2000 and 2002 in prominent organisational learning journals such as: Academy of Management Journal (AMJ), Academy of Management Review, (AMR), Administrative Science Quarterly (ASQ), Human Relations (HR), Journal of Marketing (JMK), Management Science (MSC), Organization Dynamics (OD), Organization Science (OSC), Organization Studies (OST), Sloan Management Review (SMR) and Strategic Management Journal (SMJ). This resulted in 123 papers, eight of which were review articles, 60 were theory-based articles and 55 were empirical studies. The results from the meta-analysis indicated that four contextual factors are commonly cited as affecting learning in organisations, namely, culture, strategy, structure, and environment (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004).

These four factors are closely aligned with Senge's (1990) five disciplines and I have integrated them into one diagram (see Figure 3). Firstly, personal mastery and scrutinising mental models are closely aligned to culture. In other words, personal mastery and scrutinising mental models should be emphasised and supported as part of an organisation's culture. As learning occurs when individuals question assumptions, routines and traditions (Gazzola, Jha-Thakur, Kidd, Peel, & Fischer, 2011), the culture of an organisation must encourage reflection and be open to learning.

Senge (1990) spelled out the importance of employees having a shared vision, which is related to strategy. By being involved in the formulation and communication of an organisation's strategy, employees generally develop a shared vision. Thirdly, team learning and structure are related. For team learning to take place, the organisational structure needs to allow for this. The degree to which different parts of the organisation collaborate will influence the knowledge and learning shared (Gazzola et al., 2011). Lastly, systems thinking is linked to the organisation's environment and its influencers, in that it acknowledges that the organisation does not operate in isolation. The internal and external environment and components of the system all operate interdependently.

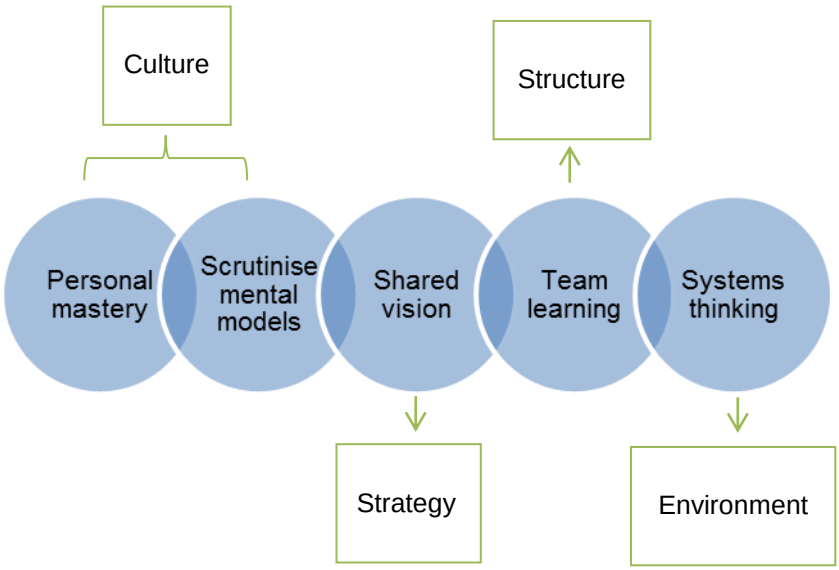

Figure 3. Senge's (1990) five disciplines aligned with the four contextual factors necessary for organisational learning.

Lipshitz et al. (2002) proposed five facets that they deemed as contextual factors influencing organisational learning. These are structural, cultural, psychological, organisational learning, and contextual factors. As outlined in the following section, I have integrated these factors with Senge's disciplines and the contextual factors identified by Bapuji and Crossan's (2004).

Structure / the structural facet.

The structural facet is concerned with the mechanisms or systems that exist within the organisation to enable learning to occur. Lipshitz et al. (2002) explain that an organisation should have an organisational learning mechanism (OLM) which enables employees to collect, analyse, store and disseminate information. These OLM's are sub-systems that individuals can use to interact, reflect, and learn (Oliver, 2009). Through making use of an OLM, employees will also be able to engage in Senge's (1990) principle of team learning.

Non-integrated OLM functions such as strategic planning, audits and quality control measures allow members to assess certain aspects of the organisation. Lipshitz et al. (2002) argue that when information from these functions is processed, errors are detected, changes are made and thus learning occurs. Integrated OLM's on the other hand, such as

performance management systems, assess learning in relation to a task to obtain feedback in the learning cycle. This feedback is then used as a basis for learning.

Bapuji and Crossan's (2004) meta-analysis supports the use of decentralised structures and participatory decision making to facilitate organisational learning. This aligns with this structural facet because when an organisation's structure is not rigid, the likelihood of innovation, insight and shared learning is increased, thus enabling the organisation to adapt quicker to change (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004).

Culture / the cultural facet.

Cultural norms are known to influence members' behaviours and are often the dominant views in the organisation. They are thus shared mental models which ultimately affect organisational learning (Gazzola et al., 2011). As discussed above, it is important that the culture is conducive to learning (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004; Bates & Khasawneh, 2005; Lipshitz et al., 2002; Senge, 1990; Wang & Ahmed, 2003). To create a learning culture, management should show support for learning and emphasise its importance.

Bapuji and Crossan's (2004) meta-analysis identified transformational leadership styles as important in ensuring that openness is encouraged, as they make it more likely for individuals to speak up. This is aligned with Senge's (1990) recommendation that employees should be encouraged to scrutinise mental models. Additionally, Bapuji and Crossan (2004) suggested that in order to implement change, an organisation's leadership must be committed and supportive of individuals and should drive the learning process. This creates an environment that allows for Senge's discipline of personal mastery to be practiced. Lipshitz et al. (2002) identified five norms that should be built into the cultural facet of an organisation to enable this to occur. They are: transparency, integrity, issue orientation, inquiry and accountability.

Transparency involves individual members being open about their own thoughts and actions, whereas integrity ensures that the feedback individuals provide is accurate (Lipshitz et al., 2002). Issue orientation ensures that members focus on actual relevant information or feedback provided to them and do not focus on the source of the information. Inquiry is when individual members ensure they have obtained all the information necessary to fully understand a problem or issue. Lastly, accountability is about taking responsibility for one's own learning as well as its implementation (Lipshitz et

al., 2002). The authors argue that having these norms within the organisation ensures that valid information is produced which will bring about commitment to corrective action and subsequent organisational learning.

Strong leadership and a clearly articulated organisational vision assist in encouraging learning activities and creating a learning atmosphere. Knowledge sharing also forms a crucial part of a learning culture. It is argued that new and existing knowledge must be disseminated throughout the organisation to enable the creation of new ideas (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004; Lipshitz et al., 2002; Senge, 1990).

The psychological facet.

The third facet is the psychological facet which comprises two states, psychological safety and commitment to the organisation. Lipshitz et al. (2002) argue that for individuals to inquire, be transparent, and provide feedback they need to feel safe. Similarly, if an organisation wants individual members to engage in certain behaviours they must feel a sense of commitment towards the organisation, its goals and values. Senge's (1990) shared vision building can be one way to bring about this commitment. A learning-orientated culture, which was found to be important by Bapuji and Crossan (2004), can assist in achieving psychological safety.

The organisational learning facet.

The organisational learning facet encompasses all the ways in which management promotes organisational learning (Lipshitz et al., 2002). This can be brought about by adhering to three guidelines: a) having tolerance for error; b) showing commitment to learning by investing in training and development; and c) showing commitment to the workplace in terms of fair treatment of organisational members. Commitment to learning is aligned with Senge's (1990) personal mastery discipline and all three of these guidelines are encompassed in the culture factor in Bapuji and Crossan's (2004) meta-analysis.

The contextual facet / environment and strategy.

The contextual facet of organisational learning includes internal and exogenous factors, some of which can be controlled for. Lipshitz et al. (2002) explain that these factors influence the extent to which an organisation can learn. These factors include: cost

of errors, environmental uncertainty, proximity to organisational mission, strategy, structure, and stability (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004; Lipshitz et al., 2002).

The rate and pace of learning was found to be influenced by cost of errors, environmental uncertainty and proximity to achieving the organisational mission (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004). Generally, the higher the cost of errors the more likely learning is to occur. Similarly, the degree of competition in the market as well as the rate of change in the external environment influence the need for learning. In addition, the closer an organisation is to achieving its mission, the higher the likelihood that learning will occur.

An organisation's strategy is made up of its vision, mission, organisational goals and objectives, all of which need to be aligned. Senge (1990) argues that the vision should be a shared vision, while Bapuji and Crossan (2004) found that organisational goals and objectives should be flexible. Given this, a vision can provide the context for learning to take place, but strategies should change as the environment changes, to create an opportunity for organisational learning (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004; Senge, 1990).

Another component identified by Bapuji and Crossan (2004) that is important for the contextual facet is the structure of an organisation. Hierarchical and bureaucratic structures in which rules and procedures are heavily relied on and are inflexible, impede a learning culture (Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000). Within these structures, employees may not feel empowered to be innovative and take a risk. This hinders the possibility of development. It also makes the discipline of personal mastery difficult (Senge, 1990). Depending on the structure, the channels of communication may also obstruct the dissemination and diffusion of knowledge and information to all members. A flatter structure is suggested in which ideas can be interchanged and the possibility of setting up task groups or project teams is available (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004).

While culture and structure seem to have the most impact on organisational learning, Pemberton and Stonehouse (2000) argue that technology and infrastructure provide the underlying support for organisational learning to take place. Technology (software, intranet, and networks) is what has made collaboration and communication easier in organisations and facilitates knowledge management.

Lastly, it seems that too much change makes it difficult for individual members to understand their environment. Thus it is suggested that, for learning to occur, a balance be

achieved between stability and change (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000).

From the descriptions above, I acknowledge that the transformation into a learning organisation is demanding. The translation of individual learning into organisational learning is not a straightforward process as it requires a variety of factors to support the transition. While creating a learning organisation is challenging, there is wide-spread acknowledgement and consensus that an organisation's success depends on its ability to learn (Alavi et al., 2014; Farrell 2000; Lee-Kelley, Blackman, & Hurst, 2007; Montes, Moreno, & Morales, 2005; Senge, Carstedt, & Porter, 2001, Za et al., 2014). It is, however, important to acknowledge that some organisations learn better than others. The next section will highlight some of the ways in which organisations use learning to leverage growth.

6. Learning for Organisational Growth

Traditionally, learning was not viewed as a primary goal of an organisation; organisational success and a competitive strategy was. Competitiveness was thought of as being related to the industry-organisation perspective (Leavy, 2005). In other words, an organisation was seen as competitive because of its market selection and position in the industry. Similarly, differences in company performances were often explained using a resource-based view in that the amount of resources at the organisation's disposal would differentiate it from others in the industry (Hatch & Dyer, 2004).

In the fourth industrial revolution, however, workplaces look different. There are new technologies, shorter product lifespans, and diffused organisational and industry structures. Competitive advantage in a 21st century organisation stems from its internal capabilities (Bhatt & Grover, 2005; Cardy & Selvarajan, 2006; Chen et al., 2009; Collins & Clark, 2003; Gold, Malhotra, & Segars, 2001; Hatch & Dyer, 2004; Hu et al., 2016; Jarrar, 2002; Leavy, 2005; Lee & Lee, 2014; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; McGrath, 2001; Standing et al., 2016; Tam & Gray, 2016; Wang, He, & Mahoney, 2009).

Senge (1995, p.48) explains that "at its essence, every organisation is a product of how its members think and interact". Thus, the growth of an organisation is dependent on the learning of its individual members (Torres, 1994; Za et al., 2014). Organisations are more successful than others if they foster and support individual learning. To sustain and

improve company performance, organisations must thus learn faster and more effectively than their competitors.

This means that organisations need to be able to harness the individual development of each employee in such a way that it improves the economic performance of the company (Senge, 1995). Competition and success are therefore based on how well an organisation is able to leverage competence, creativity and innovation from its employees and with this has come a war for talent (Al-Abrrow, 2014; Bates & Khasawneh, 2005; Menolli et al., 2017; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000; Pun & Yiu, 2017; Standing et al., 2016; Starkey et al., 2005; Vakola & Rezgui, 2000; Wang & Ahmed, 2003).

Learning is a means to enable continual improvement and ultimately to enable the organisation to fulfil its strategic objectives (Fuller, Munro, & Rainbird, 2004). This requires an understanding of how to develop employees to enable them to reach their full potential and thus contribute effectively to the organisation's learning.

Developing internal organisational capabilities.

For an organisation to develop its internal capabilities for learning, there must be investment in building capacity among its employees so that they can contribute to organisational learning and the strategic objectives of the company (Casey, 2006; Curado, 2006; Fuller et al., 2004; McCracken & Wallace, 2000; Pineda, 2010; Song & Chermack, 2008; Thomas & Allen, 2006).

When individual learning is shared at a group-level, it can lead to organisational learning. As a direct result of individual learning, performance is thus enhanced and organisational practices improved (Vakola & Rezjui, 2000). This learning cycle provides organisations with a knowledge-based, competitive advantage (Song & Chermack, 2008).

7. The Importance of Learning Transfer and the Need for Training Evaluation

The individual learning theories presented at the beginning of this chapter outlined that experimentation, behaviour change, or some form of action is necessary to demonstrate that learning has taken place. In an organisational context, this is referred to as transfer of learning. An employee must apply the knowledge and skills, acquired during the training, to the job to enhance the performance of their role and for improvements to become visible (Clifford & Thorpe, 2007; Kang, Rhee, & Kang, 2010; Phillips & Phillips,

2001; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001; Song & Chermack, 2008; Szulanski, 2000; Vakola & Rezgui, 2000). Thus, an organisation is only able to reap the benefits of training and subsequent individual learning when employees engage in learning transfer and behave differently because of their learning. . Organisations are therefore not only challenged with knowledge generation and knowledge management, but also knowledge transfer (Kang et al., 2010).

Transfer is an integral channel through which learning and advancement occur. In fact, without the transfer of learning at an individual learning, organisational learning would be unlikely. As such, organisations should have an interest in enhancing their return on investment by ensuring that transfer of learning takes place. Training is an investment and, like all other investments, should be beneficial and profitable in order to retain budget, commitment, and support (Pineda, 2010). Transfer of learning is ultimately an indicator of training effectiveness (Farjad, 2012).

The transfer of knowledge and skills as well as its value-add should therefore be monitored and measured. Training evaluation is required to ensure that an organisation has successfully harnessed the individual learning intended from training, and to investigate the organisation's environment to support learning. The evaluation of training enables the results of training and development efforts to be identified, analysed, and reported so that the organisation can learn. This feedback in turn can inform decision making and help the organisation to continually learn. This is the reason that evaluating the effectiveness of training has been chosen as the focus for this thesis. The next chapter provides an overview of training evaluation, its purposes and the common training evaluation models and approaches.

Chapter Three: Training Evaluation: Its purpose and models

In the previous chapter, the intricate link between individual and organisational learning was discussed. Given that the cycle of organisational learning begins with individual knowledge acquisition, it is essential to ensure that this translates into individual learning. While error detection and experiences are a prompt for knowledge acquisition and individual learning to occur in the workplace, formal mechanisms such as training and development interventions are also implemented to develop the learning capabilities of employees.

It would, however, be short-sighted to assume that individual learning, as defined in Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework: Organisational Learning, will occur merely because an individual acquires knowledge or has completed a training and development intervention. Thus, organisations must investigate the extent to which individual and organisational learning is taking place in the organisation.

My assessment, after researching the theoretical framework underpinning this research and described in the previous chapter, is that organisational stakeholders require feedback in order to confirm that various aspects of learning have taken place. This includes that: a) knowledge and learning have been developed (as in knowledge generation and individual learning); b) knowledge and learning generated is being transferred to the jobs of the individual members so that their performance is enhanced (as in single and double-loop learning). Further aspects are that: c) knowledge and learning is shared and stored within the organisation (as in collective learning and knowledge management); and d) changes and improvements are implemented as a result of integrating learning at an organisational level (as in organisational learning).

In my analysis, if steps a), b) and c) are ineffective, the organisation cannot expect d) organisational learning to occur. Given the importance of these steps in increasing the likelihood of organisational learning, I argue that it is necessary to investigate and monitor these learning processes. One dominant approach used to obtain feedback on whether a), b) and c) have been achieved is the practice of training evaluation (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013; Coetzee et al., 2012; Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda, & Nel, 2015; Griffon, 2014; Noe, 2016).

For the reader to gain a fuller understanding of how and why training evaluation can be used as a tool to enable organisational learning, this chapter provides an overview of training evaluation. It also gives a descriptive review of the most common methods and approaches used to evaluate training and development programmes and how these are said to provide the necessary data and feedback to enable organisational learning.

Training Evaluation Defined

Training evaluation is an area within the broader discipline of programme evaluation, which establishes the merit of training and development programmes. Many definitions of training evaluation exist (Basarab & Root, 2001; Casey, 2006; Kraiger et al., 1993; Phillips, 2006; Sackett & Mullen, 1993; Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger, & Smith-Jentsch, 2012; Topno, 2012). While each of these definitions contain some overlap, I have included them because they suggest different views on the purpose of conducting training evaluations.

Basarab and Root (2001), for example, define training evaluation as "a systematic process by which pertinent data are collected and converted into information for measuring the effects of training… and providing a method for determining the quality of training" (p. 2).

Kraiger et al., (1993) and more recently Salas et al., (2012) define training evaluation as the systematic collection of data but give a broader perspective than do Basarab and Root (2001). Here the purpose of training evaluation is described as providing a conclusion as to whether training objectives have been achieved and whether performance has increased through the transfer of training content into workplace behaviour. Similarly, Sackett and Mullen (1993) describe training evaluation as a measurement of change to establish whether knowledge or a new skill has been learned.

This coincides with Casey (2006) who argues that training evaluation allows an organisation to ascertain whether employees can apply the training content to perform tasks on the job. The difference here is that the evaluation seeks to determine whether employees can apply training content. Topno (2012) adds to the purpose of training evaluation by noting that it can also determine training effectiveness and enhance the quality of future training programmes. Decisions on training design, and how best to make

use of the training budget and resources available, can also be informed by the feedback gained through training evaluation.

Lastly, Phillips (2006) suggests that training evaluation also serves to establish the worth and value of a learning intervention, by assessing a training programme's financial return on investment.

My analysis of these definitions is that training evaluation has four key purposes: a) to assess if a programme has achieved its intended objectives and participants are able to demonstrate enhanced skills and knowledge; b) to assess whether transfer of learning to workplace tasks is taking place; c) to assess a programme's total value (worth) in terms of its financial benefit; and d) to assess the overall quality and functioning of a programme and whether any improvements are required.

It is important to note that these definitions encompass micro-level assessments to investigate interventions, determine their outcomes and measure their success (Kraiger et al., 1993; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001). Training evaluation, however, is not only limited to programme-only investigations. Training evaluation literature distinguishes between training evaluation (as defined above) and training effectiveness.

Training effectiveness serves to determine why individuals learned or did not learn, and why transfer of learning did or did not occur (Alvarez, Salas, & Garofano, 2004). The evaluation of training effectiveness is a macro-level assessment, where training is viewed from a systems thinking perspective. Through investigating training effectiveness, an evaluator seeks to determine what factors influenced the system to work or fail (Kraiger et al., 1993; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001). Information on training effectiveness can be used as a mechanism to improve training in general as well as to adapt the working environment (e.g. learning culture) to encourage learning transfer, so that organisations can reap the full benefits of training.

Despite the distinction between training evaluation and training effectiveness, the term 'training evaluation' is commonly used to refer to both training evaluation and training effectiveness, and will be used as such in this thesis.

Training Evaluation as a Tool for Organisational Learning

Ultimately, the purpose of training evaluation is to enable an organisation to learn. Lee J. Cronbach (as cited in Torres et al., 2005, p. 2) argued that "evaluation is about learning... the focal point for learning to occur is communication of knowledge generated by an evaluation". Thus, learning through evaluation feedback enables an organisation to constantly adapt and evolve (Fiol & Lyles, 1985) and in so doing, practising training evaluation can contribute towards organisational learning. Organisations that fail to monitor their learning progress and to collect evaluation data may lack the necessary feedback loops that can facilitate further and continual learning (Torres et al., 2005). The importance of such feedback loops was highlighted in Crossan et al.'s (1999) 4I's framework. Thus, organisational learning and training evaluation are complementary processes and should be practiced as such.

A learning organisation would use evaluation feedback from both the process and content of the training intervention as well as the degree to which the training resulted in desired workplace behaviours. The organisation would then transform the data into action by using it to inform improvement, growth and change for future training programmes and training procedures. For example, an evaluation of leadership training could help an organisation to identify the factors that support leaders' learning transfer when they return to work. This information would assist an organisation to make changes so that all trainees have an increased likelihood of transfer. In this example, if opportunities to apply new learning was found to be an important consideration, managers could be instructed to give trainees new projects or leadership responsibilities where they can practice what has been learnt and as such engage in transfer of learning. Leaders' behavioural changes arising from the leadership training could result in them implementing process changes or communication strategies within the organisation, which improve the functioning of their departments. This means that individual learning would have been translated into action and these actions subsequently affect organisational learning.

Brinkerhoff (2006a) argues that competitive organisations, engaging in training evaluation, use the results to organise, plan, and implement effective training. Through managing the training process, such companies are achieving increased sales and reduced costs because employees are engaging in learning transfer, and as an indirect outcome the organisation has increased employee retention. Brinkerhoff (2006a) further

explains that organisations need to realise that training is not just the delivery of learning programmes but includes supporting the learning back in the workplace and following up on its success (through evaluation). Learning from evaluation information will enable an organisation to make the necessary changes so that training can be leveraged to its full potential (Brinkerhoff, 2006a; Torres et al., 2005). Through effective training, individual learning and performance can contribute to organisational learning, as well as business growth and organisational competitiveness (Lee & Pershing, 2000).

Figure 4 provides a graphical representation of the theoretical logic of how individual learning translates to organisational learning and where training evaluation can be used to monitor and obtain feedback on the learning processes (illustrated by the blue arrows). For example, training evaluation could evaluate the extent to which an organisation has the necessary learning environment (Bapuji & Crossan's contextual factors / facets) and/or culture (Senge's disciplines) to enable individual and organisational learning. Feedback about these conditions could be used to make improvements and changes to the organisational environment and the learning processes. The changes implemented, based on the training evaluation results, could in turn influence and enhance the transfer of individual learning to group and collective levels. The figure shows that training evaluation should ideally be embedded into organisational practice if an organisation wants to investigate and monitor the extent to which they are engaging in the full cycle of organisational learning (Fulmer & Keys, 2005).

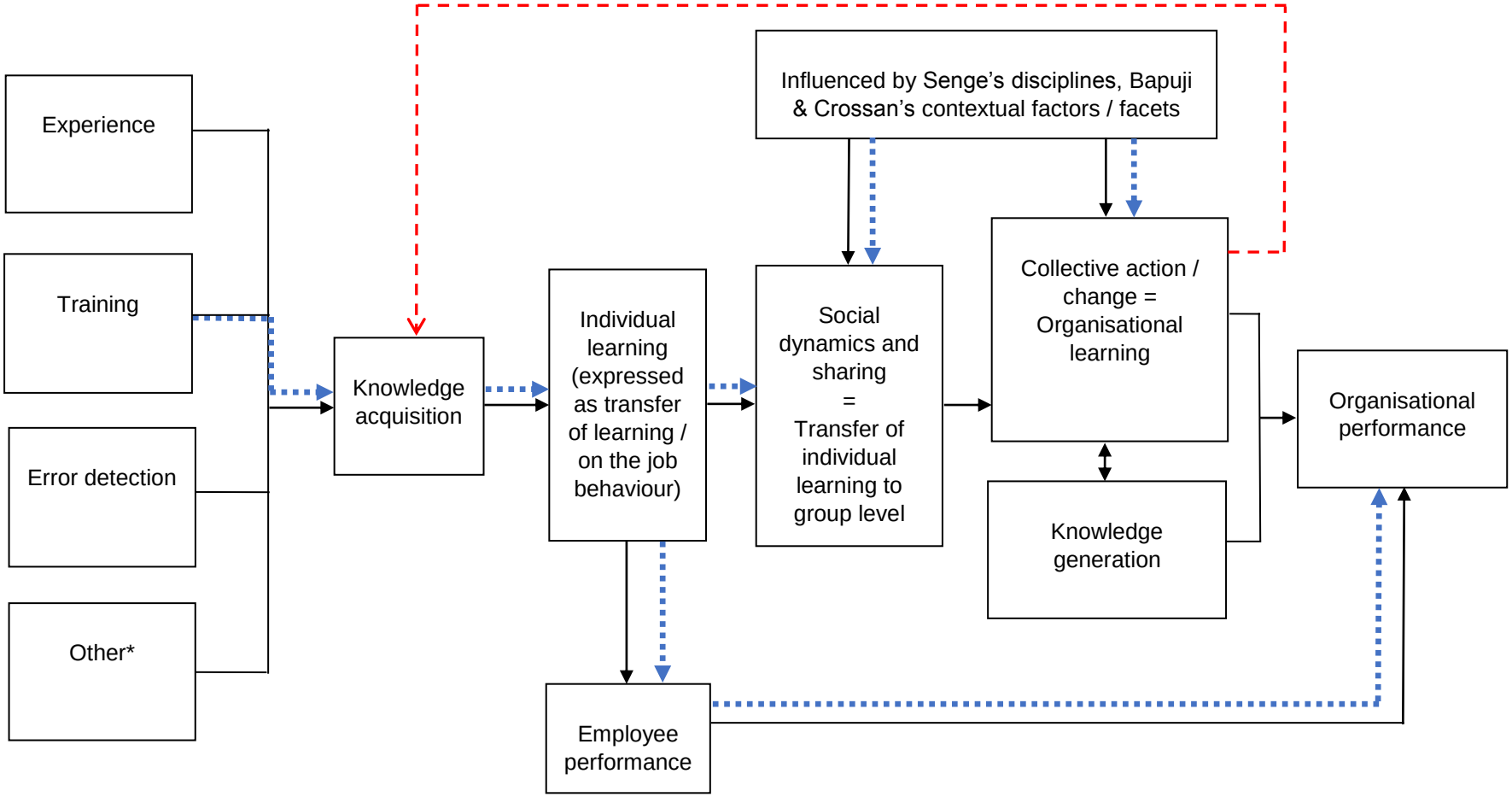

Figure 4. Blue arrows show where training evaluation can be used to monitor individual learning, organisational learning, and workplace learning context and culture.

*Note. Individuals can acquire knowledge through a variety of mediums. It would be outside the scope of this thesis to include these, and as such they have not been shown, but rather acknowledged in the diagram. There are various feedback and feedforward loops between the components in the figure. Including all of them would make the diagram too complicated. Thus, only one example of a feedback loop has been used (illustrated by the red arrow).

Other than facilitating organisational learning, there are several arguments as to why an organisation, or more specifically HR, should engage in training evaluation practices. After reviewing the literature, an overview of the purposes and benefits of training evaluation are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2

Reasons for and Purposes of Training Evaluation

Training evaluation results could achieve the following:	Authors
Determine whether training objectives have been met (training effectiveness)	Bates, 2004; Casey, 2006; Farjad, 2012; Hall & Yoder, 2003; James & Roffe, 2000; Kumnikaité, 2007; Topno, 2012
Be used to improve training design, quality, delivery and training-related activities	Bates, 2004; Blanchard, Thacker, & Way, 2000; Farjad, 2012; Hashim, 2001; Hung, 2010; James & Roffe, 2000; Topno, 2012
Justify training budget allocated (level of accountability achieved) and secure greater budgets and resources for training and development initiatives	Hung, 2010; Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Lien et al., 2007; Phillips & Phillips, 2001; Topno, 2012
Provide information about the financial value of training via return on investment	Burkett, 2005; Hashim, 2001; Kumnikaité, 2007; Lien, Hung, & McLean, 2007; Phillips & Phillips, 2001; Topno, 2012
Help to identify how an organisation can support and facilitate learning transfer through identifying what factors affected individual learning	Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002; Hung, 2010; Kraiger, McLinden, & Casper, 2004; Topno, 2012
Aid decision making on whether to continue, modify, or stop a training intervention	Hung, 2010; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Salas et al., 2012
Build credibility and worth of the HR department and training function in the organisation	Blanchard et al., 2000; Hung, 2010; Peak & Berge, 2006
Determine whether performance has increased following training and whether value has been added	Hall & Yoder, 2003; Topno, 2012
Facilitate organisational learning	James & Roffe, 2000; Torres et al., 2005
Highlight how training and development contributed to the achievement of organisational objectives and goals	Hung, 2010; Phillips & Phillips, 2001

Table 2 Continued

Reasons for and Purposes of Training Evaluation

Training evaluation results can do the following:	Authors
Enable an organisation to prioritise the most effective training interventions	Hung, 2010
Create commitment and buy-in of stakeholders to training and development	Kearns & Miller, 1996, as cited in Hung, 2010

Note. It is important to consider that the proposed purposes and benefits of training evaluation are predominantly theoretical. Given the lack of published literature, we cannot conclude that organisations who conduct training evaluations will produce the results the textbooks claim (as detailed in Table 2 above).

Three main reasons, cited in the literature for why organisations engage in training evaluation, can be gleaned from Table 2 p. XX). Firstly, training evaluation enables an organisation to determine training effectiveness. In other words, training evaluation can help assess whether the objectives of the intervention have been met. Secondly, organisations choose to engage in training evaluation to improve the training provided, including: training design, programme implementation, and overall quality of the training. Thirdly, conducting training evaluations, and specifically measuring ROI, can enable the HR department to prove that the training budget was well spent. Not only does this ensure a level of accountability for the training budget, but the results could be used to negotiate for increased budgets.

Aligned to the third reason (the training budget), the HR department or the dedicated learning and development staff are usually responsible for developing skills and knowledge in organisations. The expectation is that these departments will implement interventions that will significantly contribute to the business. With this expectation comes increased pressure to prove that the training (which is allocated a substantial proportion of the organisational budget) has in fact contributed to the organisation's performance (both monetary and outcome-based) and has thus been a good return on investment (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009; Aragón-Sánchez, Barba-Aragon, & Sanz-Valle, 2003; Holton, 1996; Peters, Baum, & Stephens, 2011; Phillips, 2007; Phillips & Phillips, 2009; Saks & Belcourt, 2006; Saks & Burke, 2012; Tharenou, Saks, & Moore, 2007).

Conducting training evaluations can provide HR managers with objective data on whether a programme has been effective. But without credible evaluation reports, HR or more specifically the training and development department, may struggle to gain respect and/or be seen as a strategic partner (Preskill, 2008). To act as a strategic partner, HR needs to leverage HR analytics. HR analytics are the results of measures. The generation of data through training evaluation is a form of analytics that can be used for this purpose (Preskill, 1994). Proving that HR has contributed to the organisation's bottom line could result in the allocation of more budgets for training and development as well as gain support for proposed development initiatives. Thus, a challenge for HR professionals is to implement timeous, cost effective, and useful training evaluations which provide evidence of the value and worth of these investments (Preskill, 1994).

The Role of Training Evaluation in the Training Process

After reviewing the most recent and commonly prescribed training and development university textbooks in South Africa (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013; Bhattacharyya, 2015; Coetzee et al., 2012; Erasmus et al., 2015; Noe, 2016) it is clear that each has a dedicated chapter on training evaluation. The practice of obtaining evaluation data for various training interventions has also been theoretically incorporated into most training and instructional design models as an important phase in the training process (Casey, 2006; Eseryel, 2002; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Salas et al., 2012).

In three of the most common training models, namely Nadler's (1982) Critical Events Model (see Figure 5); Camp, Blanchard and Huszo's (1986) Training Model (see Figure 6); and Sparhawk's (1994) High Impact Training Model (see Figure 7), evaluation is depicted as an integral step in training best practice (Erasmus & van Dyk, 2003).

Published in 1982, Nadler's Critical Events Model is regarded as one of the most seminal and enduring training models. As shown in Figure 5, evaluation and feedback are included as a crucial step after each phase in the training process. The model emphasises a need for continuous monitoring throughout the training process, from the needs assessment through to the implementation of the intervention.

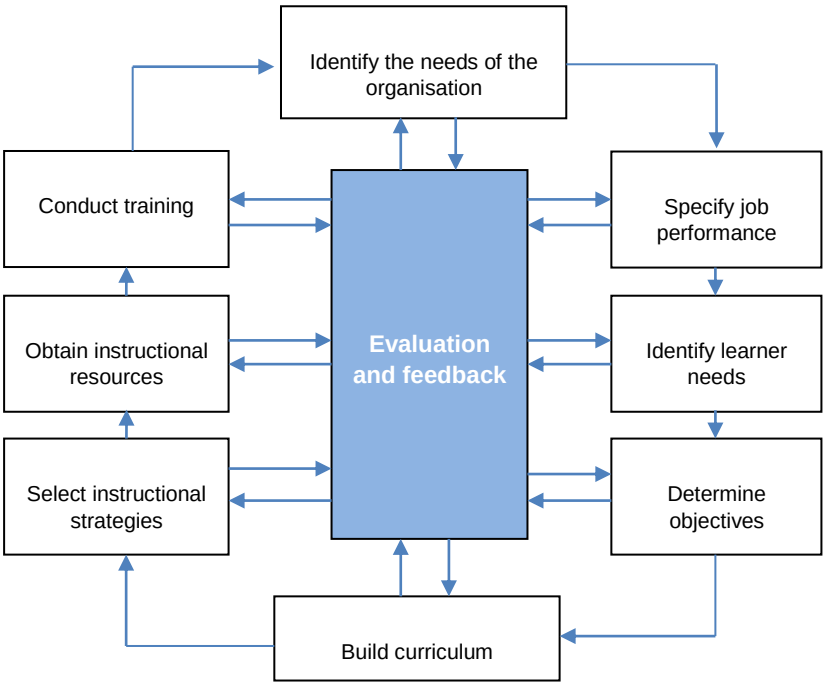

Figure 5. The Critical Events Model by Nadler (1982).

In the Training Model by Camp et al. (1986) (see Figure 6) the gathering of evaluation data forms the final stage (step eight) in the training process. This model also specifies that HR practitioners should be responsible for collecting the evaluation data and for investigating the training programme outcomes. Even though the gathering and evaluation of data is provided as a final step in Camp et al.'s (1986) model, a feedback step is integrated after each phase in the training process. In other words, HR practitioners making use of this training model should obtain feedback and continually monitor the training process. Like Nadler's (1982) Critical Events Model, feedback is a central component.

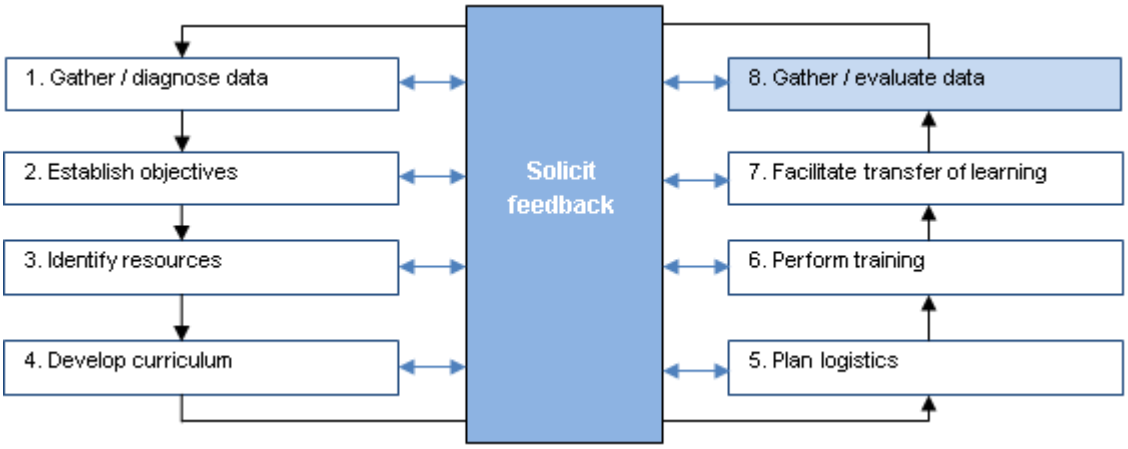

Figure 6. The Training Model by Camp, Blanchard, and Huszco (1986).

Lastly, the High-Impact Training Model by Sparhawk (1994), as seen in Figure 7, involves calculating measurables (phase five) as well as tracking and follow-through (phase six) as part of the training cycle. HR practitioners are advised to collect evaluation data after the training programme has been presented. This data will allow the organisation to investigate whether the measurables or indicators have been achieved thus concluding whether the training programme has been effective in meetings its objectives.

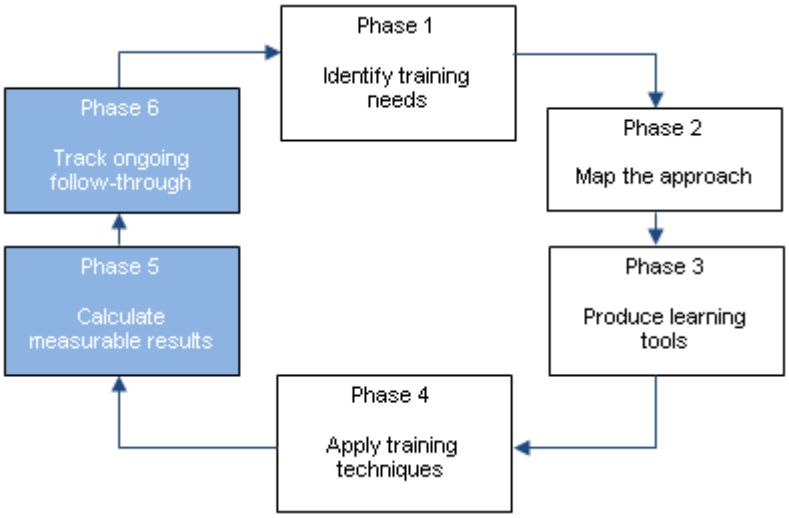

Figure 7. The High Impact Training Model by Sparhawk (1994).

Even though Sparhawk's (1994) model only incorporates a feedback loop at the end of the training process, the three models stress the importance of investigating whether training was able to achieve its intended goal(s) (Wang & Wilcox, 2006) and propose that this monitoring form part of the training process. According to all three models, making decisions for programme improvement (formative evaluation) and judging the merit of the programme (summative evaluation) form part of the training process rather than being an optional, independent process.

After an exhaustive literature review, I could find little evidence of the use of these training models in practice. While these models offer neither instruction nor guidance on how HR professionals conduct the evaluation step and use the information for organisational learning, such information can be gained from various training evaluation models.

Researchers (Brinkerhoff, 2003; Bushnell, 1990; Eseryel, 2002; Hamblin, 1974 as cited in Lee & & Pershing, 2000; Kaufman, Keller, & Watkins, 1995 as cited in Lee & & Pershing, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 1959; Molenda, Pershing, & Reigeluth, 1996 as cited in Lee & & Pershing, 2000; Phillips, 2005; Scriven, 2008; Stufflebeam, 1960 as cited in Stufflebeam 2007; Warr, Bird, & Rackham, 1970, as cited in Griffon 2014) have developed a number of dedicated training evaluation models to provide a framework for collecting and analysing data to determine training effectiveness. A review of the most popular and regularly cited

training evaluation models within the social science literature and textbooks is presented in the next section.

An Overview of the Most Common Training Evaluation Models

Two systematic approaches for designing and evaluating training emerged in the 1950s, namely, goal-based and system-based approaches. Goal-based approaches and models focus the evaluator's attention on the purpose of the evaluation. In other words, the evaluation is based on what the goal or information need for the evaluation is. These models do not present steps on how to collect and analyse data, but rather provide a framework that helps a practitioner choose the kind of evaluation to undertake (Eseryel, 2002; Phillips, 2006). An outcome-based evaluation, for example, would be goal based. The evaluator would collect information to assess whether the outcome was achieved or not.

When following a systems-based approach, however, the evaluator assesses the training context to investigate extraneous variables that may have influenced the programme and as such account for the result observed (Eseryel, 2002). Factors that support and inhibit both the learning and the learning transfer are investigated in this approach.

A number of frameworks and models aligned to these approaches have been developed. Figure 8 portrays the most popular training evaluation models by date sequence.

Figure 8. Timeline of the most common training evaluation models.

Each of these models will be detailed in the next section of this chapter. An explanation of Kirkpatrick's (1959) original Four-level Hierarchical Model (a goal-based approach model) will be provided, followed by descriptions of the other training evaluation models that were developed because of Kirkpatrick's model. Some of these models have been critiqued leading to proposed amendments, while others were developed because previous frameworks / models did not account for certain components. They are being presented as part of the literature review to show that the training evaluation literature has evolved since the mid-90s. The section will end with a description of the three most recently developed, and most common training evaluation models, namely, Brinkerhoff's (2003) Success Case Method, Scriven's (2008) Training Evaluation Checklist and Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2009) New World Kirkpatrick Model.

Kirkpatrick's (1959) Original Four-level Hierarchical Model.

Kirkpatrick's (1959) Four-level Hierarchical Model has been the primary driver of training evaluation worldwide since it was developed in the 1950s (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002; Giangreco, Carugati, & Sebastiano, 2008; Kraiger et al., 2004; Lien et al., 2007; Peak & Berge, 2006; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001; Salas et al., 2012). To date this model is still the most well-known and commonly used evaluation model by organisations across the world (Alvarez et al. 2004; Beech & Leather, 2006; Blanchard et al., 2000; Casey, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Ford, 2004; Giangreco et al., 2008; Hashim, 2001; James & Roffe, 2000; Kumnikaité, 2007; Leach & Liu, 2003; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012; Passmore & Velez, 2012; Peak & Berge, 2006; Phillips & Phillips, 2001; Rajeev et al., 2009; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001; Salas et al., 2012; Twitchell, Holton & Trott, 2000).

Kirkpatrick's (1959) Four-level Hierarchical Model places training outcomes in a taxonomy on four evaluation levels. These are reactions, knowledge, behaviour, and organisational results (Kirkpatrick, 1977), as seen in Figure 9. The model follows the goal-based approach, in that it indicates the informational need or goal at each level.

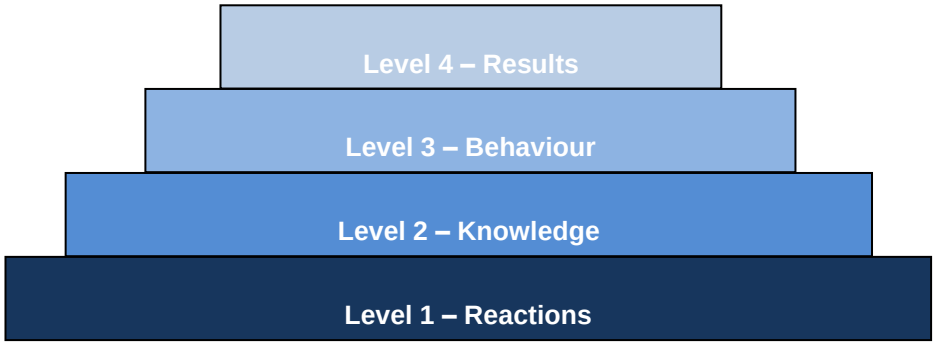

Figure 9. Kirkpatrick's (1959) Four-level Hierarchical Model.

Level one - reactions.

The reaction level assesses the trainees' affective experiences of a programme (Alvarez et al., 2004; Basarab & Root, 1992; Blanchard et al., 2000; Casey, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Farjad, 2012; Ford, 2004; Giangreco et al., 2008; Hale, 2003; Hung, 2010; James & Roffe, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 1977; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012; Lien et al., 2007; Passmore & Velez, 2012; Phillips & Phillips, 2001; Rajeev et al., 2009; Salas et al., 2012; Topno, 2012). The affective responses obtained

pertain to the perceived quality of the training programme as well as the training's relevance to the person's job (Passmore & Velez, 2012; Praslova, 2010). Affective measures can also include utility judgements which are based on how much trainees believe they have learnt because of the programme (Praslova, 2010).

When evaluations are based on Kirkpatrick's (1959) model, evaluation data is most commonly collected at this level and often at this level only (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002; Casey, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Giangreco et al., 2008; Hashim, 2001; Hung, 2010; Lee & Pershing, 2000). Data collection usually takes the form of a trainee satisfaction survey, also known as smile sheets and reactionnaires. It has been argued that the popularity of evaluations at this level is due to the ease of data collection (Praslova, 2010). Using level one evaluation data alone, however, cannot provide the organisation with concrete and objective results about a programme's effectiveness (Pershing & Pershing, 2001).

While it is important to garner participants' reactions to training, the data collected is often of poor quality. Pershing and Pershing (2001) reviewed how 50 organisations collected reaction-level data on their training interventions. Their research found that organisations commonly and mistakenly used reactionnaires as a stand-alone instrument as opposed to using them in conjunction with other evaluation data collection methods, for example, follow-up interviews to assess trainee satisfaction. Pershing and Pershing (2001) also evaluated the reactionnaires that were used on four criteria: reactionnaire design, question dimensions, question construction, and question response format. They found that 60% of the reactionnaires did not comply with survey guidelines. Some of the shortcomings included: unprofessional layout, no protection of anonymity and confidentiality, lack of logical sequence, poor questions, and poor instructions. The authors determined that the reactionnaires would not be able to yield data from which conclusions about trainee satisfaction could be measured. They recommended that organisations using this form of measurement should avoid the shortcomings described above to increase the likelihood of obtaining credible and usable information from trainees. Pershing and Pershing (2001) also recommended that organisations enlist the help of a psychometrist or programme evaluator to assist in the reactionnaires' development.

Reactions are the least effective indicator of a programme's effectiveness as they cannot determine whether the programme met its objectives. However, this level of data

collection should not be overlooked. There is some evidence that a positive attitude towards training results in a greater likelihood of knowledge and skills adoption (Awais Bhatti & Kaur, 2010; Cheng & Hampson, 2008; Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Giangreco et al., 2009; Giangreco et al., 2010; Leach & Liu, 2003; Levin et al., 2010; Long et al., 2008; Noe & Schmitt, 1986; Paulsen & Kauffeld, 2016; Rowold, 2007). Thus, this level of data collection can provide some meaningful information from programme participants if the data collection tool(s) are reliable and valid.

Level two - knowledge.

Level two of Kirkpatrick's Four-level Hierarchical Model investigates whether the trainee has acquired the requisite learning as a result of the training programme (Blanchard et al., 2000; Casey, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Farjad, 2012; Ford, 2004; Giangreco et al., 2008; Hale, 2003; Hung, 2010; James & Roffe, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 1977; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012; Lien et al., 2007; Passmore & Velez, 2012; Phillips & Phillips, 2001; Rajeev et al., 2009; Salas et al., 2012; Topno, 2012.). Within this level, three forms of learning can be assessed, namely, declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and/or attitudinal change.

Declarative knowledge is typically tested using a paper-pencil assessment (Arthur, Bennett, Edens, & Bell, 2003; Leach & Liu, 2003; Praslova, 2010). This could take the form of an examination upon completion of the training programme. Procedural knowledge is likely to be assessed through a performance and skill demonstration (Arthur et al., 2003; Leach & Liu, 2003). A trainee being able to perform the required behaviour signifies that he/she has acquired the necessary procedural knowledge. Lastly, attitudinal change is usually measured with a psychometric scale / questionnaire (Leach & Liu, 2003). In all three instances, but more importantly for attitudinal change, having pre- and post-test scores or measures would provide more objective data for the trainee's achievement of learning.

Level one and level two of Kirkpatrick's (1959) hierarchical model are considered internal because the data collected is based on what happened during the training (Praslova, 2010). Level three and four, on the other hand, are deemed external because the focus of these levels is based on changes that occur outside, and usually after, the training.

Level three - behaviour.

The third level evaluates the application of new or changed behaviour, in other words, whether trainees are engaging in learning transfer and applying what was learnt during the training programme to their jobs (Alvarez et al., 2004; Blanchard et al., 2000; Casey, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Farjad, 2012; Ford, 2004; Giangreco et al., 2008; Hale, 2003; Hung, 2010; James & Roffe, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 1977; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012; Lien et al., 2007; Passmore & Velez, 2012; Phillips & Phillips, 2001; Rajeev et al., 2009; Salas et al., 2012; Topno, 2012.).

An assessment of on-the-job performance is required to obtain data for this level (Praslova, 2010). Common data collection measures used for this level of Kirkpatrick's hierarchical model are supervisor ratings, self-report assessments, an assessment of performance indicators during performance appraisals, observations using checklists, and 360-degree feedback (Leach & Liu, 2003; Praslova, 2010). It is at this level of the model that the outcomes and benefits of training can be observed.

Level four - results.

Lastly, the results level investigates what the overall impact of the training programme is in terms of business results and outcomes (Blanchard et al., 2000; Casey, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Farjad, 2012; Ford, 2004; Giangreco et al., 2008; Hale, 2003; Hung, 2010; James & Roffe, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 1977; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012; Lien et al., 2007; Passmore & Velez, 2012; Phillips & Phillips, 2001; Rajeev et al., 2009; Salas et al., 2012; Topno, 2012.). The evaluation data collected at this level is viewed as the most important (Kirkpatrick, 1977; Saks & Belcourt, 2006).

This level of evaluation assesses macro criteria and distal (long-term) outcomes of the training transfer at level three (Arthur et al., 2003). Possible measures used for level four include productivity gains, increased customer satisfaction, enhanced employee morale, and profitability (Praslova, 2010). Tying these outcomes back to the training, however, is difficult (Leach & Liu, 2003). To isolate the effects of the training, a randomised control trial design would need to be employed during the evaluation with a control group and pre- and post-test data, both of which are uncommon in organisational settings (Peak & Berge, 2006). This level of the model specifically relates to the degree to

which individual learning has led to organisational success. The next two sections examine the model's strengths and shortcomings.

Strengths of Kirkpatrick's Four-level Hierarchical Model.

The original theory of Kirkpatrick's model presents the levels as hierarchical because a positive result at level one is supposed to result in achievement of level two, which then influences change in level three and so on (Giangreto et al., 2008; Kirkpatrick, 1977). According to the original thesis, an evaluator should start at level one and collect data at all four levels to evaluate a training programme's effectiveness (Kirkpatrick, 1977).

The model has several advantages and strengths. The key reason for its popularity is likely the fact that it allows HR professionals to understand training evaluation in a rather straightforward way (Bates, 2004). The four levels can be viewed as a system of various outcomes. Its pragmatic sequence enables practitioners to think about different evaluation possibilities and the kinds of data that could be collected for each level / type of evaluation (Lee & Pershing, 2000). The sequence of the model also makes it easier to identify different training objectives that can be linked to one of the four levels.

Another advantage is that it makes organisations aware that the collection of outcome-based data for various training programmes is important (Bates, 2004). With Kirkpatrick arguing that level four provides crucial evaluation data, it was hoped that companies would be more determined to collect outcome data.

Additionally, the model separates knowledge acquisition and behaviour as two differing outcomes. Thus, it is not sufficient for trainees to have increased their knowledge, since transfer is highlighted as a necessary progression for a training programme to achieve its intended outcomes (Bates, 2004). An evaluation of transfer enables organisations to investigate whether application is taking place following training, and thus whether individual learning has taken place.

Lastly, the model can also be used to inform the design of training programmes. Organisations using Kirkpatrick's model could design training in such a way that, where possible, the intervention can achieve outcomes on all four levels (Lee & Pershing, 2000).

Criticisms of Kirkpatrick's Four-level Hierarchical Model.

While this model is the most commonly used evaluation model, researchers have previously argued that Kirkpatrick's model is outdated (Eseryel, 2002; Holton, 1996; Giangreto et al., 2008). Five key criticisms of the model were identified in the literature. They are: simplification and complexity, a focus on outcomes, incompleteness, an untested cause and effect relationship, and the importance of progressing through all four levels (Eseryel, 2002; Holton, 1996; Giangreto et al., 2008). These criticisms might account for why the full model is seldom implemented and organisations miss an opportunity to maximise the potential organisational learning at the higher levels of the model. The criticisms of the original Four-level Hierarchical Model are presented below. It is important to note, however, that in 2009 Kirkpatrick's model was re-conceptualised and modernized to account for some of the criticisms. The New World Kirkpatrick Model is presented later in this chapter.

Simplification and complexity.

To fully comprehend the effects of a training programme, Kirkpatrick argues that an evaluator must evaluate a training programme by working through all four levels (Blanchard et al., 2000). While the levels seem easy and simplified, the data collection for the higher levels is more complex (Eseryel, 2002). Levels three and four require more time, more knowledge, and cost more (Lee & Pershing, 2000). Since the resources required to perform a credible evaluation increase as the level of evaluation increases most evaluators or HR practitioners only evaluate on levels one and two (Alvarez et al. 2004; Beech & Leather, 2006; Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002; Casey, 2006; Giangreco et al., 2008; Hung, 2010; Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012; Passmore & Velez, 2012; Peak & Berge, 2006; Rajeev et al., 2009; Salas et al., 2012).

Additionally, while the model identifies the outcomes that should guide the evaluation for each level, the model does not provide useful information on how to collect data and how to measure the effects of the training (Kraiger et al., 1993). Thus, practitioners unfamiliar with evaluation and research methods or techniques, particularly data collection methods, may struggle to evaluate levels three and four. This could also account for why only parts of the model are used in practice.

A study by Sugrue and Rivera in 2005 (as cited in Giangreto et al., 2008) found that only 13% of companies evaluated were using the full model up to the fourth level and that level one was the most widely used level. The use of level one only is a major shortfall, not necessarily for the model, but in terms of how the model is utilised (Lee & Pershing, 2000). The decision to only evaluate on one or some of the levels seems to be due to a lack of evaluation competencies as well as time and financial constraints (Giangreto et al., 2008).

Focus on outcomes.

Each level in Kirkpatrick's model is clustered around training outcome categories. The focus of an evaluation that makes use of this model is therefore summative in nature, assessing satisfaction, knowledge, behavioural outcomes and impact of the programme after implementation. The original model lacks a formative approach on how to improve the training during its implementation (Ford, 2004). With no mechanisms built in to investigate the design and implementation of the training process, information that could assist with the programme's improvement, while it is being rolled-out, cannot be collected. The model thus places importance on end results only, as opposed to a continuous process of monitoring, adaption, and improvement. With the model placing emphasis on outcomes, it may signal to HR professionals that no data needs to be collected prior to or during the training (Bates, 2004). Thus, baseline and performance data with which to judge changes in workplace behaviour and thus individual learning, is usually not collected.

Incompleteness.

Perhaps the more cogent criticism of the original model is that it does not acknowledge extraneous and intervening variables (Bates, 2004; Holton, 1996). It does not account for external variables which may have influenced the results obtained at each of the levels. Thus, the original model is viewed as incomplete (Giangreto et al., 2008).

The aim of evaluating the results of a training programme is to make a direct link between the training and some form of impact. Without considering external influences on the results obtained, the evaluator is unable to conclude whether the training alone accounted for the outcomes observed. Bates (2004) argues that this is a key failure of the Kirkpatrick's original model because it assumes that only the training programme itself accounts for success or failure. However, contextual and individual influences will ultimately affect training effectiveness including: trainee characteristics, motivation to learn,

trainer characteristics, training programme design, organisational and/or managerial support, resources available for learning transfer, organisational culture, and the workplace environment (Arthur, et al., 2003; Bates, 2004; Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002; Holton, 1996; Giangreto et al., 2008; Leach & Liu, 2003).

Levels one and two of the model evaluate the actual training, whereas levels three and four evaluate whether individuals are applying what was learnt during the training to their job and the impact thereof. At levels three and four, the component of training is removed (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002). At these levels an investigation of the performance improvement at both an individual level and at the organisational level is assessed. However, without assessing contextual factors, it is difficult to tease out whether the programme is responsible for the results achieved. Training provides capacity to employees but the training itself is not able to transform the capacity into practice; organisational factors, described in Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework: Organisational Learning, such as learning culture are responsible for this. Management needs to acknowledge these factors so that they can assist employees to ensure individual learning occurs (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002).

A taxonomy.

Kirkpatrick (1959) proposed the original Four-level Hierarchy Model as a taxonomy. Each level's outcomes are meant to lead to the next level's outcome. Studies have, however, shown contradicting results of the assumed causal relationships between each of the levels (Ruona, Leimbach, Holton & Bates, 2002). A few studies show support for the hierarchical nature of levels one, two and three (Alliger, Tannenbaum, Bennett, Traver & Shotland, 1997; Warr, Allan & Birdi, 1999, as cited in Leach & Liu, 2003). In these studies, however, the correlations are weak. Other research has found insignificant relationships between reactions and the other levels of the model and thus has failed to support the assumed correlations between the outcome levels (Lee & Pershing, 2000; Ruona et al., 2002).

Implicitly, the model assumes that reactions are a proxy outcome for outcomes of the other levels (Kirkpatrick, 1977). In other words, a positive reaction to training leads to learning, and learning leads to behaviour (Bates, 2004; Ford, 2004; Giangreco et al., 2008). Yet, reactions do not have to be favourable for the training to be effective (Arthur, et al., 2003; Holton, 1996; Ruona et al., 2002). Numerous studies indicated that trainees'

reactions to a training programme were unrelated to the amount of learning which took place, and the amount of learning was unrelated to whether or not trainees engaged in learning transfer and/or behaviour change (Alliger et al., 1997; Arthur, et al., 2003; Awais Bhatti & Kaur, 2010; Cheng & Hampson, 2008; Dixon, 1990; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Giangreco et al., 2009; Giangreco et al., 2010; Levin et al., 2010; Long et al., 2008; Noe & Schmitt, 1986; Paulsen & Kauffeld, 2016; Rowold, 2007; Russ-Eft, Dickinson, & Levine, 2005; Tan, Hall, & Boyce, 2003; Warr & Bunce, 1995).

The assumption that outcome levels two, three and four rest on affective responses from level one could be one of the reasons that organisations only collect reaction-based data (Bates, 2004). If management assumes that positive reactions lead to learning and learning leads to behaviour change which ultimately impacts the organisation, they may only evaluate level one. As discussed above, however, reactions alone are not a sufficient mechanism to judge the merit of any programme or to map real learning.

The reliance on reaction-only data may also influence the way in which training is delivered. While this is not a criticism of the original theory, the way the model is used would then have implications for training. For training providers, the focus may now be on what is most enjoyable versus what is needed (Bates, 2004). If training providers are being assessed on how well participants liked the programme, it may result in trainers distorting the training content or delivery in some way to achieve more positive feedback. Thus, trainers run the risk of focusing on entertainment rather than learning, behaviour strategies and support (Bates, 2004). On the other hand, a cancellation risk exists for trainers. If a company only uses reaction data to judge the effectiveness of a training programme, a trainer who acknowledges that learning is difficult and has focused the training to achieve this objective may receive poor feedback from participants for it not being enjoyable or fun. Subsequently, the organisation may choose not to utilise this training provider in future, when in fact, the provider may be effective (Bates, 2004).

Importance of all levels.

Kirkpatrick's original model was designed to indicate incremental importance of the four levels (Kirkpatrick, 1977). In other words, each level supposedly provides more useful and important information than the previous level (Bates, 2004; Giangreco et al., 2008; Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2005). Since the model is hierarchical, it is assumed that level one is

the least important outcome of the training with the most emphasis being placed at the higher levels (Giangreto et al., 2008).

What is evaluated, what information is collected and at which level the evaluation is conducted, however, is dependent on each specific training programme. The nature of the programme will influence what outcome measures are most appropriate. Training programmes may not intend to produce outcomes on all four levels and may not be designed as such (Blanchard et al., 2000; Giangreto et al., 2008). Thus, the level at which one evaluates depends on the purpose and objectives of the training. For team building training for example, reaction-based data would be highly regarded. For a machine operating programme, behavioural level data would be more important, and so forth. The results that the training programme intends to achieve will therefore influence the level at which to evaluate.

The level of evaluation is also dependent on the evaluation information needs of the company and its different stakeholders (Bates, 2004; Blanchard et al., 2000). Organisations may only be interested in knowing whether a particular outcome has been achieved, for example, individual learning. Thus, the importance of outcomes is based on who the evaluation is for and what results they require. If evaluation reports detailing outcomes on the other three levels will not be utilised, there is little point in doing them. In both scenarios, management's values as well as the training objectives should signal what kind of evaluation should be conducted.

Although these criticisms bring to light some of the flaws in the original model's conceptualisation, one cannot deny the contribution of Kirkpatrick's work to training evaluation. Present day models and techniques on how to evaluate training interventions are grounded in Kirkpatrick's seminal work, which is over 60 years old (Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012). His Four-level Hierarchical Model identified four tiers that every model should ideally incorporate into its design in order to measure training effects, namely a) reaction - affective responses and feedback from participants; b) cognitive - understanding the materials; c) behaviour - trainees being able to demonstrate behavioural changes at work; and d) performance improvement - assessing the benefits of learning transfer (Lien et al., 2007). These tiers have formed the foundation from which other researchers have adapted or developed new training evaluation models, methods, and techniques.

The next sections will present these models in a date sequence. It is important to note that there is little research which documents how frequently these models are used in practice.

The Context, Input, Process, Product Model.

The Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) model was developed by Stufflebeam in the 1960s. The framework specifies four criteria that can be used to judge a programme's value. It is a decision-focused approach in that the four pillars of the model aim to answer four questions: What should we do? How should we do it? Are we doing it as planned? And did the programme work?

The first phase or step in the CIPP framework is context. This phase involves a practitioner collecting necessary information about training needs so that appropriate programme objectives can be formulated (Eseryel, 2002; Phillips & Phillips, 2016; Stufflebeam, 2007; Topno, 2012). Input, the second phase involves selecting the educational strategies that are best aligned with the training needs identified in the context phase (Eseryel, 2002; Phillips & Phillips, 2016; Stufflebeam, 2007; Topno, 2012).

Thirdly, process involves evaluating the implementation of the programme or intervention (Eseryel, 2002; Stufflebeam, 2007). The purpose for monitoring the programme is to obtain feedback on how well it is progressing to schedule (Topno, 2012). The fourth phase, product, is an investigation of the outcomes or results of the intervention to determine the programme's worth and merit (Eseryel, 2002), or in other words, to determine whether or not the training objectives were met (Phillips & Phillips, 2016; Stufflebeam, 2007; Topno, 2012).

The Context Evaluation, Input Evaluation, Reaction Evaluation and Outcome Evaluation Model.

The Context Evaluation, Input Evaluation, Reaction Evaluation, and Outcome Evaluation (CIRO) model was developed by Warr, Bird, and Rackham in 1970 as an extension of Kirkpatrick's model. The authors wanted to build on the original hierarchical model to include contextual factors, inputs and resources. Unlike Kirkpatrick's model which is used to evaluate a training programme after its completion, the CIRO model can be used to design training as well as evaluate it (Griffon, 2014; Phillips & Phillips, 2016; Sachdeva, 2014; Topno, 2012).

As in the CIPP model, a focus on context is the first step. Context evaluation takes place in the initial phase of the training design process and involves conducting a needs assessment (Lee & Pershing, 2000; Phillips & Phillips, 2016). During this phase, an evaluator or HR practitioner would analyse the operational context and performance concerns to identify training needs. The results from this analysis will then be used to determine and set learning objectives for the training (Topno, 2012).

The second phase in the framework, input evaluation, takes place after having identified training needs and objectives. During this phase the evaluator or HR practitioner will select training methods and techniques that will respond to the training needs and objectives (Lee & Pershing, 2000). Deciding on the best delivery of training involves considering the resources available. Thus, course design and programme delivery are influenced by finances, in-house resources, and time.

It is important to note that an evaluator or HR practitioner not involved in the design process of a training intervention but called in to evaluate the training after its completion could critique how the context and input evaluation phases were conducted. In other words, they could assess whether the needs were appropriately identified and review the design and delivery of the training (Topno, 2012).

The reaction phase of the CIRO framework corresponds to the reaction level (level one) of Kirkpatrick's original model (Beech & Leather, 2006). This involves obtaining participants' reactions to the training as well as their suggestions for training improvement (Lee & Pershing, 2000; Phillips & Phillips, 2016; Topno, 2012).

Like Kirkpatrick's original model, this framework also places less importance on reaction data compared to the ultimate tier of the outcome evaluation despite acknowledging how difficult data collection is for the outcome level (Beech & Leather, 2006).

Outcome evaluation is the fourth phase of the framework. This phase involves collecting information on the results of the training (Lee & Pershing, 2000; Phillips & Phillips, 2016). The CIRO model divides training outcomes into three tiers, namely, immediate, intermediate, and ultimate (Beech & Leather, 2006; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Topno, 2012). These three tiers are aligned to levels two (knowledge), three (behaviour) and four (results) of Kirkpatrick's hierarchical model. Immediate outcomes are, for

example, knowledge, skills, and attitudes which have been achieved because of the training. Intermediate outcomes are those outcomes which can be observed on the job, that is, an increase in performance or behavioural transfer. Ultimate outcome is the term used to indicate organisational impact because of the training.

Hamblin's Five-level Approach / Return on Investment.

In 1974, Hamblin adapted Kirkpatrick's model to include five levels (Beech & Leather, 2006). As in the original model, levels one to four remained reaction, learning, job behaviour and organisational outcomes. Hamblin, however, divided organisational outcomes (level four) into two categories: organisation and ultimate value (Lee & Pershing, 2000). Organisation, as the name suggests, involves the benefits or organisational outcomes that are achieved because of participant behaviour and performance changes. For example, productivity, sales and absenteeism. Ultimate value (Hamblin's level five), is a cost-benefit analysis, a financial estimate of how much value the training has had for the organisation's bottom line (Lee & Pershing, 2000). Interestingly this fifth level, return on investment (ROI), is accredited to Phillips in several publications (Casey, 2006; Ford, 2004; Lee & Pershing, 2000; Topno, 2012). The Hamblin (1974) model, however, suggested ROI as a fifth level, long before Phillips in 1995.

Kirkpatrick's original model was criticised for not including a technique that measured the financial impact of training (Lynch, Akridge, Schaffer, & Gray, 2006). ROI is ultimately an approximation of the benefit or value of implementing a specific training intervention in an organisation. This form of evaluation is one way to determine the worth of implementing the training (Casey, 2006). Cost-benefit results ensure that the investment in training was worthwhile when compared to the financial rewards derived from the training outcomes (Pineda, 2010).

The fifth level is thus designed to provide the evaluator with a financial metric which evaluates the value and worth of a training intervention using financial performance data. ROI is known as the most common measure for measuring this form of impact (Phillips & Phillips, 2001). Basically, evaluators use the results obtained from the fourth level and convert these into economic values (Lynch et al., 2006). In this way, the organisation can estimate the monetary benefits from the training programme after accounting for training expenditure. Not all training costs can be accounted for directly, some indirect cost

accounting is needed. From the results of the ROI calculation, however, an evaluator can approximate the ratio of earnings to investments (Phillips & Phillips, 2001).

For evaluators to make use of this level and determine the organisation's profitability due to training and development, interventions must be evaluated in terms of their business impact. Thus, direct assessments of training participants must be obtained and calculated (Casey, 2006). To do so, companies could make use of a technology-based software package that could collect data systematically and with ease (Alexander & Christoffersen, 2006).

ROI is sometimes difficult to ascertain in relation to training because distal outcomes cannot easily be linked directly to the training programme (Bates, 2004). There are several extraneous variables that could influence performance and financial data. Thus, organisations are cautioned not to focus all their attention on this form of evaluation (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2005). Placing the most emphasis on this level may result in organisations generating evaluation reports which only contain information relating to ROI. These not only run the risk of miscalculating or inflating the training outcomes, but also lack a formative focus (Bates, 2004). A programme could be cancelled, for example, based on its ROI calculation without finding out why it 'failed'. If ROI is favoured over formative evaluations, the training function cannot be improved.

Bartel (2000) argues that conducting an ROI analysis is not common practice for corporates and often flawed measures are used to estimate the costs and benefits of the training. For a sound ROI analysis to be completed, extensive time series data is required and this is a demanding undertaking. As such, companies are not commonly equipped to perform ROI themselves (Bartel, 2000). In these circumstances, companies would need to contract an external evaluator to perform the task.

Not all training programmes need to be subjected to ROI analyses. Burkett (2005) suggests that programmes meeting one of the following criteria may benefit from a ROI analysis. They are programmes that: involve a large number of participants; are deemed to be integrated with the overall strategic objectives of the organisation; are expensive; and have high visibility. They are also programmes for which a comprehensive needs assessment was conducted and programmes in which the results are expected to be viable for a long time. There is a greater likelihood that companies may want accurate

measures of their return on investment for these kinds of training programmes to inform accurate and reliable decision making (Bartel, 2000).

Input, Process, Output Model.

IBM developed the Input, Process, Output (IPO) model for evaluating training effectiveness in the early 1990s (Eseryel, 2002). It served to enable IBM to balance its training results and training costs (Bushnell, 1990). The IPO model assisted stakeholders to: a) determine whether the training programmes were meeting their objectives; b) make improvements to the training programmes' design, content and delivery; and c) determine whether participants changed because of the programme.

At the input level, evaluators must evaluate the elements or system performance indicators that have the potential to contribute to the success of the training programme (Bushnell, 1990). These include trainee qualifications, instructor experience, training / instructional materials, training equipment, training facilities, and training budget (Eseryel, 2002).

At the process stage, the evaluator must evaluate the planning, design, and delivery of the training programme or intervention (Eseryel, 2002). For the output aspect of the model, the evaluator assesses the short-term results of the programme, including participant reactions, knowledge and skills gained (individual learning), and increased performance (Bushnell, 1990; Eseryel, 2002).

The Training Validation System.

Like the CIPP and IPO models, the Training Validation System (TVS) is a systems-based approach which enables an evaluator to think about the overall context of the training programme (Eseryel, 2002). The model involves four phases: situation, intervention, impact and value.

In the situation phase, the evaluator needs to establish baseline performance data through collecting pre-training data (Eseryel, 2002). This will enable a comparison of before and after data, after the training intervention has been implemented. In addition, as part of this phase, the evaluator along with the organisation's stakeholders should identify what the desired performance standards are (Eseryel, 2002).

Before blindly implementing training, during the intervention phase, the evaluator must identify the cause of the gap in performance between the baseline and the desired performance level (Eseryel, 2002). Through this investigation, the evaluator will be able to confirm that the problem is in fact a training need.

The impact phase involves collecting post-test data that is analysed in relation to the pre-test data gathered during the situation phase (Eseryel, 2002). Lastly, the value phase expresses the differences in quality, customer services, sales, productivity (or another intended outcome) in monetary terms based on the change analysed (Eseryel, 2002).

Florida State University Approach.

The approach by Kaufman, Keller, and Watkins (1995) is another example of an adaption of Kirkpatrick's four-level framework. The authors critiqued Kirkpatrick's model for not including usefulness of organisational resources and societal impact (Lee & Pershing, 2000). As opposed to solely obtaining feedback on trainee satisfaction in Kirkpatrick's reaction (level one) phase, the authors argue that participants must also be asked to comment on: role, usefulness, appropriateness, contributions of methods and resources available regarding the training provided (Lee & Pershing, 2000). Level two of Kirkpatrick's model (knowledge) remains an assessment of knowledge acquisition in the Florida State University Approach and is used to determine whether the training was implemented correctly to make it possible to achieve its objectives (Lee & Pershing, 2000). Level three of the approach involves measuring actual performance and transfer (mimicking Kirkpatrick's level three). This corresponds to the definition of individual learning outlined in Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework: Organisational Learning. Like Kirkpatrick's level four, the fourth level of the Florida State University Approach measures impact, but it is not solely organisational impact. It includes an investigation of training's societal impact. In other words, organisations are required to investigate the societal effects that their training intervention has had (Lee & Pershing, 2000; Mourão & Borges-Andrade, 2013).

Indiana University Approach.

Molenda, Pershing, and Reigeluth (1996) proposed the Indiana University Approach, a framework of six strata: activity accounting, participant reactions, participant learning, transfer of training, business impact, and social impact (Lee & Pershing, 2000).

The six strata are not proposed as a hierarchy, but rather different options depending on the nature and purpose of the training programme. Strata two to five are based on Kirkpatrick's original model. Activity accounting is seen as the first strata and forms part of what Rossi et al. (2006) call service utilisation. It is ultimately a count of how many trainees were serviced, their demographics, what courses they completed and when these were completed (Lee & Pershing, 2000). Social impact as strata six matches Kaufman et al.'s (1995) societal impact in the Florida State University Approach. It relates to measuring the influence the organisation's training and subsequent performance has had on society (Lee & Pershing, 2000).

The Success Case Method.

One of the more distinct models to have been developed since Kirkpatrick's Four-level Hierarchical Model was Brinkerhoff's (2003) Success Case Method (SCM). Brinkerhoff developed the SCM in response to organisations requiring quick yet concrete results on what value the training added, what outcomes were obtained and what organisational change and/or learning took place because of the training (Brinkerhoff, 2003). The most significant change from previous training evaluation models is that the SCM is one of few qualitative training evaluation models. In a radical departure from previous models, Brinkerhoff's SCM is based on the concept of storytelling. Before detailing the SCM, however, it is important for the reader to understand the logic underlying the development of this approach.

Brinkerhoff and Dressler (2002) critiqued Kirkpatrick's model because it failed to integrate principles and methods of how to improve a programme. The authors argued that evaluation's primary purpose is to build an organisation's capacity to enhance organisational learning. They acknowledge that a training programme will never be 100% successful and that training alone is not solely responsible for learning. Thus, understanding the organisational environment's role in training effectiveness is critical (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002). This is referred to as the organisation's learning capability. It includes the organisation's culture and systematic factors that influence a training programme's success or failure. Brinkerhoff and Dressler (2002) argued that evaluation should be seen as a mechanism to improve the organisation's learning capability, so that the true benefits and the most impact from training efforts are reaped.

In line with this logic, the authors argued that an organisation's evaluation strategy should focus on three primary questions:

> "How well is our organisation using learning to drive performance improvement?
>
> What is our organisation doing that facilitates performance improvement from learning that needs to be maintained and strengthened?
>
> What is our organisation doing, or not doing, that is impeding performance improvement?"
>
> (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002, p.17)

According to Brinkerhoff and Dressler (2002), evaluation results must be communicated to two parties: management and the training function in order to build an organisation's learning capability (See Figure 10). The information that is provided to management is focused on performance improvement. In other words, it includes information pertaining to individual learning, application of learning and factors that help or impede training transfer (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002). In this way, management gains information that can be used to assist employees in transforming their improved knowledge and skills into better performance. Brinkerhoff and Dressler (2002) emphasised that evaluation reports should not be used as the medium of communication for this information as these are seldom read. Instead evaluators or HR practitioners should make use of presentations, newsletters, discussions, and seminars to provide this feedback.

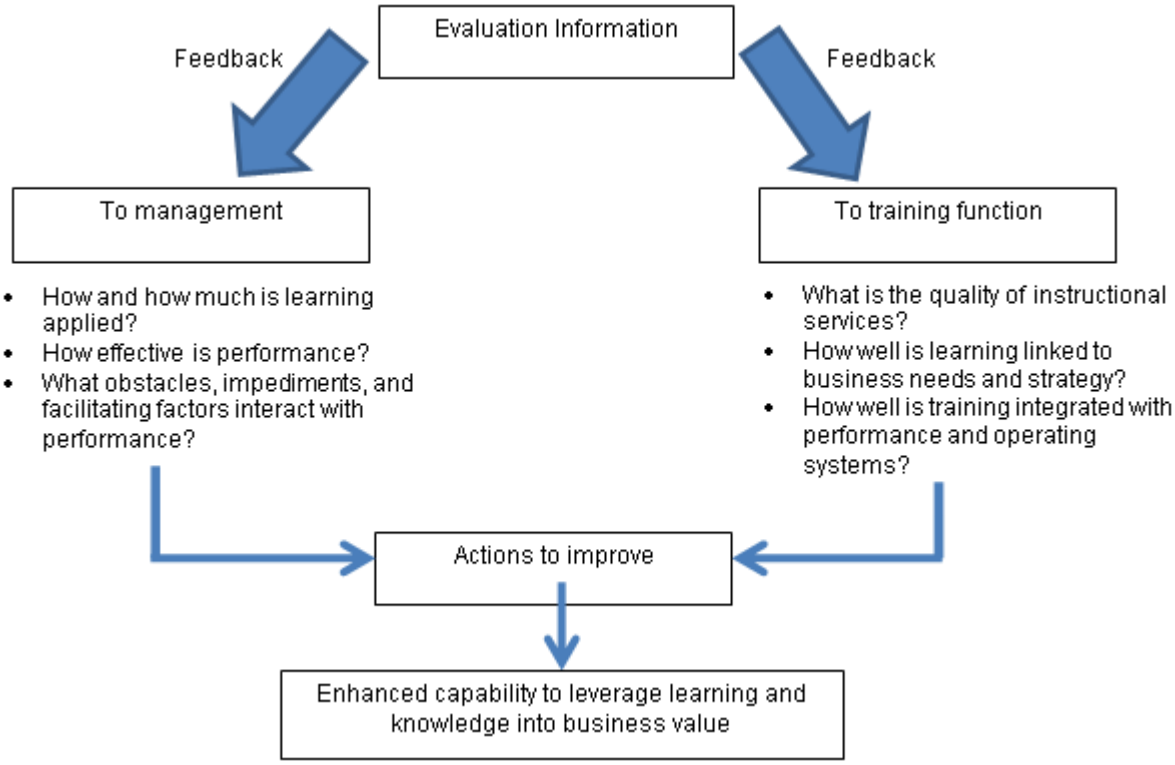

Figure 10. Evaluation as capacity building by Brinkerhoff and Dressler (2002).

The training function, that is, all those who have been involved in the training, for example, designers and implementers also require evaluation results. Their information needs are, however, different. Evaluators need to provide the training function with feedback that is focused on three main areas: whether the programme's learning goals were aligned to business goals, whether the instructional design was appropriate, and the effectiveness and overall quality of the actual training (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002).

Brinkerhoff and Dressler (2002) argued that, after receiving appropriate feedback about the evaluation results, both parties are able to implement changes. Management, for example, may implement various strategies to assist in learning transfer, while the training function may make improvements to the training intervention. Ultimately, the actions taken can result in improved organisational learning capability through which the organisation can leverage greater performance and business value from the training implemented (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002). The SCM is an evaluation model based on this logic.

An overview of the Success Case Method process.

Brinkerhoff's (2003, 2005, 2006b) SCM approach is premised on the idea that individuals must be able to transform new learning into individual performance. Evaluation data is key to understanding how to achieve this transformation quickly. Thus, the primary purpose of the SCM is to diagnose problems within the workplace that affect learning transfer (Casey, 2006).

The model is a straightforward and simple way to assess performance and high impact learning by questioning the attendees of the training programme. The model uses purposive sampling to obtain information from a select few participants (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002). The individuals questioned belong to one of two groups: success cases (individuals who have applied the training successfully) and non-success cases (Brinkerhoff, 2003; Brinkerhoff, 2005; Brinkerhoff, 2006b).

The evaluation method is a two-step approach: an initial survey is followed by the collection of qualitative data (Brinkerhoff, 2003; Brinkerhoff, 2005; Brinkerhoff, 2006b). The initial survey is sent to a large sample of employees who attended the training programme. It aims to assess to what extent individuals have been using the training in their jobs and how they believe the application of the learning has made a significant difference to the business. From the survey responses, evaluators can identify extreme cases: those who have been successful in applying the learning and those who have not.

These two extremes then make up the sample cohorts for second phase. The aim of eliciting information from these two extreme groups is to leverage non-successful training into successful training (Brinkerhoff, 2003; Brinkerhoff, 2005; Brinkerhoff, 2006b). The underlying logic is that evaluators can learn the best when questioning those who have been the most successful and those who have been the least successful in the training process (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002).

Data can be collected using face-to-face or telephonic interviews. Depending on the cohort / extreme group, a set of questions will be posed to the participants. For the success cases, evaluators ask questions such as: their perceived value of the training, which components of the training they have implemented, and what results were observed because of this learning transfer (Brinkerhoff, 2003; Brinkerhoff, 2005; Brinkerhoff, 2006b; Ford, 2004). Evaluators probe the participants to be able to document the nature of their

transfer and application in detail as well as business values and relevant contextual factors, such as supervisor support, culture, feedback and opportunities that enabled the participants to engage in learning transfer. In this way, the evaluator can build a story about each participant's success.

The non-success cases are asked different questions, namely, what prevented them from being able to use their learning (barriers that hindered use of the training) as well as their suggestions for improvement for both the intervention as a whole and the training process itself (Brinkerhoff, 2003; Brinkerhoff, 2005; Brinkerhoff, 2006b). These stories depict the struggles that made the training unsuccessful for these participants.

From this evaluation data, evaluators can produce reports which contain in-depth stories that can be disseminated to a variety of organisational stakeholders. The stories highlight the business impacts of the learning and performance of successful trainees; but also provide the organisation with detailed information on what factors enhanced or hindered the training process (Brinkerhoff, 2003; Brinkerhoff, 2005; Brinkerhoff, 2006b). The challenge for evaluators is to build compelling stories with the content necessary to convince stakeholders that changes and improvements to the training and the training / workplace environment are required. In so doing it is hoped that managers will be more likely to support future training, enabling more business impact.

Scriven's (2008) Training Evaluation Checklist.

In 2008, Scriven developed the Training Evaluation Checklist. This model is still in draft form and has been made available on Scriven's website for critique and suggestions from researchers in the evaluation field. The model was last updated in 2011.

Scriven expanded Kirkpatrick's Four-level Hierarchical Model by compiling a checklist comprising 12 areas that an evaluator should assess. Three of these are the same as in Kirkpatrick's Four-level Hierarchical Model, one is Hamblin's / Phillips' addition to the Kirkpatrick and CIRO models and the eight extra components were added by Scriven (2011) for analytic or diagnostic evaluation. Called, The Training Evaluation Checklist (TEC), it is intended for organisations who wish to gather more than just bottom-line data about a training programme. The 12 dimensions can be used for the following purposes: formative evaluation, summative evaluation and ascriptive evaluation, that is, simply to increase knowledge about a programme, monitoring, and programme design

improvement (Scriven, 2011). Primarily, the TEC can assist evaluators to investigate why a programme failed, or alternatively how to plan a programme correctly to avoid situations that may result in programme failure. The 12 components as described by Scriven (2011) are presented below.

1. Need.

Retroactive training is implemented in response to a need or problem. Scriven (2011) argued that evaluators and programme planners must obtain evidence that training can respond to and rectify an identified need or problem. Identifying something as a training need may seem obvious. However, there may be a tendency to suggest training first without obtaining credible data that the problem is in fact a training issue (Scriven, 2011). Training need data can be obtained through performance appraisals. If certain knowledge, skills, attitudes or values (KSAV's) are a prerequisite for a position and these are lacking, training would be appropriate.

Along with the needs assessment, Scriven (2011) also argued that the organisation should consider the costs and feasibility of training. Once the problem or need has been correctly identified, organisations may want to investigate alternate options to training. For example, the organisation could explore rather outsourcing a function, hiring someone with the necessary competencies, or purchasing advanced equipment / software (Scriven, 2011). The payoff of providing training must be assessed against the likely payoffs of other options. A decision to implement training should be checked from various angles to ensure it is well-informed.

2. Design.

Design requires the evaluator to assess whether the proposed training design accurately targets and encompasses three elements: a) the need identified; b) the target population's current KSAV's; and c) the resources available (Scriven, 2011). Not only should the training objectives, descriptions, and content be scrutinised, but Scriven (2011) stated that a training plan for the organisation should also be developed. This plan would include the advertising and recruitment plan; logistical arrangements for the training and site preparation (if the training were to be filmed); how to encourage participation; and what support services will be established after the training. He argued that planning these

additional design components prior to the training reduces the likelihood of programme failure.

3. Recruitment.

Scriven (2011) noted that only employees who require training should receive it. Correctly identifying them and not including additional employees would reduce costs. This relates not only to the costs associated with the actual training intervention, but also the indirect costs of that individual not being at work. A recruitment plan can ensure that training information and advertisements are not simply sent via general electronic mail, but rather that targeted employees are reached (Scriven, 2011). This may require recruitment presentations, staff meetings and in-house newsletters.

Once employees have applied to attend the training, a selection process must take place, argued Scriven (2011). Employees identified as not part of the target population should not be admitted to the training. As part of this third TEC component, participation during training should also be monitored and attrition be followed up immediately to ensure that no unforeseen problems are being experienced (Scriven, 2011).

4. Delivery.

Scriven's (2011) fourth component is a process evaluation. Here, evaluators should ensure that the training programme is delivered according to plan. Evidence of preparation and training delivery should be provided to the evaluator by the trainer, while observations during the training can also be performed and documented.

5. Reaction.

The reaction part of the TEC corresponds to level one of Kirkpatrick's model. Participants should complete questionnaires that contain closed and open-ended questions about their experiences of the training (Scriven, 2011). It has been discussed previously, that although these responses cannot provide any indication of programme impact, they can be used to identify problematic issues and serve as an early warning for possible programme failure. Scriven (2011) also argued that asking participants to complete these questionnaires may make them feel that the organisation cares about their training experiences and values their opinions. This could also enforce a favourable

learning culture in the organisation. To increase responses, time should be included at the end of the training session for this.

6. Learning.

The sixth aspect is a replication of Kirkpatrick's level two (knowledge). For this item, the evaluator must obtain data to show that the trainees have mastered the intended KSAV's of the training programme (Scriven, 2011). This data is usually collected through the use of learning assessments after the training. However, to establish more credible data, Scriven (2011) argued that a pre-test would be beneficial in order to compare it with the data collected in the post assessment.

7. Retention.

According to the underlying logic of the TEC, it is not enough to assess whether learning has occurred (Scriven, 2011). Learning retention should also be determined. Scriven (2011) suggested follow-up tests as the best mechanism for this, the timing of which would be dependent on the type of training provided.

8. Application.

Component eight of the TEC is the behavioural level of Kirkpatrick's model (level three). This aspect requires evaluators to investigate whether the employee is applying the KSAV's acquired during the training to their work context (Scriven, 2011). Some common data collection methods for application include direct observations of the employees, examinations of the employees' work, and interviews with supervisors, co-workers, and subordinates (Scriven, 2011).

9. Extension / Generalisability.

Scriven (2011) argued that it may be useful for evaluators to determine whether the training can be replicated for other contexts. For example, considerations regarding other times, other sites, other organisations, and other subject matters should be reflected upon as part of the evaluation.

10. Value.

The component of value aims to investigate the unintended benefits of the training (Scriven, 2011). By considering unplanned positive and negative consequences of the

training, the evaluator can determine the overall importance that the training has had. Scriven (2011) suggests that evaluators use qualitative data to obtain rich data on the training's value.

11. Alternatives.

As discussed above, Scriven (2011) argued that training may not always be the most appropriate course of action. For this aspect of the TEC, evaluators should compare the impact of the training with the estimated impact of other options / remedies. This comparison links to component ten in that it supports or contradicts the importance and value of the training (Scriven, 2011).

12. Return on Investment.

The final component of Scriven's (2011) TEC is the cost-benefit analysis of the training (ROI). As discussed above, this part involves estimating the net financial impact of training by equating the costs and gains of the training programme.

Scriven (2011) argued that for a training evaluator to conduct a rigorous evaluation, each of the 12 checkpoints must be addressed; even if only briefly. It is also important to note that the TEC is still a work in progress. Scriven (2011) has made changes and additions since publishing the original checklist in 2008 and will likely continue to do so.

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2009) New World Kirkpatrick Model.

After sixty-plus years since the establishment of the Four-level Hierarchy Model, Kirkpatrick's son and daughter-in-law expanded the original model to create the New World Kirkpatrick Model. The New World Kirkpatrick Model is still based on the original four levels, however, they have been reconceptualised / modernised with new elements that help evaluators or HR practitioners to implement them more effectively (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). The levels of the New World Kirkpatrick Model are presented next.

New world level one.

Originally, level one was conceptualised as trainee satisfaction. In the New World Kirkpatrick Model, level one consists of satisfaction in general as well as an assessment of the degree to which trainees found the training to be favourable, engaging, and relevant to their jobs (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016).

New world level two.

Level two in the original model involved the investigation of enhanced employee knowledge, skills, and attitudes following training. Level two in the New World Kirkpatrick Model still involves an evaluation of the extent to which employees have increased in knowledge, skill and attitude, but also includes an assessment of employee commitment and confidence (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). The authors argue that both commitment and confidence can increase the likelihood of learning transfer.

New world level three.

Level three of the original model, behaviour, was based on the application and transfer of training to the job. Level three in the New World Kirkpatrick Model still encompasses learning transfer, but also includes critical behaviours, required drivers, and on-the-job learning (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016).

Critical behaviours are actions specific to a person's job which when performed bring about outcomes that are important for organisational success. The authors argue that these critical behaviours must align with transfer of learning, and that this should be evaluated as part of level three.

Required drivers are defined as processes that reinforce, reward and encourage critical behaviours. For example, a pay for performance system could be a driver. When an individual receives a reward for performing a critical behaviour it should result in the critical behaviour being performed continually. Due to the influence that these drivers have on effective learning transfer and the subsequent performance of critical behaviours, Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) suggest that drivers be implemented and monitored as part the New World level three.

On-the-job learning, as the name suggests, involves the learning that employees obtain from performing their roles and responsibilities. Since 70 percent of learning takes place via on-the-job learning, Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) suggest that the organisational culture should encourage individuals to take accountability for their own learning and job performance and that this learning should be evaluated.

New world level four.

The results level (level four) of the original model was misunderstood. Individuals classified results as outcomes that were affected in their area or department as a result of the training. However, Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) explain that the results level is based on the broad organisational objective of the company and the extent to which training has contributed to achieving this. While the authors acknowledge that linking training to the organisation's overall goal is difficult, they suggest measuring and observing leading indicators to ensure that the organisation is on track to meet its desired result.

The revised Kirkpatrick model is arguably more aligned with organisational learning, given that level three and four have been modernised to include investigations of training effectiveness. Thus, feedback can be obtained on the level of individual learning taking place, the factors that are contributing to this learning, and how well individual learning has resulted in organisational learning and success.

In the section above, I have presented the dominant training evaluation models found in the literature. All the models, except the SCM, are grounded in Kirkpatrick's original four-level hierarchy. The information has been provided in this chapter to highlight the vast number of models that exist and that can be used by HR practitioners to evaluate their training and development interventions, as well as the learning cultures and environmental factors that influence learning transfer. The models presented are not exhaustive, but rather the most popular models found in social science research and literature. The fact that a vast number of models exists could be interpreted as an indication of the importance of training evaluation for individual and organisational learning.

The use of training evaluation models not only enables an organisation to determine the effectiveness of their training interventions and their learning environments, but the evaluation data can also provide a feedback loop from which the organisation can learn. There is, however, no one best model to use as each training evaluation will be context-specific. What is important is to ensure that, regardless of the method or model chosen, the information derived through the practice of training evaluation should be used for decision-making purposes and to implement change.

Although there is a proliferation of these models and frameworks to evaluate training programmes, there is limited evidence that any of these approaches are being used by corporates. The anecdotal evidence provided in Chapter One: Introduction suggests that training evaluation is not practised in South African corporates. In theory, the models can assist an organisation to determine the value and outcomes of training interventions, yet in practice organisations do not seem to be utilising the models fully.

The aim of this chapter was to provide a chronological, descriptive review of the most popular training evaluation models and frameworks.

As part of the literature review, however, I also interrogated training evaluation research to determine a more comprehensive picture of the current state of training evaluation across the world and at what levels and how corporates are evaluating their training programmes. The academic literature related to these topics is reviewed in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: The Practice of Training Evaluation Around the Globe

This chapter summarises research that gives insight into global training evaluation trends and practices. The literature review aimed to locate research in the form of audits or reviews that reported on the state of training evaluation in corporate contexts in different countries around the world.

In order to identify literature, the following search terms were initially entered into EBSCO Host, Jstor, and Emerald: “training AND evaluation”; “training AND evaluation AND practices”; “training AND evaluation AND trends”; “training AND evaluation AND audit”; “training AND evaluation AND review”; “corporate AND training AND evaluation”; “organi*ation* AND training AND evaluation”. After each search, the titles and abstracts on the first 10 - 15 pages of results were considered. This search retrieved no articles on the state of training evaluation. At this point, I realised that locating the research I required would be challenging.

To ensure that the review process was comprehensive and exhaustive, I decided to only use the search terms “training AND evaluation” in the subsequent search. The same databases: EBSCO Host, Jstor, and Emerald were used. In EBSCO the search results were filtered for academic journal articles and journals, yielding approximately 175 000 results. In Emerald the results were filtered based on subject: HR and Organisational Behaviour as well as Training and Development, resulting in approximately 18 000 entries. No filtering was used in Jstor, and the search terms yielded approximately 9 000 articles.

I systematically worked through the search results for each of the databases. After each review session, I saved the URL link and made a note of which results page I needed to start with the following day. I spent two months reviewing the titles and abstracts of approximately 30 000 articles.

Despite using the AND index term the search results included articles on training and development in general as well as evaluation research that was not based on training (given the mass number of search results, the actual number of articles for both occurrences was not recorded). The results also included numerous articles of once-off evaluations conducted on a particular training programme, for example, a journal article

reporting the effectiveness of a school leadership training programme. Given the large number of articles of this nature, I did not record how many search results were once-off evaluation studies. These articles were not included as part of the review, as they did not report on the global state of training evaluation.

Only a small number of articles (n = 10) were found that reported on the state of training evaluation in different countries. The most recent of these was published in 2009. The authors of these ten articles surveyed various companies in a particular country / continent to assess their training evaluation practices. The countries and continent are the United States of America (USA), Canada, Europe, Kuwait, the United Kingdom (UK), and South Africa. An overview is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Articles Found that Reported Overall Trends and Corporate Training Evaluation Practices in Various Countries / Continent

Country	Authors	Date
USA	Brandenburg	1982
	Saari, Johnson, McLaughlin, and Zimmerle	1988
	Geber	1995
	Twitchell, Holton, and Trott,	2000
	Singal	2009
Canada	Blanchard, Thacker, and Way	2000
Europe	Eseryel	2002
Kuwait	Al Athari and Zairi	2002
UK*	Bramley	2003
SA	Meyer and Bushney	2004

Note. Although the UK is part of north western Europe, the findings for Europe and the UK are reported separately.

A brief synopsis of the ten articles presented in Table 3 will be reported in the following section to give the reader an indication of what has been published in this regard. They are presented in date sequence (with the five USA studies being grouped together). I conducted regular checks during the course of this research to confirm that no recent articles were published which presented audit or state of training evaluation practices in corporate settings around the world.

Training Evaluation Trends in the USA

Research conducted in the USA in the early 1980s concluded that organisations tended to use only smile sheets as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of their training initiatives (Brandenburg, 1982). In the same decade, Saari, Johnson, McLaughlin, and Zimmerle (1988) sought to investigate management training trends. They selected 1 000 companies to survey and obtained a response rate of 61%. The survey assessed, among other aspects, whether companies conducted needs assessments prior to implementing training programmes and whether the training programmes were evaluated. Results indicated that 27% of the companies had procedures in place to conduct assessments to determine the training needs of their managers (Saari et al., 1988). The surveyed companies, however, did not conduct extensive evaluations of their managerial training programmes: 42% of companies, who spent on average $14 000 per person for MBA programmes, did not evaluate the programme's effectiveness; 32% of companies did not evaluate short course programmes; 23% did not evaluate university residential programmes; and 8% reported to have done no evaluations for company-specific programmes.

The research indicated that the most common techniques used as evaluative measures were reaction forms completed by participants as well as informal discussions to elicit feedback about the training programmes. Saari et al. (1988) thus concluded that there was a lack of systematic training evaluation practices.

The 1995 Training Industry Report of the USA (as cited in Geber, 1995) reported the evaluation practices of American organisations that employed more than 100 employees but did not provide the total number of organisations. The results indicated that the most common level of evaluation conducted was level one, reactions for both management and non-management training (as seen in Table 4). The training report also

revealed that organisations were evaluating on levels two (knowledge), three (behaviour) and four (results).

Table 4

Training Evaluation Practices of Management and Non-Management Training in the USA in 1995 (as cited by Geber, 1995)

Level of evaluation conducted	Management Training	Non-management training
Reaction (level one)	71.0%	68.3%
Knowledge (level two)	17.2%	31.0%
Behaviour (level three)	37.2%	46.9%
Organisational Results / Impact (level four)	42.8%	35.9%

In 2000, Singal (2009) conducted further research on the training evaluation practices of organisations in the USA. Results from this research indicated that 90% of organisations focused their training efforts on developing managers. Companies allocated approximately $54 billion of their budget to formal managerial training. Some survey respondents claimed to be using ROI measures to evaluate this training in addition to Kirkpatrick's four levels. Singal (2009) concluded, however, that the evaluations conducted using Kirkpatrick's model usually consisted of capturing smile sheet data immediately after the training programme and the ROI data collected was flawed due to incorrect techniques and calculations. Those responsible were thus unable to provide management with information that could be used to make adequate tactical decisions about the various training interventions.

Around the same time, Twitchell et al. (2000) conducted research in businesses and industry organisations in the USA. They focused specifically on the training evaluation practices for technical training programmes. After identifying a sampling frame of 2 569 companies, they selected a random sample and sent out 332 surveys. The response rate

was 42%, but only 112 surveys were usable after data cleaning. The results from their research are depicted in Table 5.

Table 5

Corporate Training Evaluation Practices in the USA in 2000 (as cited by Twitchell, Holton, & Trott, 2000)

Level of evaluation conducted	% of training programmes evaluated *(technical training only)*
Reaction (level one)	72.74%
Knowledge (level two)	47.05%
Behaviour (level three)	30.54%
Organisational Results / Impact (level four)	20.82%

As shown in Table 5 reaction evaluation measures were used by 73% of the organisations; and 47% of the respondents used level two evaluations. Less than half of the organisations used levels three and four of Kirkpatrick's model (31% and 21% respectively). Skill demonstrations were cited as the most popular data collection method used for level two evaluation (69% of organisations evaluating at this level used this technique). Post-test data with no pre-test was used by 60% of organisations to measure learning; whereas 55% of the organisations used pre-test and post-tests comparisons. For level three (behaviour), observations were the most reported method of data collection, followed by performance appraisals (Twitchell et al., 2000). To obtain data for level four (results), productivity estimates and measures were used by one third of the sample, with ROI measures being used in less than one fifth of the training programmes (Twitchell et al., 2000).

Five of the studies identified were conducted in the USA and the USA was the only area with more than one published study on training evaluation trends and practices. The most recent article, however, dates back to 2000.

Training Evaluation Trends in Canada

One article was found which reported on training evaluation trends in Canada. Blanchard et al., (2000) surveyed 202 Canadian organisations to investigate their training evaluation practices. Their results indicated that, as in the USA studies, reaction-level data was the most common form of training evaluation for management and non-management training. More than half of the organisations surveyed did not evaluate their training on the remaining three levels of Kirkpatrick's model. The results outlined in Table 6 were reported by Blanchard et al., (2000).

Table 6

Canadian Training Evaluation Statistics by Blanchard, Thacker, and Way (2000)

Level of evaluation conducted	Managerial Training	Non-managerial Training
Behaviour (level three)	37%	46.9%
Organisational Results / Impact (level four)	43%	35.9%

Training Evaluation Trends in Europe

The only European research found was a study conducted by the Promoting Added Value through Evaluation (PAVE) project. The study aimed to collect data on the training evaluation practices of small, medium, and large European organisations (Eseryel, 2002). The results of the research showed that the organisations surveyed were committed to training. Organisations used needs analysis techniques frequently to identify training needs, but less common were training evaluations that assessed overall effectiveness of the interventions. The research found that the majority of organisations (percentage not provided) held the line managers responsible for training evaluation and this was performed with the use of informal feedback sessions with trainees or smile sheet questionnaires (Eseryel, 2002). The PAVE project concluded that reaction-type data was the common form of training evaluation practiced.

Training Evaluation Trends in Kuwait

Al Athari and Zairi (2002) surveyed 77 organisations in Kuwait. Their findings suggest that government organisations placed a greater importance on training evaluation than did private organisations. Significant differences in training evaluation practices were based on organisations' financial performance with more training evaluation observed in companies with higher annual sales (Al Athari & Zairi, 2002). Overall, the majority of organisations in both sectors viewed training evaluation as the single most important factor for their training system's success.

Training evaluation was predominantly the responsibility of the training co-ordinator. Al Athari and Zairi (2002) found that the majority of organisations only evaluated their training programmes occasionally, however, common data collection instruments included tests, questionnaires, interviews, observations and performance records, with questionnaires in the form of smile sheets being the most common. These questionnaires asked whether respondents were satisfied with the trainer and venue, and whether the individual enjoyed the training course. The entire sample of Kuwait organisations made use of Kirkpatrick's model, at differing levels (see Table 7, for results), and 5% of the sample used the CIRO model (Al Athari & Zairi, 2002).

Table 7

Kuwait Training Evaluation Trends by Al Athari and Zairi (2002)

Level of evaluation conducted	Government Organisations	Private organisations
Reaction (level one)	85%	73%
Knowledge (level two)	47%	10%
Behaviour (level three)	35%	11%
Organisational Results / Impact (level four)	40%	48%

Al Athari and Zairi (2002) also investigated other kinds of training evaluation information collected by private and government organisations. The investigation showed

that data collection of training inputs and outputs was common for both types of organisations (see Table 8).

Table 8

Training Inputs and Outputs Collected by Kuwait Organisations

	Government organisations	Private organisations
Input data collected	No. of employees trained	No. of trainees
	No. of training courses conducted	
	Total training days	
	Cost of facilities	
		Total training expenditure
		Payments to training provider
		Trainee travel expenses
Output data collected	Customer satisfaction	Customer satisfaction
	Job satisfaction	Job satisfaction
	Productivity	Productivity
	Absenteeism	
		Sales
		Profitability

Al Athari and Zairi's (2002) research found that more than 60% of organisations in both sectors noted the following factors that hindered evaluation as the most challenging: finding suitable training evaluation models that matched the objectives of the training course; cost of conducting training evaluations; preparing feasible and appropriate reports; and gaining top management support for training evaluation. Lack of knowledge was also highlighted as a major challenge because much of the sample did not have knowledge of: evaluation tools and methods; the latest advances in evaluation and measurement; benchmarked training outcomes; and examples of best practices from other companies.

Organisations also lacked the required competencies and resources to conduct efficient evaluations, and very few organisations knew of outsiders or contractors who could assist.

Training Evaluation Trends in the UK

As part of a research paper, Bramley (2003) reported on certain training evaluation trends in the UK. However, as this was not the focus of the article, the information presented was limited. Bramley (2003) concluded that organisations in the UK became interested in training evaluation in the early 2000s. This was driven by government requiring evaluations for the public sector and corporates wanting their human resource departments to show evidence of the value-add of training initiatives for the organisation (Bramley, 2003). The specific evaluation results by Bramley (2003), however, were neither published nor accessible.

Training Evaluation Trends in South Africa

A comparative study conducted by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) investigated the levels of evaluation used in South Africa and the USA during 2004 (Meyer & Bushney, n.d). Results revealed that both countries had high levels of reaction-level training evaluation practices (as shown in Table 9). In South Africa, 68% of organisations collected reaction data compared to 74% in the USA. The research also revealed that results-level training evaluation data as well as ROI evaluations were less common, with the frequency of ROI evaluations, in particular, being low.

Table 9.

Comparative Analysis of South African and USA Training Evaluation Practices in 2004 (Meyer & Bushney, n.d)

Level of evaluation conducted	South Africa	America
Reaction (level one)	68%	74%
Organisational Results / Impact (level four)	25%	10%
ROI evaluations	8%	9%

In 2005, South Africa and America's results for ROI level statistics had improved to 39% and 23% respectively. This increase could have been due to several reasons including: an increase of conferences, networks and research encouraging ROI; influence from subject experts traveling to SA; and a focus on accountability in organisational annual reports (Meyer & Bushney, n.d). Other than this study, however, we know little about what South African corporates are currently doing to evaluate their training and development initiatives.

Synthesis of Global Trends

Based on the results of the ten articles on training evaluation in different countries / continents described above, there is some evidence to suggest that in the last several decades companies globally were engaging in some form of evaluation of their training programmes. However, the level and depth of the training evaluation practices was weak. Results in the articles revealed that organisations tended to rely heavily on reaction and satisfaction data of trainees and less on obtaining data on potential behavioural change and the outcomes thereof. Thus, it is unclear if specific training interventions led to individual learning or organisational learning.

Given that this thesis is located in South Africa, a follow-up literature search was conducted to ensure that no further audits had been done of South African training evaluation trends and practices. A search on EBSCO Host using the terms 'training AND evaluation' and filtered geographically for South Africa revealed 147 journal articles. These included a number of publications on the evaluation of social training interventions including HIV/AIDS education and counselling programmes; community leadership training interventions; rural violence training programmes; and other social training interventions. No results included an evaluation of a training programme in a corporate context. I am, however, aware of a special edition of the South African Journal of Human Resource Management (Volume 10, Issue Number 3, of 2012) which documents two job-related training evaluations: 'A process evaluation of a supervisory development programme' (Buys & Louw, 2012); and 'Evaluating a training programme for executive coaches' (Beets & Goodman, 2012).

In March 2018, another search was conducted using the database Sabinet to review any recently published training evaluation research in South Africa within the corporate context. Three articles were found. The first evaluated a contractor development

programme that was implemented for contractors in the construction industry. Dapaah, Thwala, and MusondaIt (2017) found that the beneficiaries of the programme were satisfied overall with the intervention, but that the programme was ineffective for most of the sampled contractors in improving their management skills and performance.

The second article reported on the effectiveness of emergency care workshops provided for nurses and doctors in the KwaZulu-Natal province. Naidoo (2017) found that the workshops were successful in increasing knowledge about primary emergency care when comparing the pre- and post-intervention data.

The third evaluation investigated whether the provision of a sensitisation training programme for health care workers on men who have sex with men was effective in a) providing knowledge and b) promoting non-discriminatory and non-judgemental attitudes from health care workers in the Western Cape. Scheibe, Duby, Brown, Sanders, & Bekker concluded that overall health workers had increased knowledge and awareness on matters such as penile-anal intercourse, substance use, and depression among men who have sex with men. Additionally, their research found that the intervention reduced the discriminatory attitudes of the health care workers.

These publications, however, offer limited insight into the overall training evaluation practices in the country. It was therefore concluded that the research conducted by the ASTD in 2004, as detailed above, is the only study to report a holistic view of the state of training evaluation in South Africa.

Implications of the Literature Review Findings

Having reviewed training evaluation trends and practices across the globe there is little insight into whether training evaluation practices are implemented systematically and conducted with fidelity. The data indicates that while there is some attempt to collect information on behaviour and results, most organisations are collecting reaction-level data without consciously applying training evaluation models. These findings support the evaluation theorists who argue that the most commonly used training evaluation method is reaction-level data (Alliger et al., 1997; Alvarez et al., 2004; Basarab & Root, 1992; Bates, 2004; Blanchard et al., 2000; Eseryel, 2002; Foreman, 2008; Galloway, 2007; Giangreco et al., 2008; Hale, 2003; Hashim, 2001; Phillips, Phillips, & Hodges, 2004; Sanders, 2002; Singal, 2009). A question that remains, however, is why organisations do not engage in

comprehensive training evaluation practices. Some reasons have been identified in the training evaluation literature. An overview of these reasons in provided in the next section.

Potential Reasons for the Lack of Evaluation

Evaluating the effectiveness of training interventions is not a simple task. Evaluation involves the investigation of a number of facets including reactions, learning, use of instructional materials, transfer of learning, outcomes, ROI and impact (Chen, 2005; Eseryel, 2002; Rossi et al., 2004). Paul Griffin (2010) groups the reasons for the lack of training evaluation into three interrelated clusters, namely, the complexity of learning, inadequate methods for training evaluation, and organisational barriers.

Complexity of learning is the notion that if something is too difficult to measure it is either not attempted or is over simplified (Paul Griffin, 2010). In most cases, linking a training intervention to an outcome is not easy; it requires systematic data collection. Even when conducted credibly, it is not possible to conclude a direct causal relationship between the training and its outcomes because of the complexity of learning and the number of factors that affect learning and the transfer of learning. This could be a reason underlying the choice to not evaluate training, or to use a simplified form of training evaluation. While learning is complex, practitioners may acknowledge that some form of training evaluation data is required and as such they will make use of reactions as a form of outcome data for the training programmes (Paul Griffin, 2010).

Not only is the practice of training evaluation complex, but the theoretical training evaluation models reviewed provide no useful information on exactly how one goes about evaluating a training programme (Beech & Leather, 2006; Hung, 2010; Paul Griffin, 2010; Griffon, 2014). Without a step-by-step guideline or more detailed procedural information, practitioners who are not trained evaluators will be unaware of how to use a training evaluation model to conduct training evaluations. This results in training evaluators or those responsible for evaluating training (most often HR and learning practitioners) not being equipped with the necessary competencies required to conduct a viable evaluation (Wang & Wilcox, 2006).

Lastly, organisational barriers are the common reasons cited for not being able to conduct evaluations. These include but are not limited to: cost and insufficient budget, limited capacity, time constraints, lack of data, blind trust in the training initiatives, and

inadequate support from top management (Eseryel, 2002; Paul Griffin, 2010; Phillips et al., 2004; Wang & Wilcox, 1996). Table 10 summarises the reasons as cited in social science literature and research as to why organisations do not engage in training evaluation.

Table 10

The Common Reasons for Lack of Training Evaluation Practices

Commonly cited reasons for a lack of training evaluation	Authors
Evaluation is labour intensive and takes time	Casey, 2006; Kraiger et al., 2004; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001
Stakeholders do not request or require evaluation results	Hashim, 2001; Peak & Berge, 2006
It is difficult to conduct credible evaluations	Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001; Sanderson, 1992, as cited in Beech and Leather, 2006
Evaluation theory and models provide weak practical guidance on how to evaluate	Beech and Leather, 2006; Hung, 2010
Evaluation can be complex due to a) measuring outcomes on a number of different levels including learning, transfer and organisational outcomes or impact, b) obtaining data from more than one source (i.e. trainee, line manager and subordinates or peers) and sometimes outcomes of the training are difficult to measure, for example managerial and leadership training that involves soft skills training	Eseryel, 2002; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Twitchell et al., 2000
Measuring behavioural outcomes usually requires pre- and post-test data, however, if evaluation is an afterthought, this data is not available	Beech and Leather, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Ford, 2004
There is insufficient budget for evaluation or it is costly	Al Athari & Zairi, 2002; Casey, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Hung, 2010; Peak & Berge, 2006; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001

Table 10 Continued

The Common Reasons for Lack of Training Evaluation Practices

Commonly cited reasons for a lack of training evaluation	Authors
Money for evaluation would rather be spent on more training	Sanderson, 1992, as cited in Beech and Leather, 2006
Inadequate or lack of evaluation competencies	Kraiger et al., 2004; Sanderson, 1992, as cited in Beech and Leather, 2006
Organisations have blind trust in training interventions	Eseryel, 2002; Sanderson, 1992, as cited in Beech and Leather, 2006
Organisations fear negative results	Faerman & Ban, 1993; Hung, 2010; Sanderson, 1992, as cited in Beech and Leather, 2006
Evaluation requires combined effort from trainers, managers and HR, and it is sometimes difficult to get buy-in for this	Sanderson, 1992, as cited in Beech and Leather, 2006
Organisations are satisfied with participants' reactions to the training programme, as this is seen as an indicator of programme success with other outcomes following naturally	Al Athari & Zairi, 2002; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Sanderson, 1992, as cited in Beech and Leather, 2006

Another possible reason for why organisations may choose not to evaluate training is if organisational members view training as a cost. Under these circumstances, training evaluation will be viewed as additional cost. If, however, training is understood as a significant investment, training evaluation may become an important partner to that investment (Twitchell et al., 2002). If organisational management can appreciate the importance of an alliance between learning, strategy, and training and development, then training evaluation would be viewed as a strategic investment and more effort may be made to ensure that training evaluation is practised routinely (Lee & Pershing, 2000).

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework: Organisational Learning, of this thesis outlined the importance of organisational learning to enable an organisation to thrive and grow. By engaging in learning, an organisation can improve its efficiency, productivity and ultimately enhance its competitive advantage. As presented in Chapter Three: Training Evaluation: Its Purpose and Models, training evaluation is a crucial component in the organisational learning cycle. This chapter, however, has shown that, based on the information available on global trends, the practice of training evaluation pre-2010 was done poorly around the world. Few organisations evaluated whether training was effective, or at best did so minimalistically and/or incompetently (Carnevale & Schulz, 1990; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Eseryel, 2002; Hall & Yoder, 2003; Hashim, 2001; Holcomb, 1993; Hung, 2010; Kraiger et al., 2004; Lee-Kelley & Blackman, 2012; McMahon & Carter, 1990; Rossi et al., 2004; Wang & Wilcox, 2006).

Regardless of the reasons for the lack of training evaluation, if organisations fail to routinely investigate organisational activities such as training, they are ultimately failing at good management practices (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013). This failure denies organisations an important opportunity to learn from training evaluation results. In order to remind the reader of the problem statement and the research questions of this research, they are outlined again here.

Problem Statement and Research Questions

Organisations implement various training and development initiatives to enhance individual learning. If, however, no evaluation measures exist in the

organisation to monitor these and other learning processes, I argue that there is a missing link, which is a concern. Without the necessary feedback and feed-forward loops, which training evaluation can provide, an organisation's ability to learn is gravely constrained.

To increase the likelihood of organisational learning, organisations should assess: a) whether their training is resulting in an increase of individual learning; b) whether individual learning and transfer is supported in the organisation; c) whether individuals are transferring, applying and sharing their learning collectively; d) whether the necessary contextual conditions exist to translate individual learning into organisational learning; and e) how well the organisation is learning from the evaluation results obtained to inform decision-making processes, make improvements, change and grow.

With a lack of recent literature on the state of training evaluation, specifically in South Africa, we do not know the extent to which organisations are engaging in training evaluation and using the results to enhance organisational learning. This lack of information supports the contribution and importance of this research. As such, this research sought to answer the following two research questions:

1.) To what extent do South African corporates engage in systematic training evaluation and what are the evaluation practices employed?

2.) To what extent do South African corporates recognise the importance of training evaluation and use it as a vehicle for organisational learning and change?

The next chapter outlines the method used to collect empirical data to answer these research questions.

Chapter Five: Method

This chapter presents the research design and research paradigm, data collection tools, sampling methods, participants, and the procedures followed to collect and analyse the data for the research. The rationale for each of my methodological choices is also included.

Research Design

For this research, I employed an explanatory sequential research design. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) an explanatory sequential research design, also known as a mixed methods approach or sequential model is when a researcher first conducts a quantitative phase of research and then uses a second phase to follow up on the initial results obtained. This design is well suited to a study area that is new or vague (Burns & Burns, 2008).

The design was appropriate for this research as it allowed me to address the two consecutive research questions proposed. The first research question, which corresponds to the first phase of data collection, sought to gain a broad understanding of training evaluation practices within South African corporates. It was deemed an important first step in the research given that there is no published information accessible on this topic about current training evaluation practices in our country. The first phase in an explanatory sequential research design enables a researcher to gain insight into the research problem and become more familiar with the topic prior to undertaking Phase Two of the research (Burns & Burns, 2008; Forza, 2002; Pinsonneault & Kraemer, 1993).

In the second phase of a sequential model, the researcher follows up and builds on the knowledge generated in Phase One (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Once I gained an understanding of training evaluation practices in South Africa I was then able to collect data to answer the second research question. The second research question, corresponding to Phase Two of the explanatory sequential research design, sought to establish the extent to which executive management in

South African corporates recognised the importance of training evaluation as a mechanism for change and learning.

The next section of this chapter outlines the philosophical assumptions of a mixed methods study. Following good practice, it is necessary to acknowledge the world view that influenced the methodology / procedures for this research.

Research Paradigm

The worldview most commonly associated with mixed methods research is pragmatism (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). With this paradigm, the primary focus is on the research problem and research question(s). Thus, pragmatism is said to have a problem-centred epistemological approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). How the researcher collects data is based on the context of the research and what will work in practice or is feasible in order to answer the problem or research question(s) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). When describing the chosen methods of data collection for this research later in the chapter, the reader will see a direct alignment between these choices and the epistemology of this paradigm.

The ontology of the pragmatist worldview is that varied input is required to understand the problem or investigate the phenomenon. Pragmatists hold a pluralistic view of reality (ontology). In other words, there may be a single theory to explain the phenomenon or multiple theories (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In line with this, the research process aims to gain varied individual input and multiple perspectives of the nature of the research problem. This coincides with the methodological approach of the pragmatic paradigm because the researcher uses both qualitative and quantitative data collection (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Within this research, both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used.

Finally, the axiology and rhetoric elements of this worldview must be reported. Axiology is defined as the role that values play in research or the researcher's judgements of what is valuable in the research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). A researcher with a pragmatist worldview has multiple stances on the research and thus their values may not be predetermined. Their interpretation of the results will

likely be influenced by biased and unbiased perspectives. For this research both objective and subjective points of view were valued.

Rhetoric is the language of the research or how the research will be written or reported (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Under the pragmatist worldview the researcher uses both formal and informal writing styles. This will be evident in the subsequent results chapters of this thesis.

Each phase of the research occurred independently. As such the remainder of the chapter will be divided into two parts: the research methodology for Phase One and the research methodology for Phase Two.

Methodology for Phase One

Data collection method for Phase One.

Aligned to the exploratory sequential research design, Phase One of the research was quantitative in nature and helped to develop incremental knowledge of the current training evaluation practices and trends in South Africa (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). An exploratory survey was utilised for Phase One's data collection.

An exploratory survey is often the first phase of research design when little is known about the subject matter or if the context has not been clearly defined prior to the study (Forza, 2002). Exploratory surveys are a particular technique for collecting information and asking exploratory questions such as "what" or "why" or "how much" (Burns & Burns, 2008; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; De Vaus, 2014; Yin, 2014). Given that at the onset of this research project very little was known about the current training evaluation practices in South African corporates, the exploratory survey enabled me to understand 'the lay of the land' as an initial first step in the research process.

Pinsonneault and Kraemer (1993, p. 79) argue that "the purpose of an exploratory survey is to elicit a wide variety of responses from individuals with varying viewpoints in a loosely structured manner". Exploratory surveys therefore facilitate two functions. Firstly, the survey in exploratory research is often used as a way of collecting information about the characteristics, actions, or opinions of a large

group of people (Forza, 2002; Pinsonneault & Kraemer, 1993). As discussed later in this chapter under sample, I elicited responses from HR professionals across a large number of organisations about their corporate's training evaluation trends and practices.

Secondly, exploratory surveys are traditionally used in research as a basis for developing concepts and methods for more detailed data collection techniques later in the study (Pinsonneault & Kraemer, 1993). Given that the research adopted a two-phase approach, the data emanating from Phase One was used as foundational knowledge for Phase Two of the study.

The use of an exploratory survey in the initial stages of data collection has many advantages, such as the economy of the design and the rapid turnover of data collection (Creswell, 2013). An exploratory survey also allows a researcher to determine what concepts to measure and how best to measure them (Forza, 2002; Pinsonneault & Kraemer, 1993). It assists the researcher to draw attributes from a smaller sample to understand a much larger phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Keizer, Dijkstra, and Halman (2002) conducted an exploratory study of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the mechanical and electrical engineering sector in the Netherlands. This exploratory study allowed Keizer et al. (2002, p. 1) to "find a relatively small set of variables within a larger number that are reported to be important for innovation, which suffice to 'explain' the differences between SMEs being involved in innovative efforts and others that are not". Similarly, this study conducted an exploratory study to draw wider knowledge from a sample of South African corporates, which in turn contributed to the design of data collection techniques and the direction of Phase Two of the study. The results obtained from the survey enabled me to: a) ascertain the extent of training evaluation practices in South African corporates; b) identify data providers for Phase Two of the research; and c) formulate interview questions based on the initial responses from the exploratory survey.

The results from the exploratory survey contributed new knowledge to the field of programme and training evaluation in South Africa. No researcher has done

an audit of this nature previously. Thus, the data emanating from Phase One of this research was unknown until this study was conducted.

Data collection tool for Phase One.

An online survey, using Qualtrics software was developed. To develop the survey items, the literature and research reviewed in Chapter Four: The Practice of Training Evaluation Around the Globe, was analysed and reviewed. Blanchard et al.'s (2000) survey required respondents to indicate whether formal training was provided in their organisation, what types of training were offered (that is, management, organisation specific, technical / job specific, general skills and personal improvement), the level of the training (management vs. non-management), whether the organisation was evaluating the training interventions, why they evaluated and why they didn't evaluate and, if the organisation was evaluating, at what level they did so. I wanted to obtain similar data from Phase One of this research and as such deemed this questionnaire to be well suited to information needs of the research. As such, Blanchard et al.'s (2000) survey was used as a framework from which I designed the exploratory survey for this study.

Blanchard et al.'s (2000) questionnaire can be found in Appendix B. The questions used in the exploratory survey for this research were of a similar nature to Blanchard et al.'s (2000) research but were expanded to include more detail. Entitled: Training Evaluation Practices in South Africa, the exploratory survey designed for this research can be found in Appendix C.

The survey's cover page.

The survey contained a cover letter that detailed who the targeted respondents of the survey were, the purpose of the research, that participation was voluntary, confirmation that the research obtained ethical clearance as well as the researcher's contact details.

Survey sections.

Section A of the survey included questions about the general training practices of the corporate. This section aimed to elicit responses about training expenditure of the corporate, the corporate's commitment to training as well as the

reasons for training commitment or lack thereof. Response options to the questions in Section A were either free text, where respondents could type in a response, or Likert Scale, where respondents indicated agreement with a particular statement on a scale of 1 to 5.

Section B enabled respondents to select the types of training programmes their corporate offered. These were categorised according to Blanchard et al.'s (2000) survey and included examples of training programmes as a frame of reference for the respondent. These categories are bulleted below.

- Management training and development programmes - e.g. leadership development, team leader training, supervisory training, Master's of Business Administration (MBAs), etc.
- Intra-organisational training and development programmes - e.g. induction, policies/procedures, diversity, team building, etc.
- Technical / job specific training and development programmes - e.g. production, finance, HR, general business management, accounting, marketing, sales, IT, etc.
- General skills training and development programmes - e.g. communication, presentation skills, business writing, conflict management, etc.
- Personal improvement training and development programmes - e.g. financial planning, wellness programmes, etc.

For each category (as bulleted above), respondents were asked whether their corporate offered this kind of training. Skip logic was used in the survey's design. Skip logic is when a respondent's answer to a particular question makes them jump to a different question. If a respondent indicated 'No' to the initial question of training provision they were directed to the next category of training. If a respondent indicated 'Yes' a succeeding question was shown which asked participants to indicate the levels of training evaluation that were conducted for that particular training and how often these training evaluation practices took place. Figure 11 illustrates an example question.

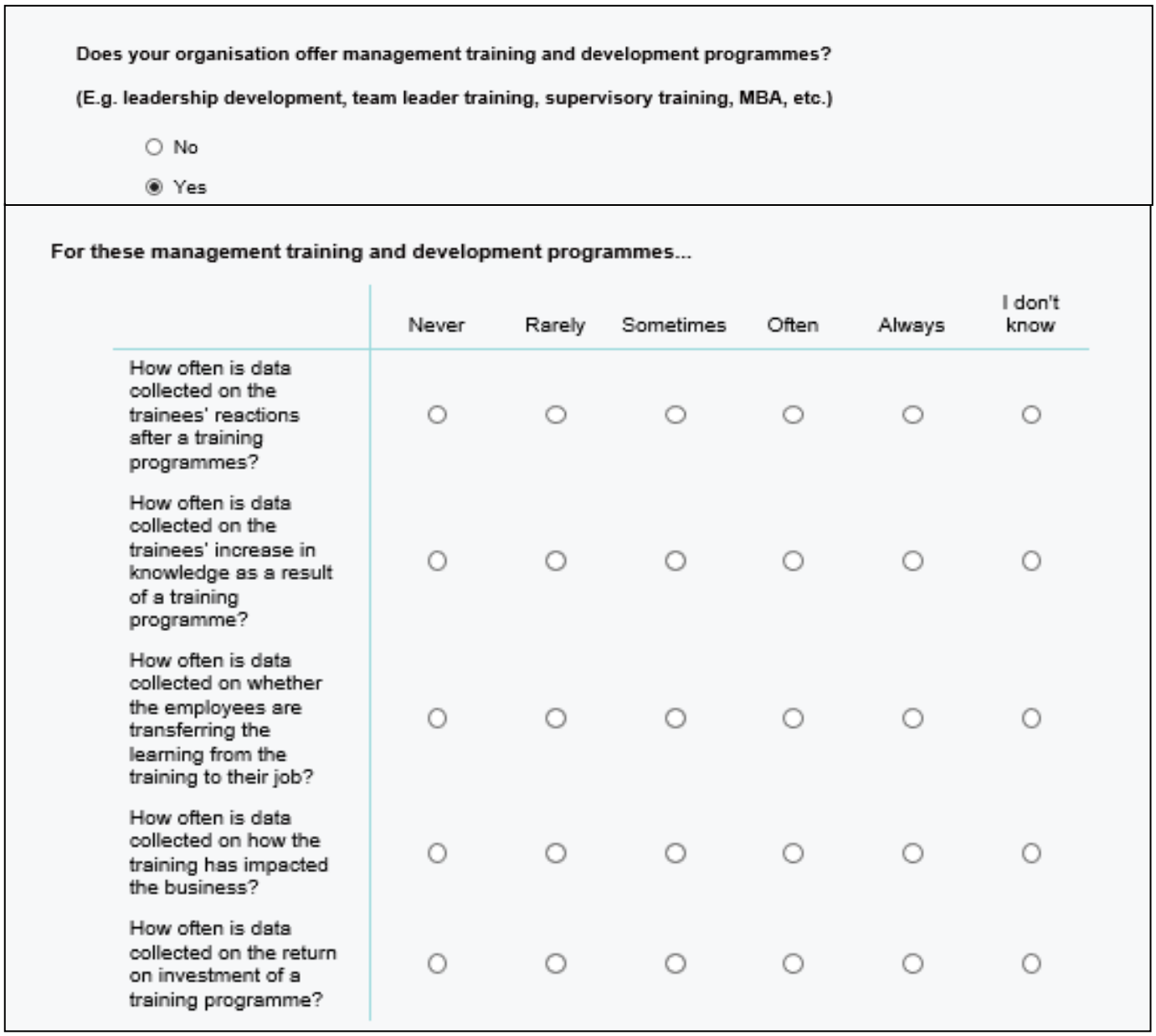

Figure 11. Screenshot from the Qualtrics survey illustrating how respondents would indicate their level of training evaluation for each category of training offered.

Since the respondent indicated that their corporate offered management training and development programmes, the levels of training evaluation were then displayed, as shown in Figure 11. If a respondent indicated ‘no’ for this question, they went to the next question pertaining to a different category of training. The skip logic is highlighted in blue on the survey in Appendix B.

In Section C of the survey, respondents were asked to provide further information about the training evaluation practices in their corporates. Respondents who indicated that their corporate engaged in training evaluation were asked to identify the reasons that supported training evaluation. Responses were obtained in two ways. Either respondents could select from a predetermined list of reasons or they could use the free text option and type in their response to the question. I developed the predetermined list based on the literature that was reviewed and presented in Table 2 in Chapter Three: Training Evaluation: Its Purpose and Models. Respondents who indicated that their corporate did not engage sufficiently in training evaluation were asked to identify the reasons that inhibited the practice in their corporate. This list was developed based on the literature presented in Table 10 in Chapter Four: The Practice of Training Evaluation Around the Globe.

Participants were also given an opportunity to provide their own general opinions about training evaluation in Section C. Lastly, Section D of the survey asked respondents to indicate the size (number of staff) of their corporate and the department within which they worked.

Pilot study for Phase One's exploratory survey.

The survey was piloted prior to it being finalised. Part-time students completing their Master's in People Management at the University of Cape Town (UCT), who are employed HR professionals in large commercial organisations (n = 5), were asked to complete the survey. In addition to these individuals, five academic staff members in the Section of Organisational Psychology also completed the survey. The HR professionals who were completing their Master's degrees were chosen due to their accessibility and because they had knowledge about the training function in their organisations and the evaluation thereof. The staff members were chosen because they themselves are researchers. Both cohorts of pilot participants were asked to note any irregularities with regards to the functionality of the questionnaire, typos, confusing questions, as well as make suggestions for the questionnaire's improvement.

The feedback obtained prompted the researcher to make a few changes to the questionnaire. These are listed in Table 11.

Table 11

Changes Made to the Questionnaire Following the Pilot Study

Section of the questionnaire	Changes implemented
Cover Letter	Shortened and clearer writing style for ease of reading
Annual budget estimation	Changed from categories of range to free-text question
Commitment to training	As opposed to instructing participants which question number to jump to based on their answers, skip logic was implemented in Qualtrics
	As opposed to giving a rating scale underneath each reason, the reasons were grouped in a matrix pattern on Qualtrics
Evaluation practices	Skip logic was implemented for the yes and no questions
	Reaction, learning, transfer, impact and ROI questions were grouped together in a matrix as opposed to individual questions
Perspective on whether the organisation is doing enough	As opposed to only probing for the two extremes, the' neither agree nor disagree' option was also explored further
Other	Spelling errors were corrected
	Progress bar was implemented
	Time taken to complete the survey: estimated at 15 minutes

Ethics approval and considerations for Phase One.

Ethics approval was sought for both the pilot study and Phase One of the research in one application. Approval was obtained from the Commerce Faculty's

Ethics in Research Committee as well as the Executive Director of Student Affairs and the Executive Director of Human Resources at UCT (see ethics approval letter in Appendix D). The minor adjustments made to the questionnaire following the pilot study were sent to the ethics committee for record purposes.

The exploratory survey posed no risk to the respondents and participation was voluntary. Respondents could withdraw from the research at any stage with no consequence. No sensitive data about the corporate was requested from respondents. The only question in the survey that could have been perceived as somewhat sensitive was a question about how much money corporates were spending on their training and development interventions. For most South African corporates, this information is readily available in their annual reports. Three strategies were, however, employed to counteract the possible sensitivity of this question, including: a) the respondent could choose not to answer the question; b) the respondent could provide an estimated amount; or c) the respondent could give the percentage of their budget allocated to training and development as opposed to the rand value.

The final ethical consideration was that the questionnaire was not anonymised for all respondents. In Section D of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to provide their contact details in two different sections. Firstly, if a respondent wanted to be entered into the lucky draw to win a shopping voucher of their choice (valued at R1000) they were asked to provide their cell phone number. This was necessary so that the winner could be contacted. The incentive was offered due to the length of the survey and aimed to encourage as many responses as possible (Guyll, Spoth, & Redmond, 2003; Kelly, Margolis, McCormack, LeBaron, & Chowdhury, 2017). While some researchers may argue that incentives are unethical because they coerce participation, Grant and Sugarman (2004) argue that this is only the case if the research is high risk, degrading, and/or where participants' aversion to the research is strong, but the incentive is large enough for them to participate regardless. None of these circumstances formed part of this research, and as such the provision of an incentive in the form of a lucky draw was considered acceptable. Qualtrics was used to randomly pick one respondent for this prize. Thereafter, the cell phone numbers were stripped from the data set before data analysis was conducted.

In the second instance, respondents who were willing to take part in Phase Two of the research were asked to provide their contact information so that I could use their corporate as a data collection site for Phase Two. Given the nature of the research, this could not be avoided. Respondents could, however, choose not to provide such information and end their participation at Phase One of the research.

Sampling strategy for Phase One.

The first task in social science research, is to identify and define the population of interest. A sampling frame is a list of this targeted population (Bryman, 2012; Burns & Burns, 2008). It can include individuals, households or institutions, from which a sample will be drawn to obtain data. The population of interest for Phase One of the research was commercial organisations operating in South Africa regardless of industry or province. Given the size and complexity of the population, I was unable to specify a list of elements and qualities for the sampling frame. Instead the sampling frame was clustered as any South African corporate (Burns & Burns, 2008).

Non-probability purposive sampling was employed to obtain participants for Phase One. Non-probability sampling occurs when the researcher selects the sample in a deliberate way (Burns & Burns, 2008) as opposed to using a random sampling method (Bryman, 2012). A combination of convenience, judgement and purposive sampling techniques was chosen for Phase One.

According to Burns and Burns (2008), convenience sampling involves asking for volunteers to take part in research. I also had judgement and purposive parameters in place because the respondents needed to have a specific set of characteristics (Bryman, 2012; Burns & Burns, 2008). Due to the nature of the questions in the exploratory survey, the respondent needed to have knowledge about their corporate's training and development trends as well as the training evaluation practices in their corporate. Thus, respondents were strategically chosen based on the information required to answer the research question (Bryman, 2012). This knowledge prerequisite was made explicit to respondents when advertising the survey on social media platforms, on the invitational emails as well as on the cover page of the questionnaire.

Sampling procedure followed for Phase One.

To identify respondents, the researcher made use of three mediums. Firstly, the researcher used her personal social media account (Facebook) to provide a brief explanation of the target audience of the research, the purpose of the study and advertised the link to the survey. Peers were asked to share the study information and survey link with their colleagues who formed part of the target audience.

Secondly, the researcher's colleagues in the Section of Organisational Psychology, School of Management Studies at UCT, were sent an email with details of the research and were asked to forward the email to the HR professionals in their personal networks. Some of these colleagues were former HR professionals and practitioners who had many industry contacts through their previous work experience and had contact with a number of corporate associates who had presented guest lectures to students at UCT. These two recruitment strategies were implemented simultaneously during the month of October 2015 and yielded 42 respondents. The sole use of personal networks and social media accounts would have limited how many HR professionals saw the request for participation and may have affected the representativeness of the sample. Given the small number of respondents that these strategies yielded, this was not a concern of this research. The third strategy, however, ensured that a large number of individuals (unknown to the researcher) were invited to take part in the research.

The third strategy to recruit respondents for the survey was provided by the South African Board of People Practices (SABPP). This body has over 9 000 HR professionals on their mailing list. The SABPP's marketing department designed an attractive email template which was sent to their members in November 2015. By 1 January 2016, an additional 140 responses were submitted (sub-total of 182). In February 2016, the researcher asked the SABPP to send a reminder email out to increase the number of organisational responses.

Sample for Phase One.

The survey began with 579 respondents. However, 237 questionnaire responses were unanswered and were removed. Respondents who had only answered the most basic questions: a) question one: *'What percentage of the*

organisation's total annual budget is allocated to training and development?' (n=13); b) question one and two: *'Please estimate what your organisation's annual training and development budget is? (e.g. approximately....)'* (n=5); or c) question one, two and three: *'To what extent is your organisation committed to training?'* (n=14) were removed from the data set (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010). This left the researcher with 310 responses for data analysis.

These 310 responses were based on the training evaluation trends and norms of 310 corporates. Given that the sample was based on corporates and not individuals, the sample was relatively large for the unit of analysis. When comparing the sample size of this research to the global surveys reported in Chapter Four: The Practice of Training Evaluation Around the Globe, this research had the third highest sample size. Saari et al., obtained responses from 610 organisations whereas Meyer & Bushney (n.d) sampled 328 organisations. The other sample sizes ranged from 77 to 202 organisations. Thus, the sample size of 310 corporates that I obtained was deemed adequate.

The 310 corporates employed nine to 160 000 staff members. Most of the survey respondents (69%) formed part of the HR department in their organisation. Table 12 shows the spread of departments in which the respondents were located.

Table 12

Departments of Questionnaire Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Human Resources	214	69.0	69.0
Finance	4	1.3	70.3
Executive Management	12	3.9	74.2
Marketing	2	0.6	74.8
Production	1	0.3	75.1
IT	1	0.3	75.4
Other	25	8.1	83.5
Unknown / Missing	51	16.5	100
Total	310	100	100

Data cleaning / formatting of the exploratory survey data for Phase One.

As detailed above (under the subheading ‘Sample for Phase One’), the overall completion of the questionnaires was assessed to determine the number of usable responses. Following this, the free text questions were formatted.

For the free text questions, the researcher unified the data. In other words, when a respondent wrote ‘fifteen percent’, ’15 percent’, or ‘15%’, the data entry was changed to just the number 15. Likewise, for budget, ‘one million’, or ‘1M’ was changed to 1 000 000.

As opposed to stating the percentage of the organisation’s annual budget that was allocated to training and development, some respondents specified the percentage of payroll that was allocated to training and development. A new variable was created for these responses (n=24).

Given that the means were being reported, when a respondent gave a range, the mid-point was inputted. For example, where a respondent specified the

percentage of the organisation's budget allocated to training and development as 'between 3 – 5%', four was inputted into the data set.

Euros, dollars and Botswana pula (n=3) were changed to ZAR based on the exchange rate on the day of the survey's completion. All the above changes were checked twice prior to data analysis.

Data analysis of the exploratory survey data for Phase One.

Phase One of the research was quantitative in nature. Based on the exploratory sequential research design utilised, the data for Phase One was used to uncover patterns in the research context (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Forza, 2002). Thus, descriptive statistics and stacked bar charts were used to analyse the data, as opposed to inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics enabled me to present the common training and training evaluation trends of the South African corporates sampled. The trends included: training budget allocations and spend, types of training offered by the sampled organisations, the frequency of training evaluation practices as well as the level of evaluations conducted.

Methodology for Phase Two

While Phase One of an explanatory sequential research design aims to uncover trends in a particular phenomenon, Phase Two is implemented in order to explain the results of Phase One in more detail (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Phase Two of the current research sought to obtain data on the extent to which South African corporates recognised training evaluation as an important and strategic business practice and the extent to which they used training evaluation as a vehicle for learning and change. This phase, therefore, aimed to gain a deep and rich understanding of the perceived value of training evaluation within various South African corporates as well as to document how they utilised the training evaluation feedback and results for individual and organisational learning.

A qualitative approach was utilised for Phase Two. Qualitative data collection is common practice in the second phase of an explanatory sequential research design. The qualitative nature of the phase enables the researcher to investigate the mechanisms and reasoning underlying the results observed in the quantitative

Phase One. In this way, the qualitative data help to explain and/or add insight into the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Data collection method for Phase Two.

Semi-structured interviews were used as the qualitative data collection method for Phase Two. Semi-structured interviews were deemed appropriate because I had a series of general and specific questions for the interviewees (Crano, Brewer, & Lac 2002) related to the results obtained from Phase One. Semi-structured interviews also enabled the interviewees to provide rich and detailed information about the behaviours, culture, practices and perspectives on the evaluation of training within their organisations (Bryman, 2012; Crano et al., 2002). In addition, Crano et al. (2002) explained that structured-non-directive interviews are appropriate when an initial exploratory investigation has already taken place. The researcher opted for face-to-face interaction with each interviewee so indirect cues (for example, body language) could be observed and the interviewee could then be probed for more information (Crano et al., Irvine, Drew, & Sainsbury, 2013; Yeo, Legard, Keegan, Ward, McNaughton Nicholls, & Lewis, 2013; Opdenakker, 2006). The semi-structured interview schedule used in Phase Two of the research can be found in Appendix E.

Ethics approval and considerations for Phase Two.

Ethics approval for Phase Two was sought and obtained from the Commerce Faculty's Ethics in Research Committee (See Appendix F for approval letter). Respondents from Phase One had already shown interest in participating in Phase Two of the research and had agreed to be contacted for an interview. Even so, their continued participation in Phase Two was voluntary, and respondents could opt out at any time and with no consequences.

Phase Two of the research did not pose any risk to the interviewee or their corporate. Respondents signed informed consent letters at the start of the interview (See Appendix G). The consent letter informed the respondent about the purpose of the interview, that participation was voluntary, that the interviews would be recorded, and that a transcriber would be hired to transcribe the interview. The data from the interview was used to write up a vignette of each corporate. These vignettes detailed

the organisational processes and procedures for training and the evaluation of their training and development interventions, as well as how evaluation was approached, and how knowledge was developed and shared. The names of the corporate and any identifiable quotes from the interviews were removed to ensure anonymity.

The researcher signed confidentiality agreements with each interviewee (see Appendix H) and signed a confidentiality agreement with the transcriber of the interviews (see Appendix I). The recordings of the interviews were stored in a password protected folder on my computer. Interviewees were not provided with any incentives for taking part in Phase Two of the research, however, the researcher did purchase a small gift for each interviewee as a token of appreciation for their time.

Sampling strategy for Phase Two.

The sampling frame for Phase Two consisted of all the respondents of the exploratory survey (Phase One) who indicated their interest in continuing their participation in the research. Aligned to this, the sampling strategy was non-probability, convenience sampling due to the sample being easily accessible (Burns & Burns, 2008) and willing to participate.

Sampling procedure and interviews held for Phase Two.

Of the 310 respondents of Phase One, 64 indicated that they were willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview for Phase Two of the research. These individuals were contacted telephonically if a cell phone number was provided or via email.

Seventeen out of the 64 respondents provided their cell phone numbers and were called telephonically to request their participation in an interview. The telephonic communication with these respondents was unsuccessful in securing any interviews for Phase Two of the research. Three individuals declined the offer to continue participating in the research. Some of the cell phone numbers had been disconnected. Some respondents never answered the calls made (despite repeat attempts by the researcher). Voicemail messages were left but respondents did not return the researcher's call. Thus, the researcher was unable to secure their participation.

The email communication was also not highly effective in attaining enough interviewees for Phase Two. Forty-seven individualised emails were sent. Fifteen emails bounced back as undelivered, these email addresses could have been typed incorrectly by the respondent when completing the exploratory survey. Of the remaining 32 emails, one respondent declined the offer to participate (due to time constraints) and six respondents were willing to take part in Phase Two. No replies were obtained from the remaining 25 emails, despite a second follow-up email from the researcher.

As a last resort, the respondents who did not respond to the email communication (n = 25), were sent an email by the researcher's supervisor, who was the Head of the Section of Organisational Psychology at the time of the research, in the School of Management Studies at UCT. Three respondents replied to the researcher's supervisor indicating their willingness to be interviewed. Thus, from the 64 respondents who were originally interested in taking part in Phase Two of the research, the researcher was only able to secure nine interviews.

Eight of the interviews were conducted at the offices of each interviewee and one was conducted via Skype. Due to the geographical locations of the eight interviews, I travelled around Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg for the qualitative data collection. The interviews lasted between 45 minutes to two hours in duration. A transcriber was hired to transcribe the interview recordings prior to data analysis.

Participants for Phase Two.

Vignettes (used as the sample description) are presented below detailing the nine corporates for which the interviewees were providing data. They are presented in no particular order. The vignettes describe the various data collection sites that served as the sample for Phase Two of the research. The vignettes were chosen as the sample description to give the reader detailed information about each site, as well as highlight the breadth and diversity of the corporates included in Phase Two of the research.

An overview of the corporate and their HR function is provided as well as information pertaining to each corporate's training programmes. This information provides the reader with a good understanding of the context of each corporate and specifically the training context, both of which are deemed necessary before the training evaluation perspectives for each organisation are reported in Chapter Seven: Results from the Analysis of Phase Two's Data.

Vignette: Corporate #1

Introduction to the organisation and the HR function

Corporate #1 is a large retail chain in South Africa that is listed on the JSE. The chain has a number of brands which all function as separate businesses but are managed and coordinated by a central structure.

In terms of the HR function: Talent Management and Development, Resourcing, and Reward and Payroll are all centrally managed. The central HR department is responsible for the research, design, development and delivery of solutions for the group. Each business has a dedicated management team, including an HR representative (decentralised HR) who serves a HR operations role.

The organisation uses the Leadership Pipeline (LP) Performance Management System. All employees are evaluated and scored based on the output and KPI targets of their LP level.

Overview of the training function

The group's annual training budget is approximately R18 million for 22 000 employees.

Product specific training takes place within each business. The HR personnel within each business design and implement store specific training as needed. Generic training programmes that are applicable across the whole group are housed in the central Talent Management and Development (TM&D) Department.

Generic training programmes are designed based on LP competencies. The TM&D department collates training needs based on performance appraisals of store staff, buyers, planners, and other employees to develop training plans and schedule the sessions. These training programmes are advertised by central HR to the group and employees are then able to either self-elect themselves to attend or are sent on the training by their line manager.

The organisation pays the 1% skills levy required by the Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA) (No. 9 of 1999) and obtains 50% of these levies back after they submit their workplace skills plan and reports. The refund is used by the TM&D Department to research, design and deliver more training to the group. Most of the training design is performed in-house, but occasionally content experts are outsourced to assist.

Training is viewed as a strategic business practice in Corporate #1. The organisation's key strategic objective is the optimisation of stores. In line with this, store staff, store managers, regional and national managers must be competent in their roles. Training is designed for these individuals based on the KPI's of each role and delivered to groups of employees from various businesses and stores. Centrally, this is where the bulk of training takes place. Store and line managers play a key role in the design of these interventions. They observe first-hand what skills are lacking and where individuals are struggling. This information is then used to make suggestions on training content. Informal discussions with staff (discussed below) also provide rich feedback for programme design and improvement.

Other than the KPI specific training linked to the LP performance management system, mandatory training is also provided within each store. For example, retail employees must receive training on the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) (No. 68 of 2008) as well as the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI) (No. 4 of 2013). In these instances, usually, the store managers are trained on the legislation and they in turn train their own staff (train-the-trainer approach). Alternatively, an online platform is available for store staff to complete the training in their own time, but many store staff are not computer literate.

The second cluster of training offered by Corporate #1 is management and leadership training. Aligned to the LP performance management system, the group sees leadership as being generic across the same level in the LP system. Training is thus provided to groups of employees on the same LP level, the content of which is based on the competencies required for that level.

Vignette: Corporate #1 – Continued

Lastly, the group runs a graduate recruitment programme. This provides graduates with exposure to the business while providing them with on-the-job training and mentoring in their selected career paths. The programme aims to balance projects (theory-based work) and the actual performing of the job.

All the training provided to employees is both reactive in terms of the performance appraisal system and identified learning gaps, as well as proactive in terms of what skills are necessary to advance to the next level in the LP system.

Vignette: Corporate #2

Introduction to the organisation and the HR function

Corporate #2 is a multidisciplinary construction group that is listed on the JSE. The information herein is based on the Mechanical and Electrical unit of the organisation. This unit has a hybrid workforce of 2 000 employees, of which 250 are permanent staff and the remainder are labour brokers and contractors that are insourced for specific projects.

Overview of the training function

The organisation implements four clusters of training at a targeted spend of 2.1% of their annual payroll. In 2016, however, the organisation only spent approximately R2 million on training (>1% of their annual payroll).

The first cluster of training offered makes up 90% of the training implemented and more or less accounts for 40% of training expenditure. This cluster is training that is required by law. Given the industry within which Corporate #2 operates, safety training is mandatory and specific roles, for example, welders and electricians need to be re-certified every two years. This legislative and mandatory training is outsourced to a training provider that is accredited with and vetted by the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (MERSETA).

The provider not only presents the training content but also assesses the competencies of the trainees as part of the various courses. Employees who successfully complete the training are issued with a compliance certificate, which is logged in their personnel file. These certificates determine whether a worker is legally permitted to be on a project site.

The second cluster of training is the organisation's apprenticeship training. Every year the organisation takes on approximately 17 apprenticeships. The programme runs for three years and costs approximately R400 000 per apprentice. This cluster of training has the greatest training expenditure. The apprenticeship programme is offered for two key reasons. Firstly, the organisation believes it is good business practice to upskill the industry. Currently the industry and the organisation itself have an oversupply of semi-skilled workers but require more artisans. Secondly, the company takes these apprentices to offer them full-time employment on completion of the programme. The company is thus responding to their own need for artisan-level employees, who through succession planning can become foremen, supervisors and site managers.

The third cluster of training is for personal development. It is a very small snippet of the training function and is uncommon in the organisation. If, however, an office-based employee wants to develop themselves and attend training, the company will support part-time studies.

Finally, Corporate #2 has a mentoring programme. About 14 employees (seven mentors and seven mentees) take part in the programme each year. Due to the time-pressurised environment, employees are not keen to become mentors, so management identifies programme participants. Mentees are chosen based on the organisation's succession planning model.

Work and projects drive the mandatory training. Employees must be up to date with their accreditation and must have the necessary Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points to retain their registration with The South African Council for Project and Construction Management Professions (SACPCMP) as well as the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). Corporate #2 is audited to ensure compliance in this regard is governed and maintained.

The underlying reason for the apprenticeship training is for the organisation to earn Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) points. The organisation pays the skills development levy to MERSETA and receives grants which are funnelled back into the apprenticeship programme, but the training offered specifically is to receive BEE points and in turn have a better BEE rating to win tenders.

Vignette: Corporate #2 – Continued

What drives the training function?

In the nutshell the training implemented in Corporate #2 results in employees being able to fulfil their roles, so training needs are neither reactive nor proactive in nature. The company would not be able to get to a place of proactive training because the environment is too time- and work-pressured. Employees would not be able to take time off to attend training. The projects have strict deadlines that must be met. Mechanical and electrical is the last function on the site and as such they are often responsible for trying to catch up any delays.

Given that 90% of the training in Corporate #2 is mandatory, training isn't viewed as a strategic partner. Instead the organisation views training as a means to an end. The apprenticeship programme could, however, be viewed as producing the strategic benefit of a more skilled workforce as well as increasing the company's BEE scorecard.

Vignette: Corporate #3

Introduction to the organisation and the HR function

Corporate #3 is a large auditing, accounting, tax and advisory service organisation in South Africa. Originally Learning and Development (L&D) was a separate unit from the HR department but by the end 2017, L&D was due to be integrated into HR.

Given that L&D was separate during the data collection phase of this research (beginning 2017), the information reported here is based on the 2016 structure when L&D was still separate to HR. The L&D unit consisted of four employees who performed the function for the entire organisation across all 12 of the offices located throughout South Africa.

These four individuals included an HR Director, the national talent management director, the national learning and development senior manager, and an industrial psychologist specialising in T&D. Each office of the organisation had its own HR admin individual who was responsible for an HR generalist function, but L&D was a central function.

Overview of the training function

The organisation's training budget is approximately 2% of their annual payroll which equates to R5 million per annum. There are 1 200 employees in the organisation.

The organisation offers an array of training programmes, including leadership and mentoring. However, the bulk of training is in the form of learnerships for articled clerks. Compliance training is also both necessary and important to ensure that employees in Corporate #3 maintain their South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) points.

The organisation rates itself as being committed to training. Learning is viewed as a market differentiator and as such the organisation acknowledges its strategic contribution. The training that takes place is pro-active in nature. Employees' future training and development needs are assessed and they are then offered training programmes which map onto these competencies. Their needs are identified through the organisation's performance management system. The roles in the organisation are comparable, so often training takes place in a group session where, for example, all tax officers are given the same training.

The company uses the 70-20-10 methodology with regards to learning and development (70 = the percentage of learning acquired through on-the-job experiences; 20 = the percentage of learning acquired from colleagues; 10 = the percentage of learning acquired through training). They believe that training in a classroom costs money, not only due to the programme itself but also due to the absence of the employee and their lack of performance. They also believe that more beneficial learning can take place from colleagues, thus the organisation emphasises mentoring. Employees are trained how to be mentors and how to be mentees and are then placed in mentorship relationships. These relationships occur at the level of managing partner right down to the second-year articled clerks.

Training usually takes place using a blended-learning approach which often requires self-study by the employee. This self-study enables the employee to grasp the theory (70-20-***10***). The L&D unit then sets up discussion forums for teams of employees. These 'connect sessions' enable employees to learn from each other as well as from an expert in the organisation (70-***20***-10). The expert using the theoretical information provided to the employees shows them how the content is relevant and applicable within the organisation. The remainder of the learning (***70***-20-10) takes place through the mentorship relationship as well as through the employee being assigned and completing challenging tasks as part of their job.

Vignette: Corporate #4

Introduction to the organisation and the HR function

Corporate #4 is one of the largest financial service providers in South Africa. The organisation offers individual customers and businesses a variety of services in insurance, investment and financial planning.

There is a HR Centre of Expertise where organisational development, L&D, recruitment and selection, and reward and recognition, are centrally managed. Each business unit in the organisation then has its own Training Manager, HR Manager and HR consultants. At the unit level, the Training and HR Managers are responsible for needs analysis, performance appraisals, and functional and technical training within their area. They have a budget allocated for this. Legislative training and generic training (not business-unit specific) is managed by central HR and is paid for by the central budget.

Overview of the training function

The organisation's annual payroll cost is R1.7 billion for 13 000 employees. The organisation assigns 5% of this annual payroll to training and development budgets (approximately R85 million). Functional, technical and product-specific training takes place within each business unit (decentralised) whereas generic and mandatory training is managed by central HR.

The functional and technical training that is provided to staff enables them to fulfil their job requirements. For example, each business unit will have different products on offer and will work with different systems.

Training programmes based on these are offered to staff in that specific business unit. Functional and technical training needs are assessed by line managers once a year in a performance appraisal meeting. The assessment of training needs is thus reactive in nature. These training needs reports are sent to the business unit HR Manager to organise training.

Central HR monitors the mandatory compliance training that is required for certain positions in Corporate #4, for example, legislative training for financial advisors. Central HR also develops the annual workplace skills plan and reports.

Training is viewed as a strategic business practice in Corporate #4. Other than the reactive training needs analyses conducted, staff development plans are aligned to organisational strategies. Leadership training in particular is highlighted as essential to ensure operational efficiency.

The reasons underlying the company's commitment to training are three-fold: a) legislation mandates that certain employees be accredited as having completed various training programmes and obtaining the necessary credits; b) the organisation wants to maintain their Investors in People accreditation, which requires that each individual employee's development plan is aligned to the strategic objectives of the organisation; and c) the organisation requires BEE points to maintain business relationships with its clients.

Vignette: Corporate #5

Introduction to the organisation

Corporate #5 is a small supply chain and logistics company in South Africa, employing 350 staff. The organisation offers products to their clients that will enable them to transport their finished goods, i.e. pallets and crates. The organisation's annual training budget is approximately R500 000 per annum.

Overview of the training function

Unlike other companies interviewed, the bulk of training conducted in Corporate #5 is a supply chain training programme rolled out for new employees as well as their clients, making up 90% of the organisation's training.

The organisation operates using an online supply chain management system. Clients, who want to order products for the transportation and delivery of their own goods, place an order by logging onto this system. Employees in the company then log onto the same system to view the orders, organise delivery and prepare invoices. The online system not only enables clients to order products, they can also assess how much product they will need, assess the stock they have on hold, plan deliveries and the return of the products for refurbishment, view their invoices and authorise payments. Because everything is online, both employees and clients need to know how this software functions. Thus, monthly training takes place for this purpose.

The remaining ten percent of training is to address skills gaps for permanent staff members. Performance appraisals and aligned training needs analyses take place once a year. They are reactive in nature. Common training programmes include telephone etiquette, customer service, financial skills, and software courses. These interventions are implemented with the aim of maintaining good customer relationships so the organisation gets repeat business. Client relations is therefore the driving force behind the organisation's training strategy.

Vignette: Corporate #6

Introduction to the organisation and the HR function

Corporate #6 is a South African organisation that is one of the only manufacturers of a particular product in the world. They employ approximately 500 employees and export almost all the product to America. The company operates in US dollars and spends approximately R750 000 a year on training and development. The company has a central HR department.

Overview of the training function

Sixty percent of the company's training is for operational-level employees. This training is functional in nature and aligned to job-specific skills. The remainder of training provided (40%) is for managerial training as well as the apprenticeship and learnership programmes. Training needs analyses (TNA) are performed by line managers, but this is done poorly throughout the organisation. The TNA is for reactive purposes, to identify skills deficiencies and then offer training accordingly.

There is no communicated, five-year organisational strategy. The company will continue to function as is. Given the high profit margin of Corporate #6, there is no culture for change. Management knows that there are inefficiencies in the organisation, but they are not focused on due to the profit margins the company achieves and will continue to achieve. Succession planning is weak and as such no employees are trained proactively.

The key reason underpinning training interventions in the organisation is to obtain BEE points. Without a good BEE status, the company would lose clients.

Skills levies are paid and workplace skills plans and training reports are submitted for the organisation to obtain rebates and discretionary grants. With the money, the organisation implements an apprenticeship and learnership programme.

The rationale for these two programmes is two-fold: a) they allow the organisation to be socially responsive and overcome skills shortages in the industry, and b) the organisation benefits from the BEE points. Apprenticeship and learnership graduates are not employed by the company after completion of the three-year programme. Every year a new batch of learners is appointed onto each programme.

In terms of the training culture in the organisation, the general trend among operational employees is that they are not interested in development. Usually these employees have operated in a certain role for 10 to 15 years and as such have become accustomed to doing the role in one way. In addition, managers are hesitant to attend managerial training in the fear that they will look incompetent.

Vignette: Corporate #7

Introduction to the organisation and the HR function

Corporate #7 is a large insurance provider in South Africa that employs approximately 5 000 staff members. The company's training spend per year is R50 million. Like other financial corporates, the organisation has a HR centre of excellence responsible for reward and recognition, employment equity, organisational development, industrial relations and talent management. Under each of those functions there are approximately 14 teams of HR professionals (total of 40 HR personnel). Each of the three business units in the organisation has a HR Manager.

Overview of the training function

The organisation spends the bulk of its training on two key areas, namely, leadership and management training, as well as technical and mandatory training.

In terms of the leadership training, the organisation has partnered with a university to offer MBA's to team leader level and up.

For insurance employees and advisors, the legislation mandates that certain training must be completed to remain certified. This compliance training is implemented and monitored. Technical training refers to any other skills that the employee requires to do their job and is usually implemented reactively based on the skills gap of the employee. These skills deficiencies are highlighted through the organisation's performance management system. Examples of technical training include: generic call centre training, product training and systems training.

The organisation acknowledges the link between training and organisational strategy. An underlying reason for the technical training is to curb leakage (when an employee pays out too much on a claim). This relates directly to the strategic objectives of efficiency and profitability. Likewise, the product and systems training implemented aims to increase sales in the organisation, also responding to the strategic objectives.

Vignette: Corporate #8

Introduction to the organisation and the HR function

Corporate #8 is another one of the largest financial service providers in South Africa. The organisation offers a variety of insurance, investment and asset management services to individual customers and businesses. Currently the organisation employs 15 000 permanent employees.

An HR Director oversees the entire human resources function for the whole business. There is also a centralised HR department and a decentralised HR department. Centralised HR consists of specialists who are responsible for L&D, reward, talent, organisational development and industrial relations. Decentralised HR consists of generalists (HR executives and training managers) within each business unit. These individuals do daily HR functioning and are responsible for the training within their unit.

Overview of the training function

The organisation's annual training spend is approximately R120 million. Excluding their mandatory training, every employee attends at least one training programme per year. HR is viewed as a strategic partner in the workplace with emphasis on the importance of development. The organisation believes that people are the key enablers of the business.

The bulk of the training offered is in-house because the organisation is a registered training provider with its own business school. The training offered is linked to the three levels upon which employees are assessed. At an individual level, employees require certain knowledge to fulfil their job roles. Decentralised HR departments will offer sales, product and technical training in line with these assessments for the staff in their business unit. At a business level, employees are assessed to investigate if any customised training is necessary. At an enterprise level, employees are assessed to determine their leadership and management training needs. Central HR deals with the business- and enterprise-level training and will organise generic training sessions related to leadership and interpersonal skills for employees in all business units.

The business school publishes training dates for the generic training programmes on offer. Individual employees must take initiative and ask their line manager if they can attend these interventions. HR and line managers will only nominate employees for training when the training is for strategic learning purposes.

Vignette: Corporate #9

Introduction to the organisation and the HR function

Corporate #9 is a science and research council established by the South African government. Its mandate is to conduct research and drive development within its particular sector. Currently, the organisation employs approximately 2 000 employees and has four branches / themes within which research occurs. There is one central HR Department for all four branches of the business.

Overview of the training function

Given the mandate to be the frontrunners in research, the organisation is committed to training, upskilling and developing their staff. Currently the budget for training and development is R10 million per annum. HR is viewed as a strategic partner, in that human capital is developed and aligned to organisational strategy.

Two clusters of training take place within the organisation: generic training for the staff and the academic training stream.

Most of the generic training offered to staff is outsourced. The bulk of the generic training consists of leadership training for supervisors, team leaders and upwards; project management; and then coaching and mentoring training. The needs of staff members are assessed through the company's performance management system. This assessment is largely reactive and based on skill deficiencies. Individual staff members can, however, nominate themselves for a development intervention which would be proactive for their career development and advancement. Once all the performance appraisals are obtained by central HR, training needs are collated and the year's training schedule is planned.

The second cluster of training is the academic stream. This stream is two-fold. Firstly, staff need to complete Master's and PhD degrees. This is necessary for the research they will conduct within the council. Secondly, students completing their related B-Tech degrees with universities located near the organisation are assigned supervisors within the company to assist them with the practical components of the degree. The company provides 400 bursaries to students wanting to complete a B-Tech degree within their areas of science and research. Once these students graduate, they enter the organisation as interns.

Corporate #9 pays the required skills development levy and obtains several grants and incentives back which are used as bursaries for the B-Tech students as well as for the academic pursuits of employees. The organisation's rebates are prioritised because they form part of what the government has deemed pivotal skills.

Data analysis for the interviews for Phase Two.

As a starting point, I listened to each interview recording twice and read the transcriptions. This is known as data immersion or the familiarisation phase of qualitative data analysis (Ritchie & Spencer, 2002). It allows the researcher to recollect and gain an overview of the data that has been collected. It also enabled me to write up summary notes on each of the nine corporates and generate some rough ideas of the possible themes and codes and for this research (Ritchie & Spencer, 2002).

The transcribed notes were then imported into the data management tool, ATLAS.ti. This tool is a Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) programme. No programme is able to analyse data, instead the software is a supportive tool for the researcher during the process of qualitative data analysis (Friese, 2012). Although the software cannot analyse data, it provides a platform to organise the data. The researcher therefore uses the programme in order to code the data obtained. The various codes represent data segments that have similar meaning. These organised clusters can then be used by the researcher to analyse the data systematically (Friese, 2012).

I used the framework known as the Notice Things, Collect Things and Think about Things (NCT) model, adapted from Seidel (1990) and further developed by Friese (2012) to conduct the qualitative data analysis. This model was chosen because it simplifies the complex nature of qualitative data research. The model provides three steps as well as guidelines on how to go about performing each step (Friese, 2012).

While the NCT model can be used linearly (represented by the thin arrows in Figure 12), it is more common for a researcher to move back and forth through the three components of the model (Friese, 2012) (as depicted by the larger arrows in Figure 12).

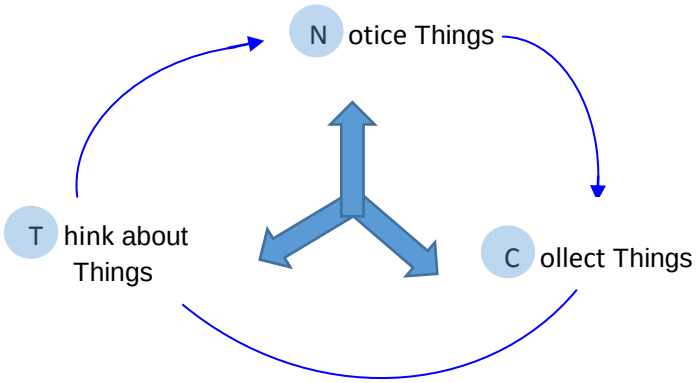

Figure 12. The NCT Model of Qualitative Data Analysis (Friese, 2012, p. 92; originally adapted from Seidel, 1990).

The first phase of the NCT Model is Notice Things. This process involves the researcher finding interesting things in the data when reading the interview transcripts in Qualtrics (Friese, 2012). During this stage, the researcher will assign preliminary codes to mark important data. This is what is referred to as content analysis or indexing (Ritchie & Spencer, 2002). Using the ATLAS.ti software, I worked through each transcription, highlighting various segments of text with similar meanings and creating a suitable code for the data.

For example, during the preliminary coding of the transcription of the interview with Corporate #1, the following quotation: "*Every now and then we go back into stores and do um checks around knowledge retention"* was coded as *Form of T(training) E(valuation) Conducted*. To do this, I highlighted the text and used the computer function to input a new code name. I chose the code name because it signified to me that the piece of text represented a method or approach that Corporate #1 was using to collect data on how effective their training had been. Each time I read in the transcribed text about a different method (or approach) that Corporate #1 used to evaluate training I assigned the same code to it. Thus, each time a different method of training evaluation was described, I highlighted the quotation and dragged and dropped the code name *Form of TE Conducted* onto the highlighted text. ATLAS.ti then assigned the text to the code. The ATLAS.ti process identifies that a code has reoccurred. When viewing the code names in the code

manager window, each of them has a number shown in brackets. This number indicates how many quotations are linked to that particular code (Friese, 2012).

The second stage of the NCT Model is Collect Things. Here, the researcher notices similarities in the data collected (Friese, 2012). Information from other transcriptions may be assigned the same codes as in stage one (Notice Things). Going back to the example above, text from organisation five which described the use of portfolios of evidence as a training evaluation mechanism: *"All of our staff have a portfolio of evidence and they get accredited based on that"* was linked to the already established code *Form of TE Conducted.* Code names can be renamed, merged and deleted during the Collect Things phase. An example of this was that the code *Form of TE Conducted* was changed to *Current forms of Measurement and Monitoring*. The new code name was deemed to be more fitting of the data and quotations / text highlighted.

The final phase of the NCT Model is to Think about Things. The goal of this component is to identify patterns, codes and subcategories, in other words, linking up the key themes in the data (Friese, 2012). Thus, I categorised similarities across all nine interviews under categories / themes. Going back to the example discussed previously, several quotations were coded as *Current forms of Measurement and Monitoring.* Going through the quotations, however, I noticed that across the organisations some of the methods and procedures used as mechanisms for evaluating training were the same. As opposed to simply having *Current forms of Measurement and Monitoring,* I formed two subcategories, for example, *Current forms of Measurement and Monitoring_P(ortfolios) o(f) E(vidence) and Current forms of Measurement and Monitoring_knowledge checks.*

Through the coding process, code and category / theme names were adjusted to be more descriptive, and while some categories / themes were combined, others were separated. At the same time, some quotes and segments of text were re-coded into different codes, and some categories / themes required subcategories / sub-themes. As opposed to making these changes during a review at the end of the coding process, I found it easier to engage in the coding and review thereof simultaneously. I therefore implemented the required coding changes as I

encountered or recognised the need for changes. Once the coding was completed, a final review of the codes, categories / themes, and sub-categories / sub-themes was done to ensure no further changes were required.

To conduct the review, an adapted process of cutting and sorting was performed (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Ryan and Bernard (2003) noted that the cutting and sorting technique can be used as an initial coding process for identifying sub-themes, where a researcher uses the skills they learnt as a child to cut out quotations and stick them onto index cards. After all the quotations are placed on a large surface area the researcher is able to sort them into piles of index cards that represent similar quotes. The researcher can then use the index cards to code the quotations in a software programme.

I opted to use a similar process to review the coding I had performed. I found it difficult to critique the code names and whether the quotations matched the correct themes using the ATLAS.ti software. Instead I printed all the codes with their linked quotations. I cut out each quotation and placed it into a pile that represented a theme or sub-theme. For each theme and sub-theme, I created mind maps. I wrote the theme or sub-theme name on a piece of flip chart paper and using Prestik stuck all the quotations onto the paper. These mind maps were then put onto the wall in my office (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Photographs of the mind maps created.

With all the quotations displayed around the theme name, I was able to review them and decide whether they were aligned to the code I had created. Using Prestik enabled me to move a quotation if I thought it was incorrectly coded and stick it on a different piece of paper. I used yellow tags (as seen in Figure 13) to indicate which quotations had been moved. The same changes were thereafter performed on the ATLAS.ti software. While it was time consuming (24 hours) to cut out the various quotations (total of 93 pages) and paste the various pieces of paper into mind maps (9 hours), this iterative process enabled me to finalise the qualitative data analysis and coding process.

Having the quotations printed out and arranged in this manner also enabled me to choose which quotations were the strongest and which would be included in the Results Chapter. The quotations that were included in the Results Chapter were ticked with an orange highlighter and the quotations which were deemed to be weak in illustrating a theme or sub-theme were marked with a purple 'X'.

Methodological Limitations

A methodological limitation of this exploratory research was the sample size in both Phase One and Phase Two of the research. Despite the researcher's best efforts, only information from approximately 300 corporates was used to document the trends in South African training and training evaluation.

As described previously in this chapter, the sample size for Phase One of this research is the third highest in comparison to the sample sizes of the global surveys reported in Chapter Four: The Practice of Training Evaluation Around the Globe. But given that Phase One aimed to present South Africa's training, and training evaluation trends, I would have preferred a larger number of responses. The fact that the results from the survey were aggregated counters this limitation to some extent.

Despite 64 respondents from Phase One indicating their willingness to take part in Phase Two of the research, only nine interviews were able to be conducted. The researcher exhausted all options to obtain more participants for this phase of the research but was unsuccessful. Nine corporates may not be sufficient to credibly document the training evaluation realities of South African corporates.

Another limitation was the likelihood of duplicate data in Phase One. Due to the anonymity of some the survey responses, the researcher acknowledges that there may have been a possibility of duplicate organisational information obtained. In other words, more than one respondent from a corporate may have completed the survey. The fact that the results for Phase One were aggregated countered this limitation.

I conducted the data cleaning for phase one and did not have a third party verify that the data matched the submissions. I ensured the integrity of the data by doing these checks twice.

Finally, I could have included more corporate-specific questions as part of the survey for Phase One. For example, I could have asked respondents to indicate the industry within which their corporate operates. While this information has no bearing on the results of the research, it would have provided more detailed information of the kinds of corporates that responded to the survey.

Research Assistants

Five research assistants were used during this research. Sarah Gordon was contracted to source literature on various training evaluation models as well as HR metrics. She also assisted me with the purpose and benefits of exploratory surveys. Nadine Veldsman sourced literature which documented the outcomes of organisational learning. I used the articles found to develop Table 1. Jennifer Lyons from Evergreen data visualisation developed the figures and graphics reported in Chapter Six: Results from the Analysis of Phase One's Data. The nine interviews from phase two were transcribed by Elaine Grobbelaar. Finally, the PhD was edited by Liz Mackenzie.

The following two chapters report the results obtained from Phase One and Phase Two respectively.

Chapter Six: Results from the Analysis of Phase One's Data

The following chapter details the results obtained from the first phase of the research. A quantitative exploratory survey was used to answer the first research question: 'To what extent do South African corporates engage in systematic training evaluation'. This phase of the research mimicked an audit, investigative data collection approach. I sought to generate data on the patterns and trends of training evaluation in South Africa.

The results are presented in the sequence of the sections of the survey. The first section of the survey aimed to elicit general training trends of South African organisations. Given that the research is centred on training evaluation, it was deemed important to also document general training practices of the organisations. As such respondents provided information on their organisation's training expenditure and budgets, their organisation's level of commitment to training to development, and the different types of training interventions that the organisation provides. The remainder of the survey asked respondents to indicate the extent to which the training provided was evaluated and what levels of training evaluation were conducted.

Given this research objective, the results presented in this chapter are descriptive in nature. The researcher acknowledges that, typically, descriptive statistics are presented in tabular form in a table. For ease of reading and after consulting with Evergreen Data (International Reporting and Data Visualisation), however, I opted for a more visually accessible modality for the presentation of Phase One's results in-text.

Data visualisation is an important tool for communicating research results effectively (Evergreen & Metzner, 2013). The aim of data visualisation is to appeal to the reader, get their attention and help them to understand and engage with the data being presented. Effective data visualisation therefore communicates key results clearly and simply (Evergreen & Metzner, 2013). Thus, the data visualisation of the results presented in this chapter was developed with Evergreen Data because this

format helps to communicate the research results more effectively. Frequency tables for the results are, however, provided in the Appendices.

In Section A (Training in Your Organisation) and Section C (Your Perspectives of Training Evaluation) of the survey, respondents either had to either: a) indicate the extent to which a list of itemised reasons underpinned their responses; or b) provide narrative reasons for their responses.

Modes were chosen as the descriptive statistic to present the results for when respondents selected from the itemised list. In these circumstances the mode represents which of the itemised reasons were most common among the sample. For example, a mode of five indicates that that particular itemised reason was dominant among the respondents, whereas a mode of one would indicate that the itemised reason had little influence on the respondents' answers.

When respondents had to input additional reasons to explain their responses, frequencies were chosen as descriptive statistic to present the results. The frequency indicates how many respondents provided the additional reason. For example, 11 respondents inputted 'for strategic reasons' as a free text response when asked why their organisation was committed to training.

The results are presented under the following six main headings: training spend; organisational commitment to training; non-commitment to training; types of training provided; training evaluation data collected and frequency of training evaluation per training category; and rationale for training evaluation or the lack thereof.

1) Training Spend

Respondents were asked to estimate the Rand value of how much their organisation spent on training and development per annum. The results ranged from R5 000 to R468 million, with a mean of R21 898 533.70 ($\bar{x}$ = R21 898 533.70; *SD* = R63 196 310.47). Overall, the organisations included in the research were deemed to be contributing substantial capital to training and development initiatives.

The portion of the organisations' total annual turnover budget allocated to training and development ranged from 0.01% to 65% ($\bar{x}$ = 8.3%; SD = 11.6). The researcher acknowledges that 0.01% and 65% seem unrealistic. These responses were, however, provided more than once so they were retained. The mean indicates that the surveyed organisations assigned just less than 10% of their total annual turnover budget to training and development initiatives.

Some respondents (n = 24) specified the percentage allocated to training and development as the percentage of payroll (as opposed to total annual turnover budget). These unique responses were calculated separately. For these 24 responses, the organisations allocated between 1% and 15% of their payroll budget to training and development with a mean of 3.3% (*SD* = 3.3).

2) Organisational Commitment to Training

Survey respondents were asked to reflect on the extent to which they thought their organisation was committed to training. The results were positive overall, with more than half of the sample (62.9%) indicating that they perceived their organisation to be highly committed or extremely committed to training (see Figure 14).

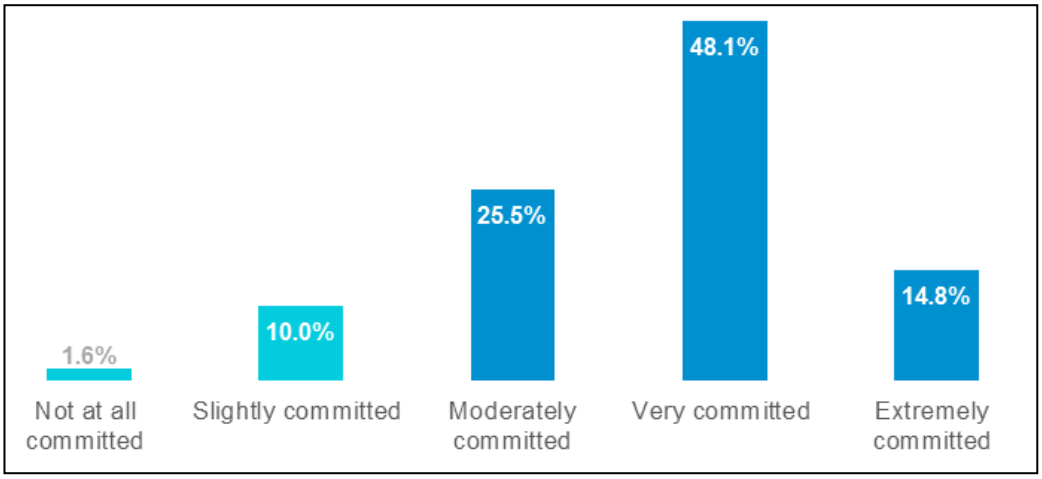

Figure 14. Perceived commitment to training.

Respondents who selected 'moderately committed' (n = 79), 'very committed' (n = 149) or 'extremely committed' (n = 46) were asked to rate the extent to which several itemised reasons influenced their organisation's commitment to training.

These reasons for training commitment and their modes are shown in Figure 15. The mode indicates how commonly the itemised reason was chosen by respondents (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Thus, the mode indicates which reasons were most dominant among in sample in explaining why their organisation was committed to training.

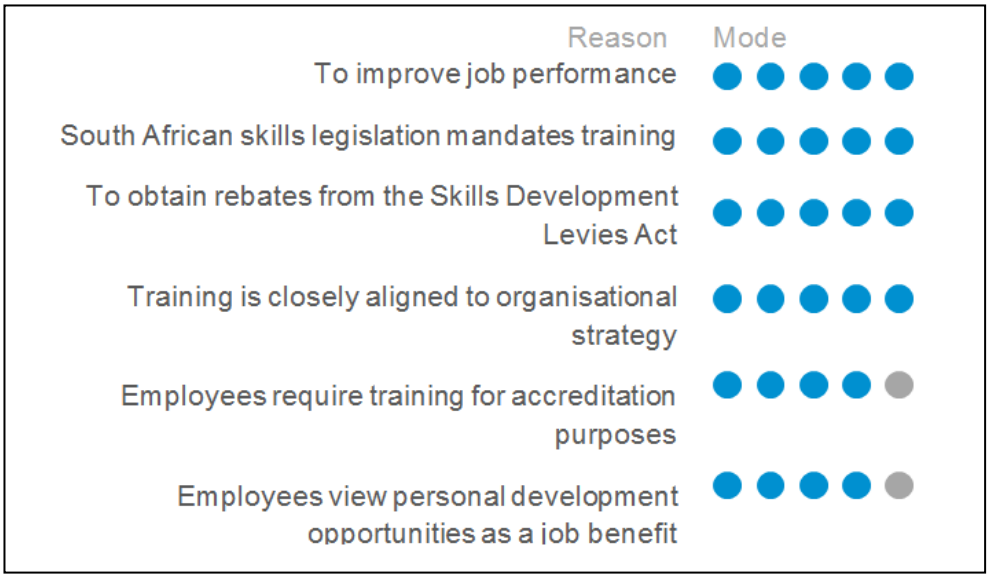

Figure 15. Reasons for the organisations' commitment to training and their respective modes.

All six itemised reasons had high modes, showing that the respondents frequently indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that these reasons underpinned their organisation's commitment to training. The frequency tables for each of the itemised reasons can be found in Appendix J, Tables J1 – J6. These frequency tables display the number of times respondents chose a particular response option for each survey question. Given the large number of frequency tables, it would have been cumbersome to include them all in this chapter. As such, they are included in the appendices for ease of reading.

In addition to the reasons provided in Figure 15, respondents were asked to add any other reasons that influenced their organisation's commitment to training. Eight further reasons (see Figure 16) were provided by the respondents. The frequencies indicate how many times the additional reason was inputted by survey

respondents. Succession and career planning was the most common additional reason, cited by twelve respondents as the reason for their organisation's commitment to training.

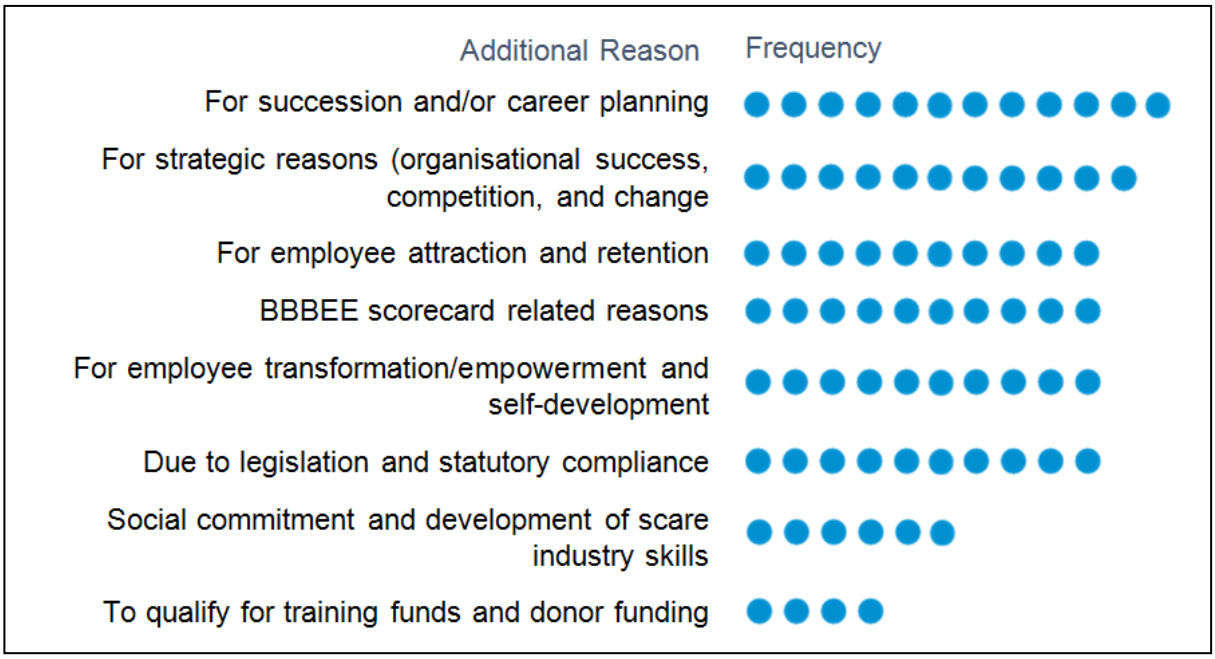

Figure 16. Additional reasons why organisations are committed to training and development.

3) Non-commitment to Training

Respondents who indicated that their organisation was not at all committed to training (n = 5) or only slightly committed to training (n = 31) were asked to indicate the extent to which a number of itemised reasons influenced their organisation's lack of commitment to training. These reasons and their corresponding modes are presented in Figure 17. The most common reason cited for an organisation's lack of commitment to training was that other business functions in the organisation were viewed as more important.

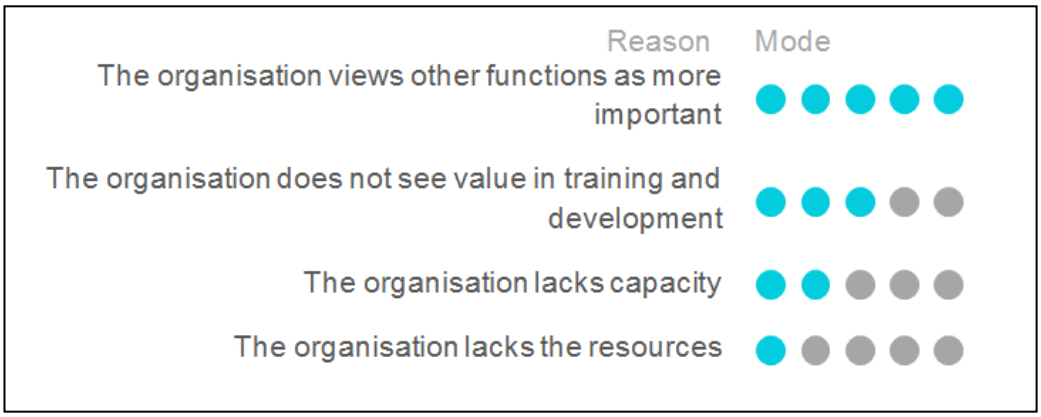

Figure 17. Reasons for the organisations' lack of commitment to training and their respective modes.

The frequency tables for each of the itemised reasons for lack of commitment to training can be found in Appendix K, Tables K1 – K4. Respondents were asked to specify additional reasons that underpinned their organisation's lack of commitment to training. Ten additional reasons as presented in Figure 18 were stated. The most common was that training was seen as a waste of time (n = 3). This reason coincides with the result in Figure 17 that training was not viewed as important when compared to other business functions.

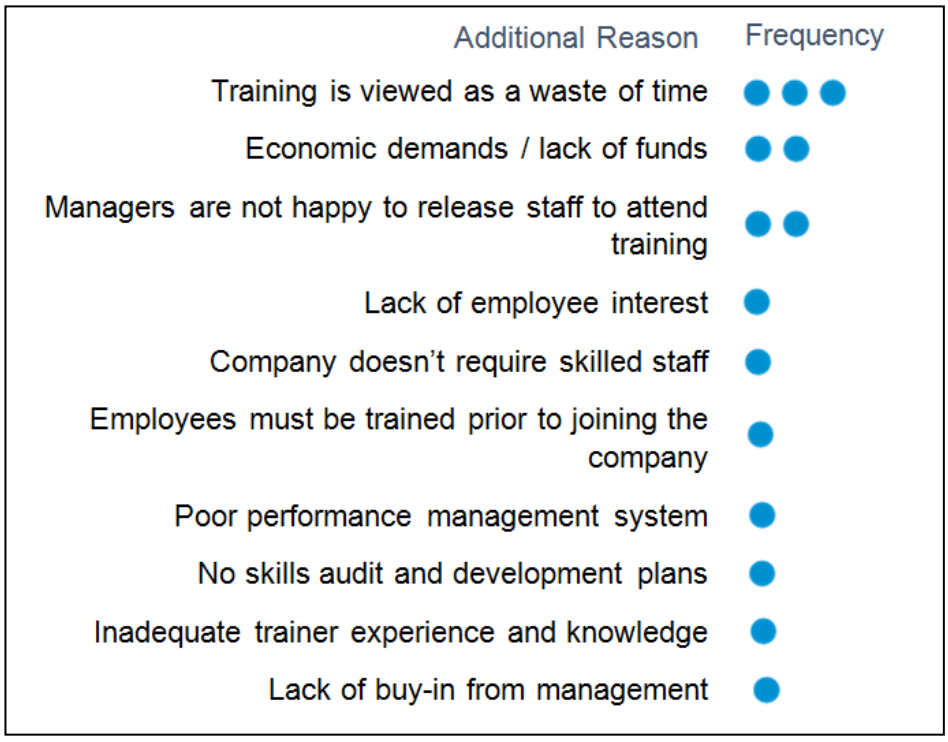

Figure 18. Additional reasons why organisations were not committed to training and development.

4) Types of Training Provided

The second section of the survey asked respondents about the specific categories of training programmes their organisations provided as well as the evaluation practices of these programmes. The results are presented according to these categories:

- Management training and development (e.g. leadership development, team leader training, supervisory training, Master of Business Administration degrees (MBAs);
- Intra-organisational training (induction, policies/procedures, diversity, team building);
- Technical/job-specific training (e.g. production, finance, HR, general business management, accounting, marketing, sales, IT);
- General skills training and development (e.g. communication, presentation skills, business writing, conflict management); and
- Personal development training (e.g. financial planning, wellness programmes).

Data visualisation in the form of quick reference logos were developed for each training category described above. These are depicted in Figure 19.

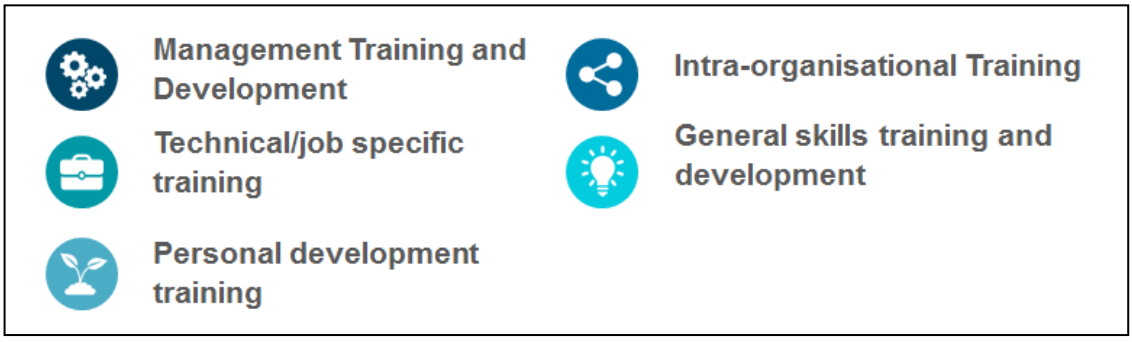

Figure 19. The categories of training offered with their respective logos.

5) Training Evaluation Data Collected and Frequency of Training Evaluation per Training Category

Management training and development.

Almost all (80.8%) of the sampled organisations offered some form of management training and development. The dominant types of training which formed part of this training category included: leadership development, team leader training, supervisory training and MBAs.

Respondents were asked to indicate how often training evaluation data was collected for their management training and development programmes. For each level of training evaluation (reaction, learning, behaviour, results and ROI) responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale. A response of 'one' signified that the organisation never collects training evaluation data whereas a 'five' signified that the organisation always collects training evaluation data.

The responses on the scale points one ('never collect this form of evaluation data') and five ('always collect this form of evaluation data') were used to present the results of this section of the survey. The figures presented provide the reader with a visual representation of the overall trend of the systematic training evaluation practices among the sampled organisations as well as enable the reader to compare the two extremes.

Figure 20 shows how often evaluation data on reaction, learning, behaviour, results and ROI was collected for management training and development. Approximately half (44.7%) of the sample always collected reaction-level data for their management training and development programmes, but the practice to collect other forms of training evaluation data declined as the level of training evaluation was intensified. This is evident with only 16% of organisations always collecting results data as shown in Figure 20.

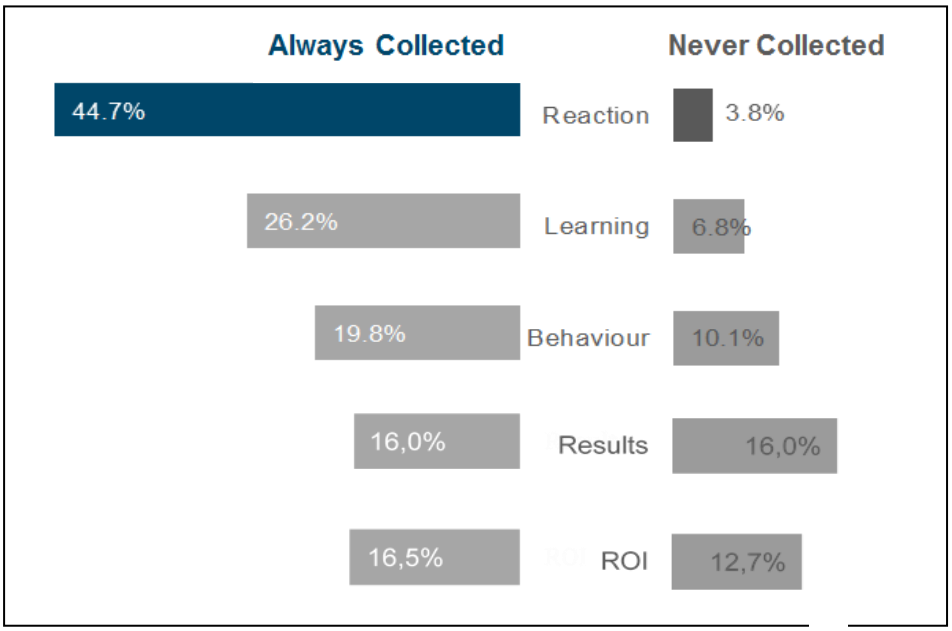

Figure 20. Frequency of training evaluation for management training and development per training evaluation level.

The frequency tables illustrating the number of times respondents chose the other frequency scale options (rarely, sometimes, and often) for each item in the survey can be found in Appendix L, Tables L1 – L5.

Intra-organisational training.

Intra-organisational training was described as organisation-specific training. Examples included training programmes that addressed or focused on: induction, policies/procedures, diversity, and team building. Seventy eight percent (78.7%) of the organisations surveyed offered intra-organisational training. These respondents were asked to specify how often reaction, learning, behaviour, result and ROI training evaluation data was collected for this category of training.

Figure 21 shows that less than one third (32.3%) of the organisations surveyed consistently collected reaction-level training evaluation data for this category of training, while the number of organisations who collected learning,

behaviour, results and ROI data is low (ranging from 13.9% - 19.7%). The frequency tables illustrating these results can be found in Appendix M, Tables M1 – M5.

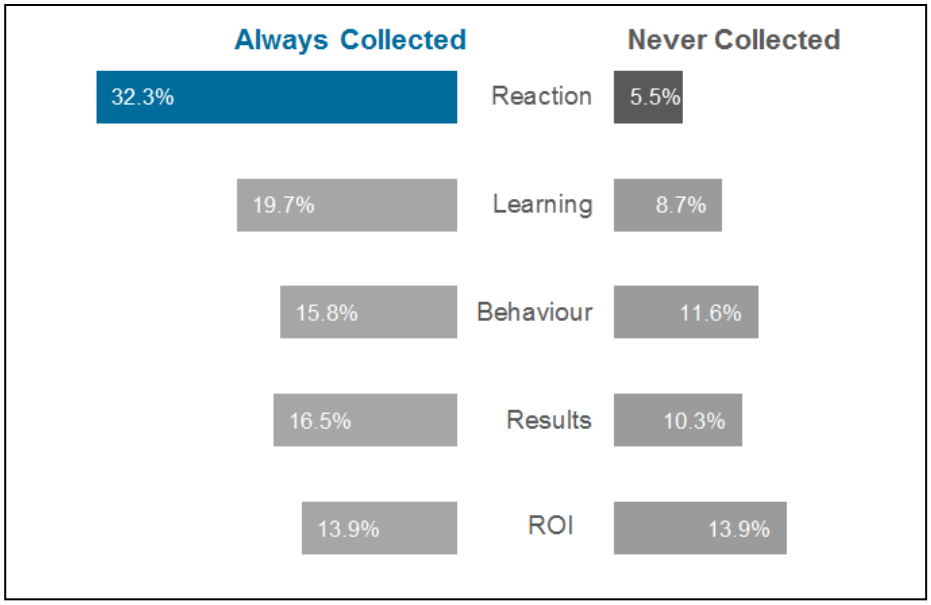

Figure 21. Frequency of training evaluation for intra-organisational training per training evaluation level.

Technical / Job-specific training.

Technical / job-specific training was defined as training that is implemented and aligned to employees' areas of work, for example, production, finance, HR, general business management, accounting, marketing, sales, and IT. The responses indicated that 77.1% of the sampled organisations offered technical / job-specific training. Those respondents, whose organisation offered technical / job-specific training, were questioned about their organisation's training evaluation practices for this category of training.

As shown in Figure 22, only 30.6% of the surveyed organisations always collected reaction level data for their technical / job-specific training and only 14.8% and 13.5% always collected results and ROI training evaluation data, respectively.

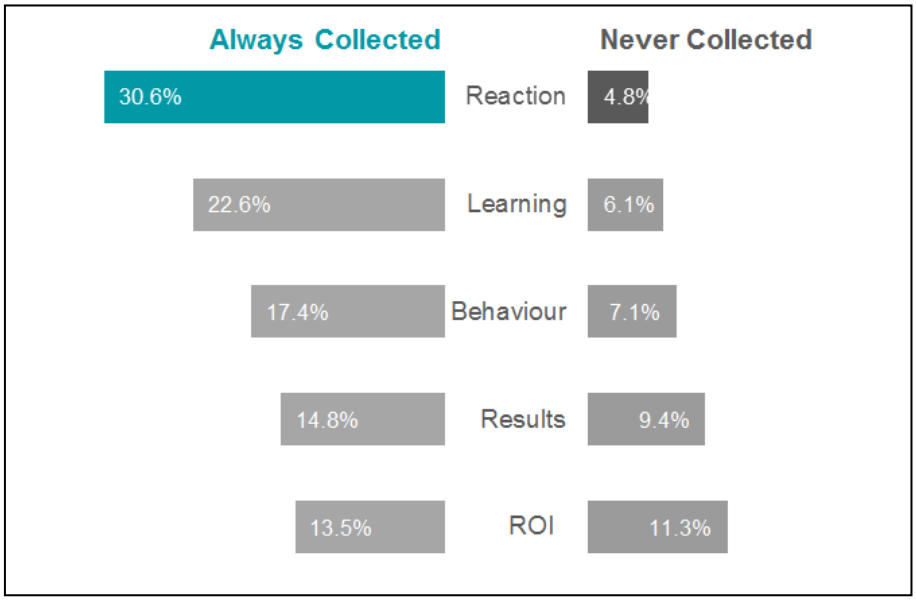

Figure 22. Frequency of training evaluation for technical / job-specific training per training evaluation level.

Like the previous two training categories (management and development training, and intra-organisational training), Figure 22 shows that the organisations consistently collected reaction data more frequently than data for the other levels of training evaluation. The frequency tables illustrating these results can be found in Appendix N, Tables N1 – N5.

General skills training and development.

Approximately three quarters (74.5%) of the sampled organisations offered general skills training programmes. This category of training included programmes for communication skills, presentation skills, business writing, and conflict management.

Figure 23 shows that just over one quarter of the sample (28.7%) always collected reaction-level data, compared to 15.8% of the sample who always collected ROI data for general skills training.

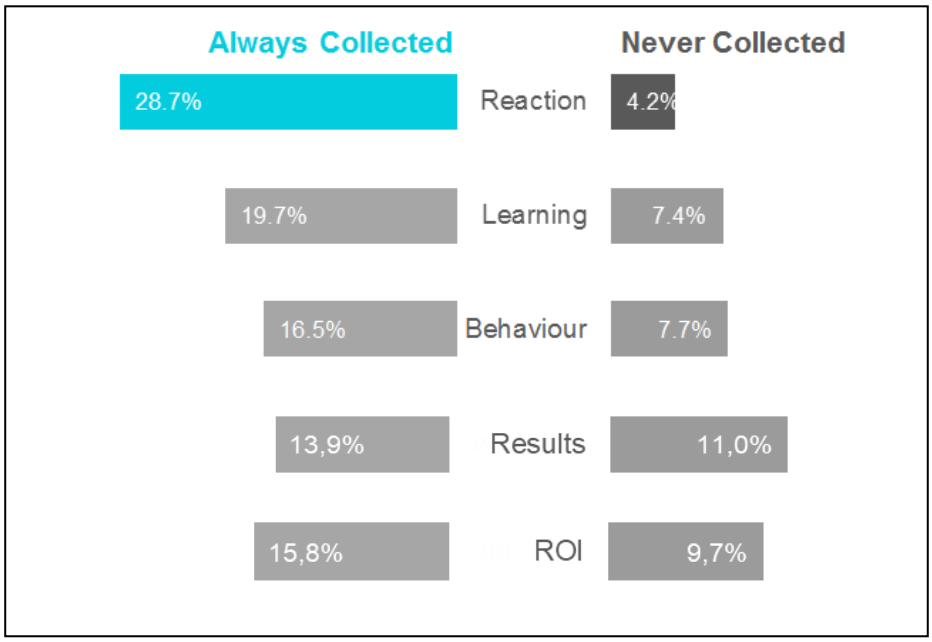

Figure 23. Frequency of training evaluation for general skills and development training per training evaluation level.

While there is also a trend to do less frequent training evaluation from the reaction to the results levels for this category of training (as portrayed in Figure 23), the organisations collected ROI training evaluation data (level five) more frequently than results data (level four) for general skills training. The frequency tables illustrating these results can be found in Appendix O, Tables O1 – O5.

Personal development training.

The responses indicated that 66.5% of the sampled organisations offered personal development training programmes, such as financial planning and wellness programmes. Those respondents whose organisation offered this category of training were questioned about the training evaluation practices for this category of training.

As shown in Figure 24, only 22.6% of the organisations consistently collected reaction-level data and 12.6% collected ROI data for their personal development training programmes. Figure 24 represents the same trend as the previous categories of training, with less training evaluation taking place for levels two

(learning), three (behaviour), four (results) and five (ROI). There is, however, only a 10% difference between how consistently reaction-level data was collected compared to ROI-level data. The frequency tables aligned to these results are in Appendix P, Tables P1 – P5.

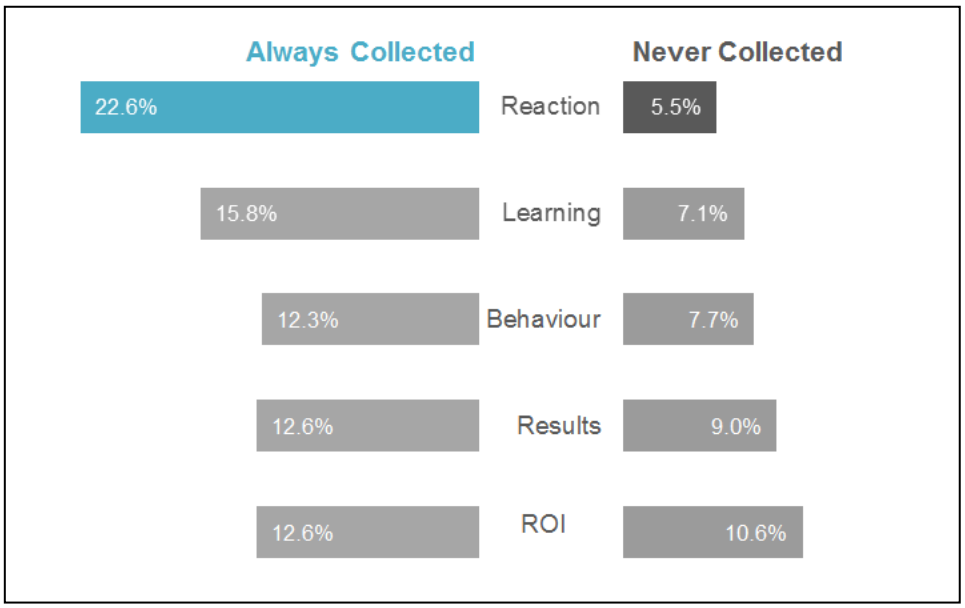

Figure 24. Frequency of training evaluation for personal development training per training evaluation level.

Summary of frequency of training evaluation levels per category of training.

Figure 25 collates the training evaluation trends as described above. The figure shows that, reactions were most commonly collected as a mechanism to evaluate training interventions, at an average of 32% of the time that training programmes were run. However, at the ROI level, organisations collected evaluation data less often, on an average of 14% of the time. Figure 25 also shows that the category of management and development training programmes had the most frequent collection of evaluation data (at the levels of reactions, learning, behaviour and ROI).

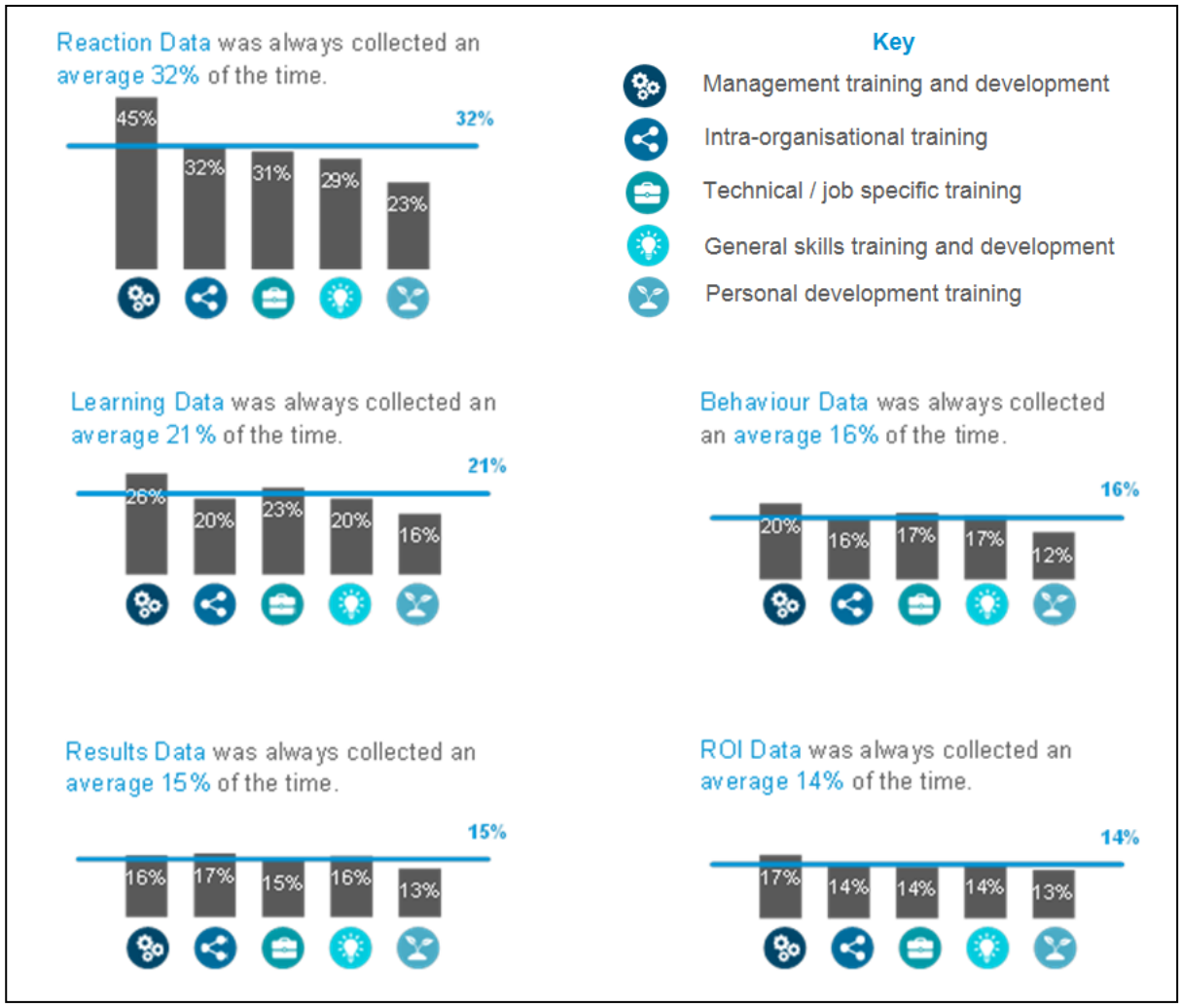

Figure 25. Frequency of evaluation data collected per level for each category of training.

6) Rationale for Training Evaluation or the Lack Thereof

The third section of the survey required respondents to reflect on whether they thought their organisation's training evaluation practices were satisfactory. Overall, more than half of the sample (55.2%) indicated that they perceived their organisation as not doing enough to evaluate their training and development interventions (see Figure 26).

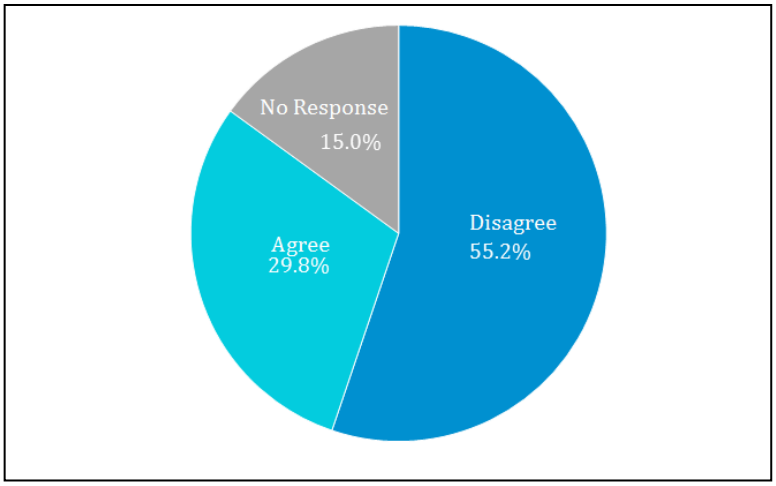

Figure 26. Respondents' agreement levels with whether their organisation engaged in sufficient training evaluation practices.

Reasons for the lack of training evaluation practices.

Respondents who selected disagree (n = 102) or strongly disagree (n = 53) to the following question: "I think my organisation is doing enough in terms of evaluating their training", were asked to rate the extent to which several itemised reasons influenced their organisation's lack of training evaluation. The reasons and their modes are shown in Figure 27.

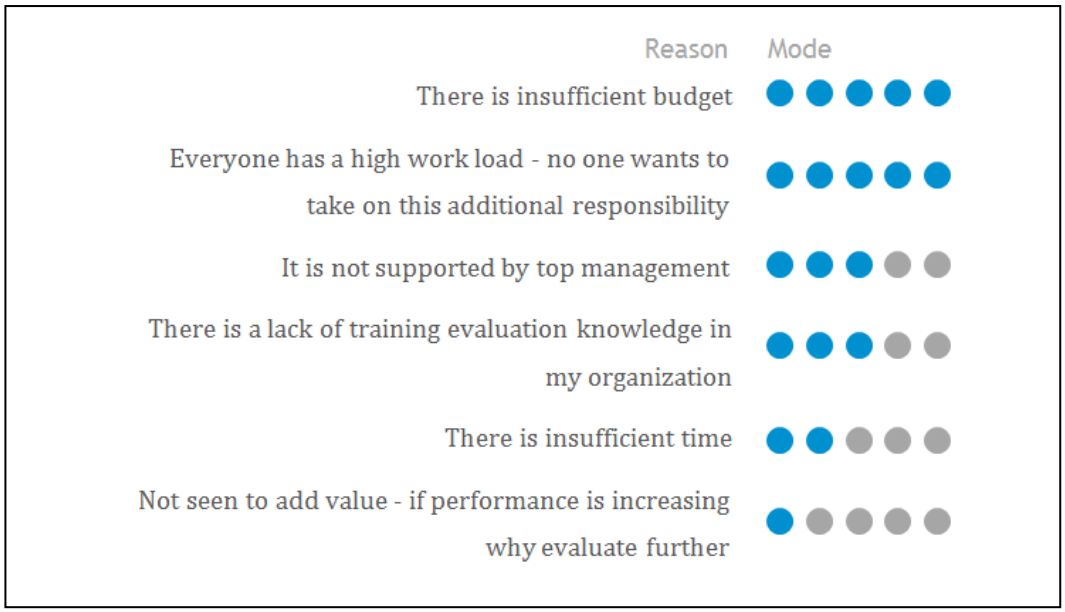

Figure 27. Reasons for why organisations did not engage in training evaluation.

As shown in Figure 27 two reasons were chosen most often as the key reasons underlying the lack of training evaluation. They were that: there was insufficient budget to conduct training evaluations, and everyone in the workplace had a high work load already and thus no one wanted the extra responsibility of performing training evaluations. The frequency tables illustrating these results can be found in Appendix Q, Tables Q1 – Q6.

Respondents were given the opportunity to list alternate reasons for why their organisation was not conducting training evaluations. Fourteen additional reasons were cited. These reasons as well as their frequencies are provided in Figure 28. The most common additional reasons cited were a lack of knowledge and expertise, a lack of resources (money and staff) as well as staff being overburdened in their current roles.

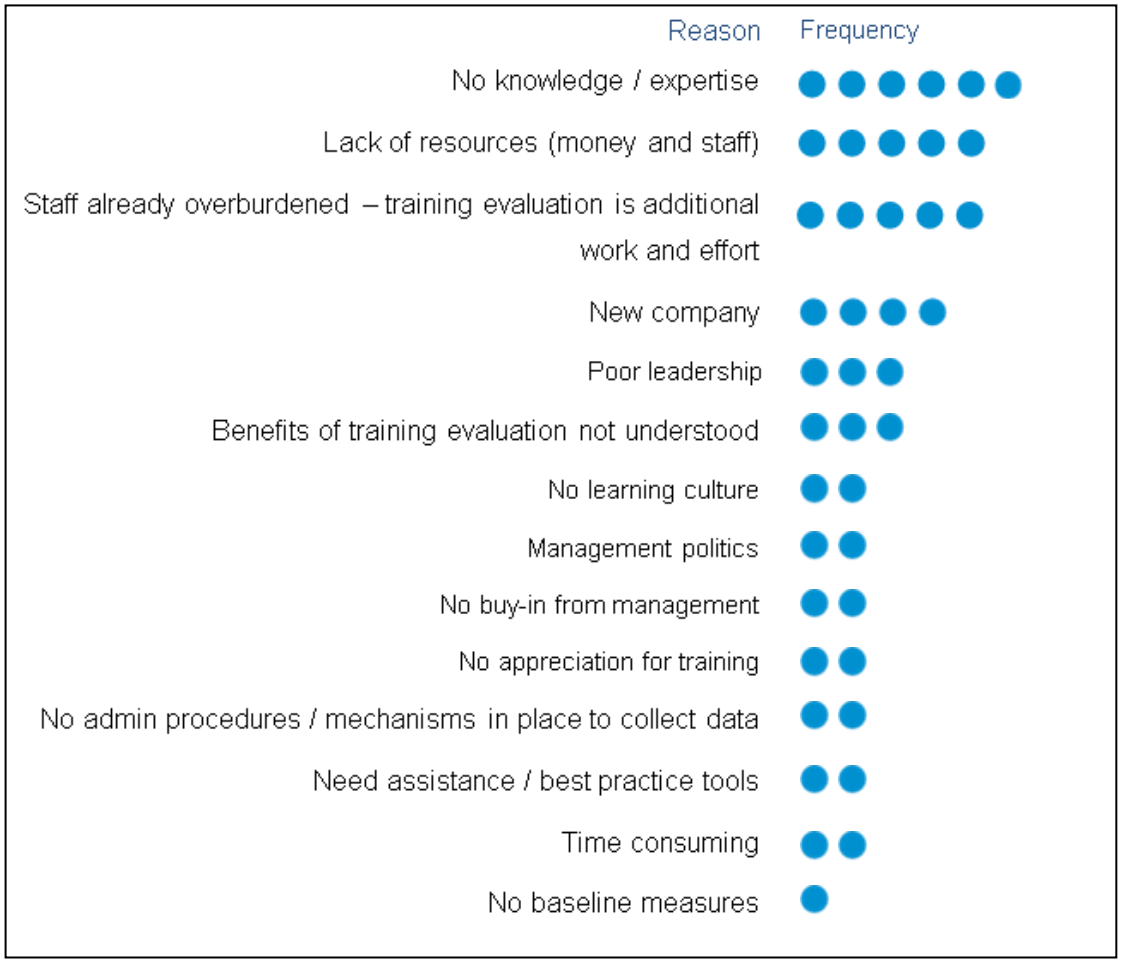

Figure 28. Additional reasons for the lack of training evaluation practices within the various organisations.

Reasons supporting training evaluation practices.

Respondents who selected agree (n = 67) or strongly agree (n = 17) to the following question: “I think my organisation is doing enough in terms of evaluating their training” were asked to rate the extent to which a number of itemised reasons influenced their organisation’s support for training evaluation. The reasons and their modes are shown in Figure 29.

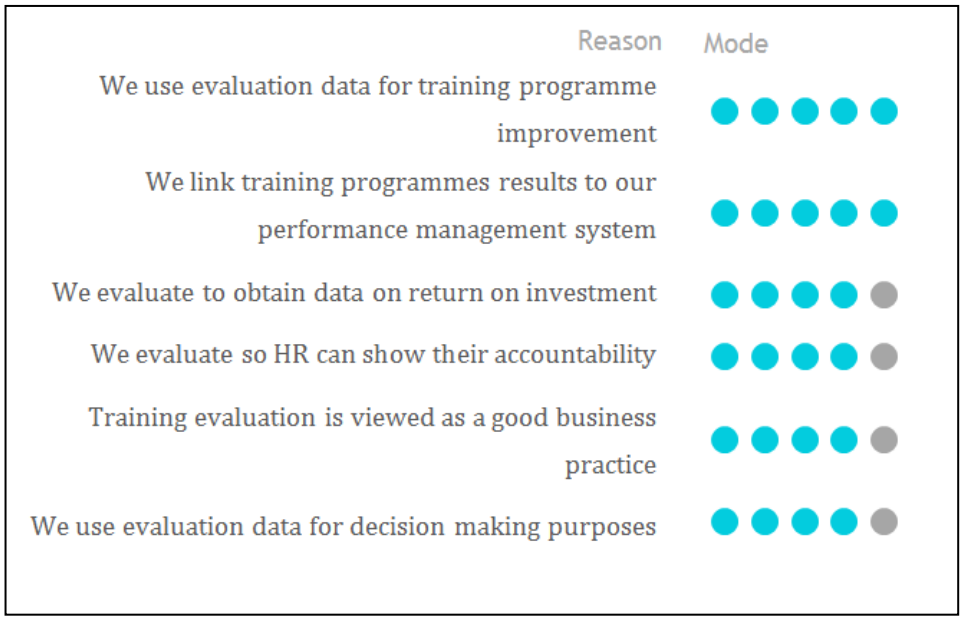

Figure 29. Reasons for why organisations engaged in training evaluation.

As shown in Figure 29, all of the listed reasons were influential as to why the organisations conducted training evaluations, with each reason obtaining a mode of either 4 or 5. The frequency tables illustrating these results can be found in Appendix R, Tables R1 – R6.

Respondents were also given the opportunity to state alternate reasons for why their organisations conducted training evaluations. Ten additional reasons were cited. These reasons as well as their frequencies are provided in Figure 30. The most common additional reason cited was that training evaluation was used to improve employee performance.

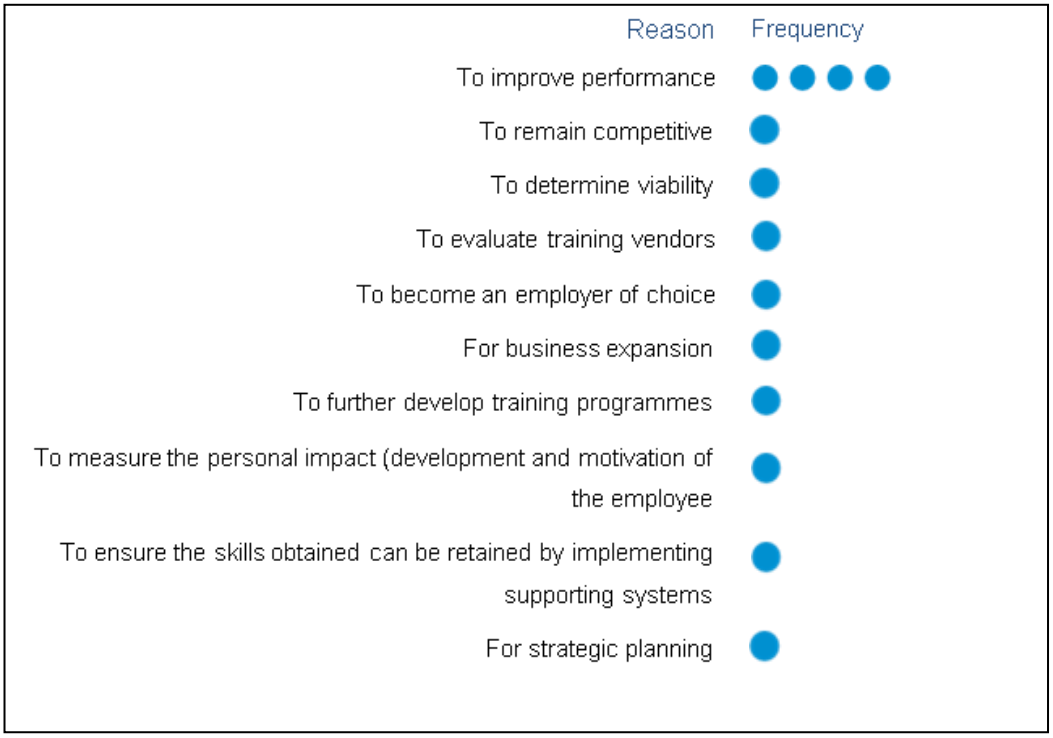

Figure 30. Additional reasons for training evaluation practices within the various organisations.

Reasons for neutral responses.

Respondents who selected 'neither agree nor disagree' (n = 42) to the original question "I think my organisation is doing enough in terms of evaluating their training", were asked to rate the extent to which several provided reasons influenced their neutral response. These reasons and their modes are presented in Figure 31.

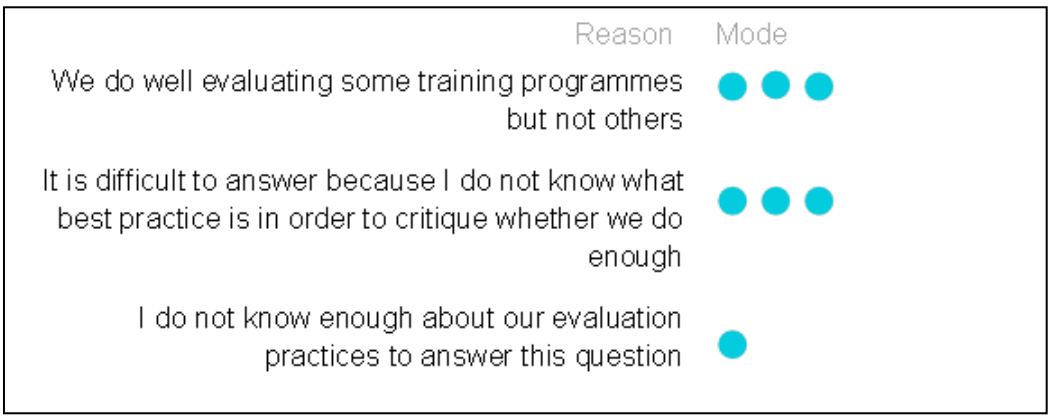

Figure 31. Reasons for a neutral response on whether the organisation was doing enough training evaluation.

These same respondents were then given the opportunity to cite additional reasons for their neutral response. The additional reasons provided as well as their frequencies are presented in Figure 32.

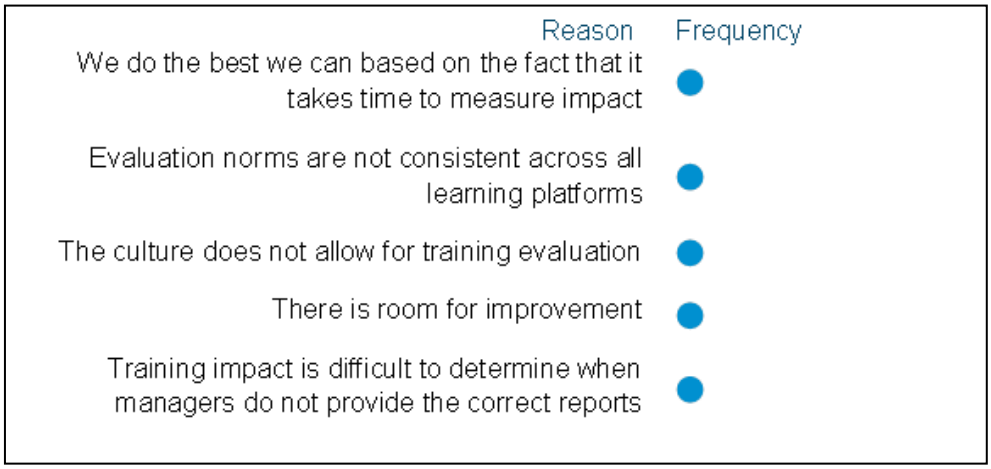

Figure 32. Additional reasons for a neutral response on whether the organisation was doing enough training evaluation.

Summarising the Results from Phase One

In summary, the analysis of Phase One's results indicate that the South African corporates sampled are highly committed to training and invest substantially in training and development interventions. However, the frequency of their training evaluation is low across all categories of training. While the collection of reaction-level data was the most common evaluation approach used, the statistics were low for all five levels of evaluation (reaction, learning, behaviour, results, and ROI) across all categories of training. Reasons underpinning training commitment as well as training evaluation practices or lack thereof were provided by the respondents. Overall, the majority of respondents stated that their organisation was not doing enough training evaluation. Phase One's results portrayed a broad overview of the training, and training evaluation trends and patterns within South African corporates. Phase Two of the research sought to explore these findings in more detail. The analysis of Phase Two's results is presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven: Results from the Analysis of Phase Two's Data

As described in the method chapter, nine corporates took part in the second phase of data collection. This phase was qualitative in nature with the expressed aim of providing me with a more in-depth understanding of the quantitative results emanating from Phase One of the research process. Specifically, the interviews in Phase Two aimed to answer the second research question about whether South African corporates perceive training evaluation to be an imperative and strategic business practice and investment.

This chapter presents the five key themes that emerged from the analysis of the interview data. They are: a) the confirmation of no systematic training evaluation; b) the confirmation that training evaluation is not viewed as a worthwhile and strategic business practice; and c) reasons for why training evaluation is not / will not be invested in, in the future d) the recognition that training evaluation could be advantageous; and e) current forms of measurement and monitoring that are being used instead of systematic training evaluation. Like Chapter Six: Results from the Analysis of Phase One's Data, quick reference logos have been used for each theme. These are depicted in Figure 33.

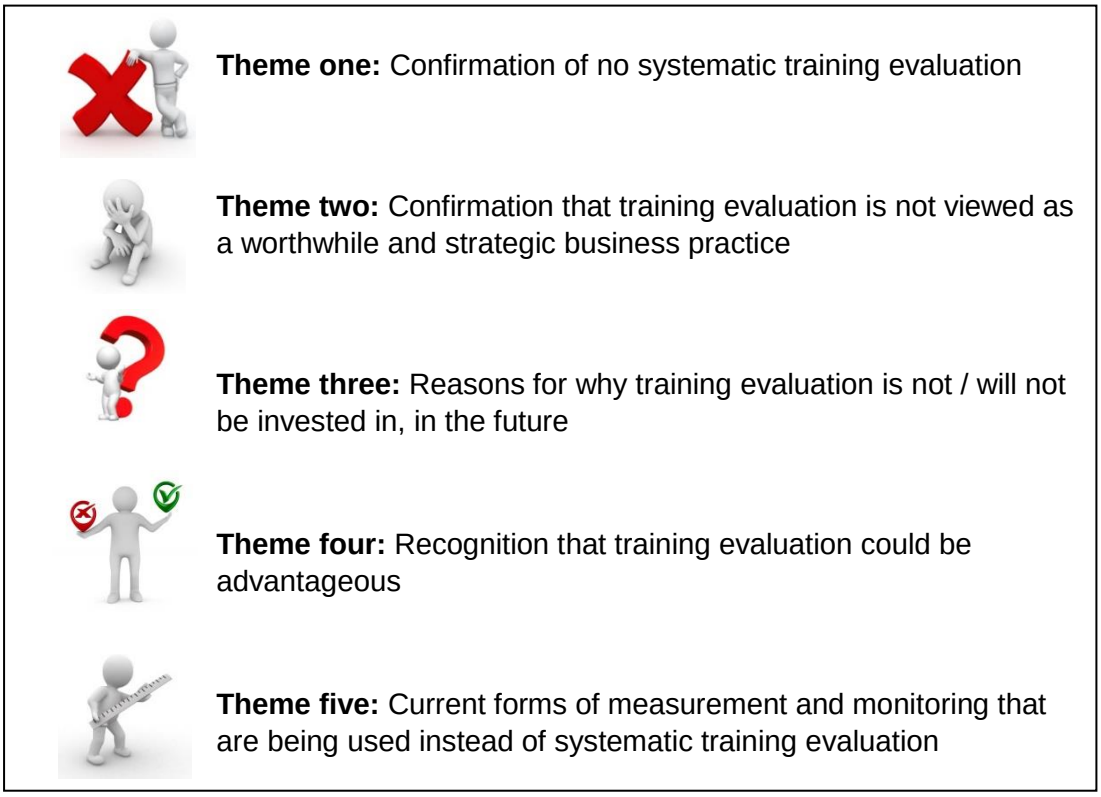

Figure 33. Phase Two's themes with their respective quick reference logos.

Figure 34 depicts the ATLAS.ti network map of these five themes that emerged from the qualitative data analysis of Phase Two.

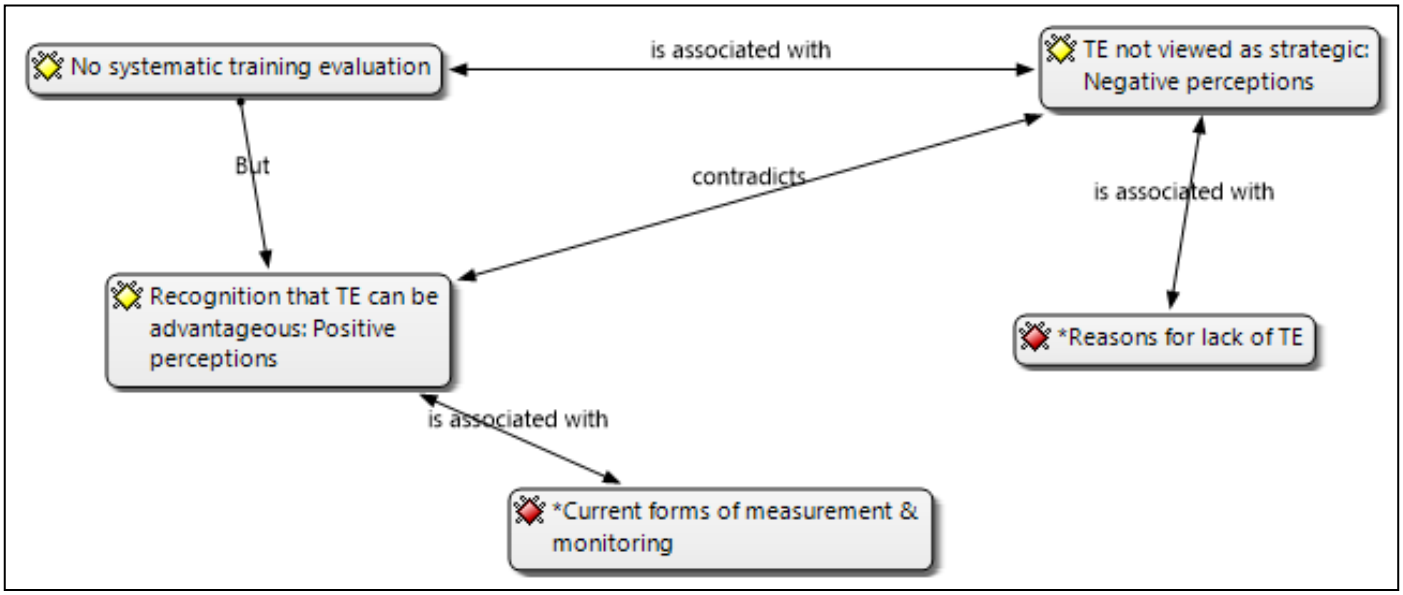

Figure 34. Network map from ATLAS.ti of Phase Two's nodes (themes).

The next sections will present each theme as well as quotations from the interviews which substantiate the findings. The grounded score for each theme / subtheme will also be provided. Groundedness or a grounded score in ATLAS.ti represents the total number of quotations linked to a particular code (theme). A high groundedness score indicates the number of quotations evidencing and substantiating that particular theme. These should be noted with some sensitivity because more than one quotation is used by each interviewee. The grounded score is included to show which themes and subthemes are more important.

Theme One: Confirmation of No Systematic Training Evaluation

An overarching result that emerged from the data analysis across all the interviews was the lack of formalised metrics and approaches to measure training outcomes and impact (unsystematic). While it was reported that in some of the corporates there were policies pertaining to evaluation or actual training evaluation manuals on how to go about evaluating training, there was no compliance with these policies and no implementation of these practices.

It was clear from the interviews, that all interviewees had a common understanding of what systematic training evaluation was. Across all nine interviews, there was confirmation that no formalised, consistent and continuous metrics or processes existed to measure the effects of training and development interventions [groundedness = 32][4]. Quotations illustrating this lack of systematic training evaluation are provided below.

"Um, so no, there is definitely no formal process. We don't use any metric. If there is a problem, you [will] certainly hear about it".

(Interviewee from corporate two)

"We've tried a lot of...I mean in theory you have to track, you have to set up an admin department just to track all those measurements [but] I haven't seen any measurement yet. Um I mean we've also sent people on training courses to measure

training; by the end of the day if you want to measure ROI you can make a thumbs-up exercise, that's what we do, we make assumptions on those things".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

"We don't specifically drive Kirkpatrick's levels and whatever [else] is around to measure and show the numbers… I mean…what we don't do is integrate all the information back…so if we spent R120 million [Rand] a year on training… we don't actually consolidate that into a view for the business at the end of the day to say this is how much you've invested in training and… this is the return on investment you getting".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

Within one of the corporates, an interviewee explained that they made use of their performance management system and the performance appraisals of staff to identify training needs and training. The interviewee referred to this as the front end of the training cycle, whereby interventions were matched to job role competencies and training needs of employees. The interviewee said that training was implemented but thereafter no evaluation was conducted to determine whether the intervention did in fact respond to the training needs identified, nor to determine whether there were any differences in the performance appraisals of the employees who attended the training.

"Yah, yah, um, again, we weren't very good [at training evaluation], so what we had was that we took, from a link point of view, we took the competencies obviously required for each role at each level, and we designed programmes mapped to competencies per level or per function or whatever it might be, to ensure that whatever it is we were training, was relevant. So the front end side of things was very much aligned; the back end – whether the link was created to determine effectiveness? – No".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

Another interviewee explained that the executive management in their corporate tended to ignore any calls from HR to evaluate training. According to the interviewee, these managers knew what training evaluation was, but they chose to overlook implementing these practices into the organisation.

"In terms of the evaluation methods that are being used and the return on investment - that is still a grey area" [interviewee laughter].

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

In one corporate, the interviewee acknowledged that no systematic evaluation was done. They explained that HR and specifically the learning and development team had fulfilled their evaluation responsibility by providing line managers with a training evaluation manual. This manual provided guidance and instruction on how to evaluate various training programmes within the organisation. The interviewee remarked that the distribution of this manual was viewed as sufficient in terms of their [HR's] role in the training evaluation cycle. No one in the organisation, however, enforced the use of the manual. Thus, in this corporate, the tool(s) existed to enable systematic training evaluation, but it was a manager's prerogative whether or not to evaluate the training that his/her staff attended.

"My quick response to that question [whether systematic training evaluation is taking place] is that there's no process in place to ensure people are measuring this. We said right, we're going to compile a guideline for the different areas. Return on investment guidelines for measurement, review, reporting and feedback on learning and development initiatives... And then we said right, we will also train the people… where people request it we will do a workshop to create understanding. So we're giving the people tools to actually do it. We've got fairly comprehensive measures in place… [But] we're not forcing anybody to do it… we are just saying that this is our consistent approach that you can follow. I am not saying it is working. I'm realistic about it…there are pockets of experts, our challenge is to be more consistent. I don't know who is measuring it. There is no follow up to say okay now let's bring the link back again. But the scope is there. We encourage people to do it… [But] I cannot honestly tell you that you A, B and C are doing it consistently. We probably have everything in place, it's just that last little link that we need to put in place… I need to put a process in place. I mean in an HR environment this is almost close to the ideal world, it's just that last measurable link. If [someone] wants to point a finger at us [HR], we can say we did our side, we put this in place [and] we've offered workshops".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

Theme Two: Confirmation That Training Evaluation Is Not Viewed as a Worthwhile and Strategic Business Practice

Theme two encompasses the negative perceptions that the interviewees and/or the top management in their corporates had about training evaluation. More than half of the interviewees commented that training evaluation was not deemed important. Six interviewees affirmed that individuals within their corporates were sceptical about systematic training evaluation. As a result of these opinions, training evaluation was not viewed as a worthwhile and strategic business practice and it was unlikely that these perspectives would change in the future [groundedness = 18].

One interviewee explained that the training evaluation culture in their corporate would not change and that generally top management had a negative perception of training evaluation.

"I think they would find it difficult to… bother really… the general feeling is that it's a waste of money. Straight up".

(Interviewee from corporate two)

Another interviewee, who was the head of the training and development function in their corporate, shared their own view of training evaluation. This interviewee said that academics believed that ROI was an important mechanism to determine training effectiveness, but the interviewee did not share this belief. This individual did not support the calculation of ROI linked to training.

"And your view is probably yah but you need to determine the return of investment wadah wadah all those things. I think it's a misperception to say that this training that I've attended caused us to make more x-percentage more profit".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

Another interviewee also stated that they believed ROI was nonsense and as a result their corporate would not invest in ROI measures for their training programmes.

"3415% return on the investment. With all respect I think it's a lot of nonsense, okay, and you can put me on the tape, I don't mind because I've said it at a lot of international conferences too. Because what does 3400% return on investment tell you? It doesn't say anything. You provide us with four pages of Excel spreadsheets to determine ROI and you get to some ridiculous percentage. And then you say well maybe if you're not comfortable, change a variable in that spreadsheet. You change it and you get to a different answer. I mean, I have my doubts about it, uh, I might be a lone lunatic in terms of that, I'm just saying in Afrikaans they say die kool is die sous nie werd nie, it's you know, all the effort is not worth getting to that figure, because what does that figure prove?".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

One interviewee explained that training evaluation was not viewed as a worthwhile and strategic business practice because the Board of Directors was only interested in the organisation's profits. The interviewee further said that the same processes and procedures had been practiced in the corporate since its inception. If the corporate continued to make money, no additional processes would be implemented, despite the interviewee's efforts to enforce training evaluation practices.

"The company is making tons of money. Believe me when I tell you they are making tons of money. So everything here is hunky-dory and no evaluation is or will be done. So the justification of the business is we are making tons of money, so there's no need for any change. The profitability levels are there. The Board of Directors only wants to see profits, nothing else".

(Interviewee from corporate six)

Another interviewee who held a top management position in their corporate and oversaw training and development in the organisation, stated that they were cautious about training evaluation. This individual did not want to implement these processes in the corporate.

"from time to time we'll have students that come into the department and are quite gung-ho on trying to put in some kind of return on investment. I've got some of my managers also quite keen on doing that. I'm very cautious. I don't go with it… I don't want to put in another step… or another piece of paper"

(Interviewee from corporate one)

Theme Three: Reasons for Why Training Evaluation Is Not / Will Not Be Invested In, In the Future

Theme three emerged as a follow-on theme to theme two. When the interviewees expressed the negative views of systematic training evaluation (either their own or that of top management in their corporate) they detailed the reasons underlying these negative beliefs. These inputs informed theme three which pertains to the reasons why training evaluation is not and will not be invested in, in the future.

There were several reasons discussed and as such theme three has nine sub-themes. Figure 35 portrays these sub-themes.

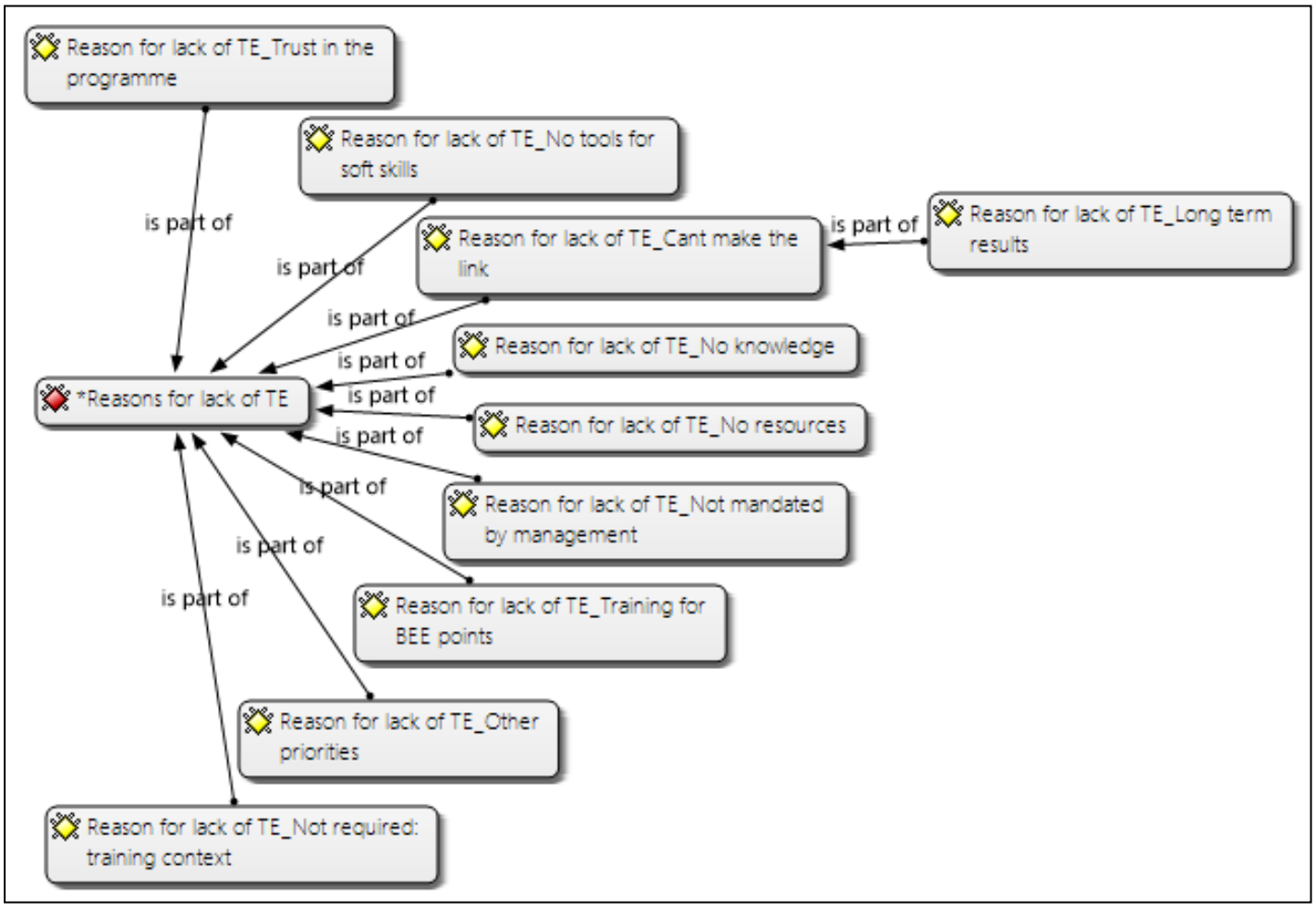

Figure 35. The nine sub-themes for why training evaluation is not and will not be invested in.

The next section will present each sub-theme. The groundedness of each sub-theme will be provided in brackets. The sub-themes are represented in no particular order.

Trust in training programmes [groundedness = 3].

Two interviewees justified their corporate's lack of training evaluation practices by saying they had trust in the training programmes that were implemented. Evidenced by the quotations below, these interviewees said that they believed that the training their corporates provided added value and employees could engage in transfer of learning when they returned to their jobs.

"When I walk out [of the training'], I'm able to transfer that learning back to the workplace".

(Interviewee from corporate five)

"We know that training adds value. I don't think that we do training that's not adding value, it's training that the business asks and the business pays for. You must remember in our industry, if you take a person from the call centre, you lose capacity there for the day – to take calls – so it's less incoming calls, it's less opportunity to turn into business. So they will not lead people for training if it's not necessary".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

No tools for soft skills [groundedness = 6].

Four interviewees explained that their corporates would like to practise training evaluation for leadership and development interventions but believed there were no tools to enable them to get evaluation feedback for this type of soft-skills training. Within these organisations there was a lack of understanding on how to measure and evaluate leadership development programmes. Common across all four interviews, the interviewees explained that measuring the behaviours that leadership training aimed to change was difficult and they were unaware of any

models that could do this objectively. Quotations for this sub-theme are provided below.

"As you move through the different levels it becomes more difficult to do assessments of learning. So at a foundation level it's relatively easy. Leadership is harder to understand. I man I do feel that there are many tools, [but] it doesn't mean that any of those can be used for leadership".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"I think the other thing I want to mention is it's easier to measure the ROI of training maybe with the technical stuff, [but] the soft skills and those things it's not".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

"The textbook doesn't tell you how to do that"

(Interviewee from corporate six)

Evaluation cannot make the link [groundedness = 9].

Four interviewees commented that training evaluation data was not able to demonstrate a causal relationship between the intervention and the outcomes observed. As such, their corporates chose not to evaluate training. Common across all four interviewees, they remarked that causality was something they would want to prove, but knew that it was not always achievable.

One interviewee further explained that if the training their corporate implemented was for longer-term outcomes, then the evaluation of that training would only be able to take place in three to five years' time. According to this interviewee, the longer time frame between when training was implemented and when outcomes were expected made causality even more difficult to prove. Below are the responses of the interviewees who used this sub-theme to justify their corporate's lack of training evaluation.

"Is training responsible? That you got a 4 rating because you went on a training course… I don't think it works like that. So I think the training plays a very big part. However is it the only thing that's going to determine success? No, I don't

believe that. I think there are other, other factors and maybe one avoids it, but there are other factors. And there are, there, I think the training in terms of the competence to do your job, ja, we can train you that on a training programme, or we can show you how to use that system and train you onto, on how to use the system or do metrics, or um, the fact that you do it really well, is that success of the training? No, not necessarily. And again, the further down the line that you go, the more difficult it is to link it back to that training programme specifically".

(Interviewee from corporate one)

"Which is like the problem that we're having all over the show. It's so difficult to do that direct link because there's so many other factors that could come into play that you just don't know".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

"I take the 40 successes in the company on a simulation exercise over 2 days, it costs me R200 000, how do I determine return on the investment? Yes, can you do it? Theoretically yes, if you take, but then you need to have all the variables into effect, and you cannot do it over a short period. You will probably have to evaluate the company over the next 5 years to see what strategic decisions people are making".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

Lack of training evaluation knowledge [groundedness = 12].

Five interviewees explained that limited knowledge was a key reason underpinning their corporate's lack of training evaluation practices. In their organisations, both the HR employees and the line managers lacked the knowledge of training evaluation processes and practices. Quotations supporting this sub-theme are provided below.

"No, currently we, we don't have learning evaluation competencies".

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

"Carren that is the stumper right now. No knowledge. Quite difficult".

(Interviewee from corporate five)

"I think that a lot of HR, learning and development, all of us, professionals lack that skill".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

"You see the biggest challenge I'm sitting with is that the supervisor, or the line manager is just as illiterate as the guy at the bottom".

(Interviewee from corporate six)

"I certainly feel that most people in the field don't actually understand what needs to happen".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

Lack of resources to conduct training evaluations [groundedness = 12].

Like the sub-theme above, lack of resources was cited by five interviewees as a key reason for why training evaluation did not take place in their corporates.

Two interviewees explained that they had limited capacity due to the small number of employees responsible for training and development in their corporate. This personnel shortage was evidenced by the quotations below.

"The other thing is resources, when you have, I mean our learning and development team was 3 people for an organisation of locally 1200 in 7 regions, 7 offices. So while there's the right things to do, there's also what's kind of um, what you're able to. So for us it was definitely a resource issue".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

"If it's not the line manager doing it, the learning team cannot because they're a bunch of ten people who constantly have new employees coming through the door [into the organisation that require training]".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

Three interviewees remarked that lack of time prevented anyone in their corporate from engaging meaningfully in the practice of training evaluation. These quotations are provided below.

"I mean [we] say it's leadership but we also just don't have the time, I mean I've got back to back [meetings] since 08:30 this morning until four 'o clock, and that's the story of our lives. We're not in the office so we don't have time to do our job. So it might not only be leadership, it's a time thing that doesn't afford us to do what we need to be doing and that's a huge thing".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"It's not that we don't want to measure it, I mean we would be excited too. But um for me it's not, I mean if you go speak to any leader, any leader, they would say you know what if I only had the time to I would"

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"The pressure is just so much on site that you don't have the time to do anything". "I think they would find it difficult to find the time or to, to bother really".

(Interviewee from corporate two)

Lastly, two interviewees said that the costs involved with implementing training evaluation processes would be too high and as such their corporates would not invest in the practice.

"The business is under duress for costs so how do you substantiate an evaluation teams' existence. I mean that's a line manager's job".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"Cost, we're under huge cost pressure and to set up an admin that's not necessarily going to add value".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

Training evaluation is not mandated by management [groundedness = 16].

Four interviewees explained that one of the key reasons why their corporate was not engaging and performing training evaluations was because the senior executives in the organisation did not require the information. Commonly cited across these interviews, the interviewees felt that because training evaluation wasn't supported by top management, results would not be used, so there was no incentive to do it. Supporting quotations are provided below.

"It's not even a time and money thing, it's just a commitment thing, really. In terms of getting uh commitment from the [top]. 'I've always done things like this for the last 20 years and it's worked... let's not fix what's not broken'. To get change is going to require an entire management change. It's a sad culture but it is the reality that I'm dealing with".

(Interviewee from corporate six)

"Um and I'm sad to say it, it is down to leadership. Top management don't mandate evaluation, so whether a manager analyses the pre- and post- [training data] is entirely up to the line manager. It's up to the line manager whether they do it and that's the problem".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"…managers don't have time in the workplace… they don't request evaluation results".

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

"I mean if there's no, there's no mandate, there's no mandate from any executive member, for me, to say for every training programme produced at ROI or ROE figure, um if there was, we'd be able to do it. But I mean with such a lot of other priorities on your table, I'm not going to start doing these calculations for programmes if no one is going to use that figure".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

"… management is not um, it's not interested in training… Management only needs to show results. The Board of Directors only want to see profits, nothing else".

(Interviewee from corporate two)

Training for Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment points [groundedness = 8].

Three interviewees stated that their corporates only implemented development interventions so that they could earn points on their Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) scorecard. In South Africa, to tender for business and get repeat business the organisation's B-BBEE points are considered. The more training an organisation implements, the higher the B-BBEE points they receive. In the case of these organisations, as training was implemented fundamentally to increase the points on this scorecard, management did not require training evaluation, since it would be provided regardless. The quotations below illustrate this sub-theme.

"A *lot of training [we] do is basically for our, is because of our employment equity report, to say that we are spending x amount of money on training and development". "So it's not we've paid this much, this is how much we're gaining, it's just simply for a box exercise". "So provided it's done, to get our BEE score card points that is the way [management] thinks".*

(Interviewee from corporate six)

"The newest challenge for us probably is ensuring that we comply [with] triple B, double E employment equity and making sure that we train enough. Because we get rated and if we are not rated sufficiently… [we] lose business… they say sorry, your rating is too bad in terms of what you're investing in developing black skills".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"Our intention is to do it [training] for I suppose really for the BEE points…" "And of course the margins with the work diminishing in the country, the, the competition for the work is so much higher, so you've got to bring your margin down and of course all training eats into your margin, so the, the decision that we've made here is we're happy to live with x amount of points on your BEE score card which costs you x amount of money versus spending the full amount which would be another R8 million which comes directly off your profit, so the conversation with the CEO is you need to choose. Do you want profit or do you want points? You know?"

(Interviewee from corporate two)

Other business priorities [groundedness = 6].

Two interviewees said that other business priorities underpinned their corporate's lack of training evaluation practices. These interviewees remarked that other business functions were deemed more crucial than training evaluation and thus these functions were prioritised over the measurement of training effectiveness. The quotation provided below demonstrates this sub-theme.

"And why isn't it being done? What is inhibiting us from, from actually going and measuring this, and, and taking it back the full loop? That's another hour's discussion. [Laughs] But, but the reality is um it is business pressure. We've probably had everything in place, it's just that last little link that we need to put in place, and the question is why don't we do it? It's about um strategic priority, and I know if you now take this tape to the CEO, she will say but you must bring it to our, you must come and put it on the, you know, bring it to our attention and put it on the table, present it to us, etc. Then maybe I'm accountable at the end of the day for that. But uh, but it's going to take additional effort and energy and I, and sometimes I think it's about timing, you must decide what is relevant to go and put on the table at the moment".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

Training evaluation not required due to training context [groundedness = 8].

Three interviewees explained that the training their corporates provided was mandatory legislative training, and due to the context of this training, the organisation did not need to evaluate it. In all three corporates, the mandatory training was delivered by an external service provider accredited by SETA. Thus, the need to evaluate reactions was not relevant because whether the trainees liked the training or not it was still a mandatory programme that had to be completed. In the legislative training programmes, learning as well as behavioural competencies were evaluated with built-in assessments. Formative assessments, summative exams as well as portfolios of evidence were all requisites for these training programmes. Thus, for this type of training, evaluation was not deemed necessary by these three corporates. The supporting quotations are provided below.

"We don't necessarily need to evaluate. Remember they've got both formative and informative assessments as part of the programme". "So in the case of um the, the, the courses, like the one that I've mentioned, the service provider is the one who carries the, the whole function in terms of facilitating, assessing and also um certifying".

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

"So there's no point… because they still got their PoEs, there's no point in me doing relevant implementation or to increase evaluation because the systems that they are using now are producing the results on whether the training has or hasn't been successful".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"The majority of the, the training that's done is the mandatory training and so they have to give us a competency certificate". "That company assesses whether the person is competent and gives them the certificate". "[For other training] it's really just an attendance course. They've got to be recertified every two years".

(Interviewee from corporate two)

Theme Four: Recognition That Training Evaluation Could Be Advantageous

Theme four refers to positive perceptions about training evaluation that were expressed by some of the interviewees during the interview process. This theme highlights an inherent contradiction in the interviewees' experience and the general management of this function. Even though interviewees reported that their corporates were not evaluating their training and development interventions, some conveyed that they viewed training evaluation as an advantageous business practice. These latter perspectives resulted in the formation of theme four.

Seven of the interviewees said that training evaluation could be an advantageous business practice in their corporate environment [groundedness = 22]. These positive perceptions of the importance of training evaluation are illustrated in the following quotations.

"Training and evaluation is important because I need to know the skills of the workforce. I need to understand who needs improvement, whether the guy is uh battling because he does not understand the process correctly, [whether] he's got uh inefficiencies in his understanding of the process or [if] it's the training".

(Interviewee from corporate six)

"*The entire business looks at is as very very important".*

(Interviewee from corporate five)

"Currently it's an initiative from HR following the normal processes of training to make sure for whatever training that we do, you need to evaluate, I mean to, to the reason as to what impact the course had on people, or did the situation change… and return on investment that's, it's important".

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

One interviewee recognised the value of training evaluation as a measurement tool to enable the tracking and monitoring of employee improvement after training.

"*And that's what I get excited about, is when there [could be] active measurement and using resources to identify has this person improved and what is the improvement, and then monitor it on a regular basis".*

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

Another interviewee explained that top management in their corporate should welcome training evaluation practices because this process would be able to determine and quantify the impact of the training implemented,

"Yah absolutely so from the senior side of things I mean that's exactly what they want – they want the Rands and cents, they want the bottom line. What if, if I do this, why would I do this, what will the impact be and can you show me, can you quantify it? So it's a huge need".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

The same interviewee remarked on the worth of being able to produce hard data that could conclude whether or not the training implemented was beneficial or

not for the individual and/or organisation. The interviewee did, however, explain that for this to occur they would need to design internal practices which integrated the performance management, training and learning processes within the organisation,

"So it theoretically makes sense, and it's the way that it should be… from a systems and analytics point of view, to get down to the hard facts… it's the only way we can start to make things being hard, and start to make things hard and tangible as opposed to fluffy. Um but I think that there's a couple of things that there need to be in place, HR learning and development need to be integrated... and I think there needs to be a system, there actually needs to be an input system where you were talking about performance management or the design of competencies – the performance management side of things… generally organisations are terrible at that so you lose the link. So I think that the evaluation, the constant check-in, the review, the feedback loop, that kind of thing is great from a learning organisation point of view".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

Theme Five: Current Forms of Measurement and Monitoring That Are Being Used Instead of Systematic Training Evaluation

Theme five refers to the measurement and monitoring practices that were used within the corporates as approaches to obtain training data. While the interviewees acknowledged that systematic training evaluation was not practised in their corporates, the data from the interviews indicated that each corporate sporadically used unique and context-specific mechanisms to collect data for some of their training and development interventions. The discussions of these mechanisms led to the development of theme five.

Thirteen forms of measurement and monitoring techniques emerged across the nine interviews. Each of them represents a sub-theme under theme five. Figure 36 portrays these sub-themes.

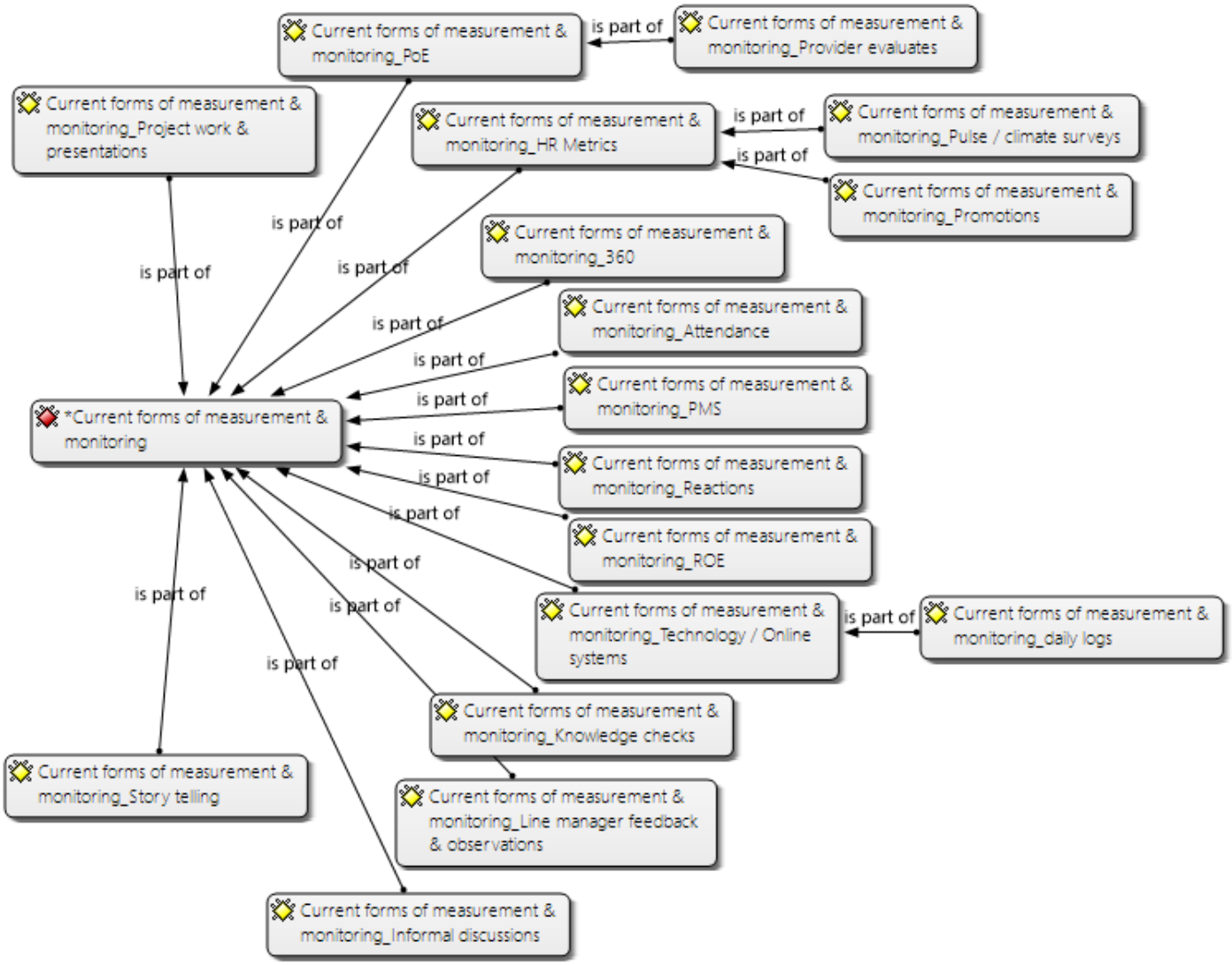

Figure 36. The thirteen sub-themes of theme five: Current forms of measurement and monitoring that are being used instead of systematic training evaluation.

The next section will illustrate each sub-theme with the groundedness of each sub-theme provided in brackets. The sub-themes are represented in no particular order.

Project work and presentations [groundedness = 6].

Five interviewees reported that their corporate made use of project work and presentations to assess learning and behaviour post leadership training. Common across all five corporates, when leaders and/or managers attended any kind of leadership intervention they were earmarked as the lead for an upcoming internal project within the organisation. Following completion of the project these individuals

were required to present the project and its outcomes to the Board of Directors. Through this process, the leader / manager could demonstrate the knowledge and skills learnt during the training to top management. The quotations provided below illustrate how project work and presentations are used as a training evaluation method for the learning and behavioural application of leadership training.

"Our leadership programmes that we run, we incorporate projects into those programmes to assess learning, we have our senior leaders in the organisation, they work on projects and they present back to the board on specific projects".

(Interviewee from corporate one)

"So at a senior level portfolios of assessment don't really work for them, um so we would mostly use projects, um so we would create projects afterwards that they would need to do which are work-based projects. They would need to do the project and then present back, present the project back to the sponsor group on the implementation of the project".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"For the leadership training programme, everybody has to come and make a presentation on how they have improved over the last three months [after the training]".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

Portfolios of evidence [groundedness = 7].

Five interviewees explained that Portfolios of Evidence (PoEs) were sometimes used as a training evaluation technique to assess knowledge and application of training. The PoEs involved formative and summative assessments that were built into the training programmes' structure. Following training, employees were required to complete these assessments. The assessments were application-based, which means that the employee must understand the theory covered in the training and must be able to demonstrate its relevance and applicability to their job. The marks received for the PoE enabled the line manager to assess the extent to which an employee has learnt during the training and whether or not they are deemed competent by the training provider. Thus, reviewing an employee's

performance score for their PoE was used as an assessment of trainee knowledge and learning application. Quotations supporting this sub-theme have been included below.

"In terms of assessment of knowledge we implement accredited learning, which means people have to do a portfolio of evidence and they've got to do their projects um so there's a huge amount of knowledge that goes back in the workplace through the portfolios of evidence".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"All of our staff have a portfolio of evidence and they get accredited based on that".

(Interviewee from corporate five)

"Our apprenticeships and learnerships are assessed through SETA and with a portfolio of evidence".

(Interviewee from corporate six)

HR metrics [groundedness = 9].

Five interviewees explained that their corporates made use of various HR metrics as a form of training evaluation. These metrics included the number of promotions, results from engagement surveys and pulse surveys, employee morale indicators, and retention statistics. Top management ascribed the results of these HR metrics to the training provided to staff. All five interviewees acknowledged that they recognised that this practice was problematic in that HR metrics did not provide data on training effectiveness or outcomes. They reported that despite this, top management in their contexts believed that employees' satisfaction with the training and development programmes attended, did manifest in and influence the data collected for HR metrics. Thus, the HR metrics were used as an indirect measure of the effects of training on business outcomes.

One interviewee remarked that their corporate did not see a need for training evaluation, because they were able to see whether their employees were satisfied with the training with which they were provided, through an engagement survey.

"You're going to see it [evidence of training effectiveness and satisfaction] in other metrics. In staff retention for example and we run an engagement service once year [to see] who do people want to work for".

(Interviewee from corporate one)

Another interviewee explained that top management in their corporate believed that there were several factors influencing training and its effectiveness. For this reason, they chose not to evaluate each training programme, but rather to investigate other aspects of the business, using HR metrics as a proxy indicator,

"There's so many variables around – but I mean if we looked at people's performance ratings over a period of time that must be some indicator into training. If we look at people getting promoted. So there's all the other HR variables that are basically impacted through development directly and indirectly".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

Another interviewee reported that their corporate monitored various HR metrics bi-annually and then assessed the difference in scores for the HR metrics, which were in some way related to training and development in the organisation. The interviewee said that there was a strong belief that their company morale and the training offered went hand-in-hand. The corporate attributed an observed difference in employee morale to the training that was provided to staff.

"Sorry I'm getting passionate now but let me show you this, so this now we've done twice a year, now what happened was morale was very low, say about a year ago, so you can see to be a best company you have to have at least [a score of] 85, well 85 and more. Top companies achieve anything from 65 to 85. But we are moving towards that. So what we do is we measure management style, ethic style, transformation, human capital, performance management and all of those things. Where there's a specific intervention you can see there's a statistically significant difference in morale and one of the big drivers for that is training. So I can tell you one thing, if you stripped out the training side, I can nearly guarantee you that the difference wouldn't be that high. Training is a driver of our morale. If you ask me to prove it, I'll say no I can't, but I know through experience".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

360-Degree feedback [groundedness = 9].

Data obtained from four interviewees indicated that in some contexts, 360-degree mechanisms were used as an approach to assess behaviour change in employees who returned to work following training. In all four corporates, the 360-degree appraisal and feedback systems were used as a training evaluation tool for leadership training specifically.

Two interviewees explained how their corporate used 360-degree data to assess an employee before they attended leadership training and again when they returned to work. The employees rated themselves on a list of competencies while their managers, subordinates and/or team also had an opportunity to rate them. When the employee returned to work, ideally, they should engage in transfer of learning by applying what was learnt during the training to their jobs. The 360-degree process was implemented twice so that pre- and post-data could be compared to ascertain whether the employee had improved ratings because of the training. The quotations provided below illustrate this process.

"We also do quite a lot of 360-degree for leadership, um before and after, and also personal assessments around the competencies prior [and after] the training. After the post consultation we measure percentages [changes]. We measure competent percentages, so currently 90% is competent, between 70 and 90 is a coaching need and if the person has anything less than 70 they haven't learned".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"There was a measure done upfront where we looked at, I mean basically our high potentials we're looking to feed a leadership pipeline in an accelerated development way, and so there was a measure done upfront, kind of like a 360 that's done quantitatively obviously, half way through and then at the end. And so the end of [the programme] is a 360 evaluation. Oh and we had a senior manager's programme um and that was also both feedback from the senior managers, feedback from their teams, so I suppose 360 as well".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

One interviewee explained that they had not used a 360-degree feedback system yet but were investigating the possibility of using it as a mechanism for evaluating leaders following training.

"Um 360 to use it for after training, um I think in my view, it could work because if you've attended the training, the people who would notice your increase in knowledge, or renewed skill would is the managers and employees. It could work, because you're asking people to say okay, this person last month attended this type of training, was there any change?"

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

Monitoring through attendance registers [groundedness = 6].

Five interviewees reported that their corporates used attendance registers as a dominant measure to monitor training. All five interviewees acknowledged that the attendance registers did not enable their corporate to investigate training effectiveness, but through this paperwork they were able to report and track how many employees had attended training. The quotations below demonstrate that attendance registers were viewed as an important monitoring system for the training function in their corporates.

"I ensure that I keep proper registers".

(Interviewee from corporate five)

"We have metrics in terms of attendance. So we, well we've got a plan, we know what our training plan for the year is, and we will look at that plan in terms of attendance, what are we hitting in terms of training conducted and attended".

(Interviewee from corporate one)

"we break down white, black, race, gender, etc. [for] all those 27 000 interventions, you can see exactly who did what, when and what was the cost involved… how many people did it and what was the race and gender and etc. breakdown on that. Okay, so we've got comprehensive information on that".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

Use of reaction-level data [groundedness = 12].

Six interviewees explained that their corporates made use of reaction data as a training evaluation method. While the collection of reaction-level data was included in some training evaluation models, it did not constitute systematic training evaluation. Data emanating from the interviews revealed that, in some instances, training service providers gave the corporates smile sheet reports, while in other cases, the corporate requested trainees to complete reactionnaires on the training attended when they returned to work.

"We depend on the service providers who will tell us how the course was. We would normally request a report to say what happened, how was the class, how do they receive it, what is the feedback. When they bring a certificate, we give them a form to say can you evaluate this course, was it good, was the venue and all of that, you know, okay, so that we know if in future we may know. The real evaluation, people, people; people will tell you whether it's good or not".

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

"From a continuous side of things, there are just kind of self-report evaluations after any sort of intervention that we gather".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

"Um, I suppose everyone does level one evaluation... Yes, I mean everybody does that and we do to, it gives you some sense of where people are at. Um, and I suppose it depends on the questions that you put in, what you're going to get out. We do level one to give us a sense of how people are experiencing the programme, which has an impact on whether they are learning or not, so we definitely do level one".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

Return on expectations [groundedness = 9].

Four interviewees said that in their corporates' ROI had been surpassed by Return on Expectation (ROE). Where ROI is a financial figure of gain because of training, ROE was described by these interviewees as an approach to demonstrate the value of the training. Through ROE, business stakeholders and top management

were given an opportunity to estimate the degree to which the training had been beneficial to the organisation and whether their expectations of improved employee competence following the delivery of training had been met.

"Return on expectation is used to measure what is changing in the workplace".

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

"Much of the focus should be on the ROE rather than on the ROI. So it's more on satisfaction".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

One interviewee explained how ROE played out in their context. When a gap in performance was identified, the learning and development department was called upon to help achieve an organisational objective. The learning and development team then developed a training plan that would assist the corporate to meet the objective. Once the training had been delivered, the learning and development team reported back to a board of executives, an estimate of the extent to which they thought the intervention had contributed to the achievement of the objective. This estimation formed the ROE measure that was used to demonstrate the value of the training that the team provided.

"So basically it is around return on expectation, as opposed to ROI that is calculated. It becomes difficult to show an actual monetary link, which is why we chose the return on expectations. Let's say there are five objectives per year: so increase revenue by 20%, grow through acquisition, whatever it might be...reach market, have 20% growth in market brand recognition etc. etc. and so you take that, and so for each one of those objectives there's an exec sponsor and you say to them right, from a learning and development point of view, what percentage contribution do you think we could make or be responsible for, for this objective? So if you want to increase sales by 20% and you send everyone on training and sales only goes up 12%, is that learning and development's fault or not? Because there were probably other factors like management, um, whatever it might be. So of that 20%, how much is take-on from our side? The sponsor then comes up with the metric. So then we say right, in order to contribute to the increase in sales, this is our plan, this is our structure, and this is our design to achieve that percentage. And then I had to report to the board, the national board (Exco whatever you want to call it), once a quarter,

and then twice a year I would present my plan for the year ahead and obviously account for what I have done".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

Online technology systems [groundedness = 25].

Two interviewees reported that their corporates had internal technology systems that could be used as training evaluation systems. These two systems are explained separately below.

One interviewee explained that their corporate had a workflow system that logged employee performance. The name of this system cannot be disclosed because this would expose the identity of the organisation. The system was used as a daily log and tracking system for employee performance. It collected all kinds of data that could be used for evaluative purposes. For example, the system could be used by the sales managers to track call centre employees' performance with sales calls. When a sales manager listened in on a call they could log how many errors the employee made on the workflow technology system. A line manager could print off a system report of all the logged inputs for an employee. This enabled the line manager to compare the employee's performance before training to their performance after training to see if the number of errors made during calls had decreased.

"[We have] one of the most comprehensive management information systems, that produces figures and analyses figures all the time and trends, etc. If a sales manager listens in on a call centre staff's call, they can use the system to log how many errors the employee made during the call. Each time a call is evaluated the errors, time taken to answer the call, whether the call was correctly completed, etc. is all logged. If the staff member goes on a training programme, these statistics can be compared as a pre- and post-test to see if the training made a difference to their performance".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

Another example of how the workflow technology system worked within the same corporate pertained to performance logs. Line managers had to input into the system how many cases an employee handled for the week. This formed a

continuous record of the employee's performance. Like the example above, a line manager could draw a report on the employee's weekly workload performance statistics. If training had been provided to the employee, the line manager could assess whether or not the employee's performance increased after the training.

"Before the training [the employee] did ten cases, after the training [they are] now doing fifteen cases and before the training [they] made five errors and now on average [they] are making three errors. So they can attribute that [improved performance] to the training. So there is active measurement…to identify has this person improved and what is the improvement…it is monitored on a regular basis. Weekly sales reports are also logged on the system. So a sales guy would make 20 calls this week of which he got three pointers, he went to these pointers and he finalised x number of cases and made a sale of x amount".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

While the data was continuously collected and stored on the workflow technology system, it is important to note that the line managers within this corporate were not forced to download reports and evaluate the employees' performance pre- and post-training. The interviewee explained that using the system for evaluation purposes was the line manager's prerogative and the corporate was not aware of how many managers were using the system to link performance and training.

The second interviewee discussed how their corporate provided training to employees using an online e-learning platform. Employees logged onto the system in their own time and completed various training programmes. Assessments were built into this platform for each course or training programme. Once an employee had completed the online modules for a particular programme, they were required to complete the assessment. The assessment was used to evaluate employees' learning of the content and was usually in a theory test format. The learning system also had built-in refreshers, so employees were periodically prompted to redo assessments to re-test their knowledge after the training, in order to assess if their learning was being sustained.

This interviewee also explained that the platform was linked to SAP (an HR software system), so employee records were automatically updated once they had

completed a training programme. This enabled the corporate to download reports on how many individuals were trained as well as their performance statistics for the various programmes delivered.

"Okay, we, for assessing or evaluating um employees, uh we make use of question mark perception, which is an assessment tool… We publish exams on question mark perception, which is a tool, an online tool, where they can get assessed. The results are then written back to a data base and then reports are generated and those reports are then forwarded to whoever needs to see them. We use SAP as our, our learning management system and we've integrated the SAP learning management system with question mark perception. So by the end of the day, once you've gone through the entire e-learning process and you've taken the assessment, the HR record or the training record of the employee is immediately updated. After that training they [go] back to the workplace and then a month or two later they do a refresher course to see if the people are still on par. And that is where we've built an application in question mark".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

Knowledge checks [groundedness = 10].

Interviewees from two corporates said that their organisations made sporadic use of knowledge checks to assess the learning of the trainees following training. Knowledge checks were described by the interviewees as being informal conversations between line managers and employees, where the line manager used the forum to ask the employee questions about their training. By questioning the employees, the line manager could ascertain whether the employee obtained the intended learning from the training provided. The quotations below illustrate how knowledge checks were used as a form of training evaluation.

"*Every now and then we go back into stores and do um checks around knowledge retention. What did you understand about the Consumer Protection Act and what it means to you? It is done ad-hoc, it is not a formalised process".*

(Interviewee from corporate one)

"I do a theoretical assessment… do you understand the theory? I make them write a test and then what we do is we practically go on the factory floor… I put them

in a practical scenario… then you've tested them, you've done the checklist and they have done the demonstrations".

(Interviewee from corporate six)

Line manager feedback / observations [groundedness = 19].

Five interviewees commented on how line manager feedback and observations were used as a mechanism to assess training effectiveness in their corporates. These corporates relied heavily on line managers to provide HR with feedback on the training and to inform HR about the employee outcomes that had been observed when the staff member returned to work. All the interviewees remarked that HR specifically wanted feedback regarding the differences in employee behaviour and performance after having attended training. In all five instances, the interviewees explained that the feedback was provided through informal conversations. The quotations below illustrate this sub-theme.

"So the line managers or area managers will say sjoe,[wow] there's been a huge shift. This is now what I'm seeing. These are the things that are going better. So we get a lot of, and we have a lot of forums where we um have conversations on that. Similarly the area managers will comment on the store manager. So line sort of does observations and then feeds that back".

(Interviewee from corporate one)

"The best measurement for me ever is a line manager. Ultimately training is about changing behaviour, whether you measure it financially or just through observation of the person… that's what we want to see. The best person to make a call on that is the supervisor or team leader or the manager. Four months after training, we ask the manager 'can you see a difference?' The feedback from the managers and supervisors, you should actually speak to them, there's a huge difference… Um they even told us you can see the difference, and I mean it's just observation and through results of the ones that has been on the programme [compared to] the ones that [haven't] been on the programme. The results [are] different".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

"It's a very simplistic environment, so [a manager] can watch and see".

(Interviewee from corporate two)

"And so a lot of that was obviously observed… I suppose some of it [was a] tick-box like exercise to see if they have the competencies… and stuff like that".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

"…immediately when I get back I inform my manager, you know this was a good training, I have learned something about this and so on, and I'm looking forward to implement one of two [or] three steps… This is informal feedback, [employees] can put it in writing, you know. That, that's what happens in the workplace".

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

Informal discussions [groundedness = 8].

All the interviewees reported that their corporates encouraged line managers to have informal conversations with staff who had been on training courses. During the informal conversations, line managers asked the employees about the quality of the training they attended, whether it met their expectations, how beneficial they thought the training was, and so on. In some corporates, line managers were only required to hold these discussions when the employee returned from training, whereas other corporates tried to encourage line managers to have a pre-training and post-training discussion with each employee. The quotations below illustrate how these discussions were used as a training effectiveness measurement tool.

"So I must say we try and train line. And some do it, and some don't do it at all. If you've got someone on your team that has been booked on some training programme, ask questions. What did you learn? What did you, what are you going to do differently? What did you like? What didn't you like? But the amount of people that do that are limited".

(Interviewee from corporate one)

"I mean we encourage people to have a pre-development discussion and then a post-development discussion, because that's where return on expectation comes out".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

"Before the programme takes place they have to… we know for example who is going to attend, for example we know in June who is going to attend this stress management course in Johannesburg… [we will] mail all of those people [and ask] what they need from the programme… so it's a pre kind of engagement, and then afterwards we get feedback as well".

(Interviewee from corporate seven)

"When a person comes back from a workshop, we know we're supposed to sit with the person, what did you learn, what did you find beneficial, what did you not enjoy, how are you going to apply this into the workplace? So you have your initial discussion and then afterwards you should check how's it going - ask people for feedback – but we don't do that".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"The line managers will have sort of informal talks with employees that have gone on the training to find out whether it met their objectives".

(Interviewee from corporate five)

Story telling [groundedness = 2].

Two interviewees reported that their corporates used story telling as an informal mechanism to assess the effectiveness of training interventions. This approach was used for leadership training interventions within both organisations. Stories about the training and how the leaders transferred their learning to their jobs were shared on the corporates' intranet and within the corporates' newsletters. These stories were obtained from employees who had attended training and they document the impact the training has had for the employees. Online forums were also cited as other sites used to share success stories in management development and leadership training.

"At the senior level it's about the stories people tell about the change in behaviour that they've made and it's about how people experience them differently and getting those stories told and we do that through getting people to talk about their journey, like their leadership journey, we do articles on people, we profile them on the website so we have a different way of [measuring] results".

(Interviewee from corporate eight)

"We tried last year to put something together, um, like a, a blog website, Wiki type of thing for leadership [training] and where they can come and just discuss, but you know, these people are so busy and it, it really, it never took off".

(Interviewee from corporate four)

Performance management and appraisal system [groundedness = 5].

The corporates used the approaches, illustrated by the sub-themes above for monitoring. In three interviews, however, interviewees discussed their organisation's performance management and appraisal systems as approaches that could be used to measure training outcomes. While none of the corporates were using performance management as a tool to evaluate training and development, the discussions emanating from the interviews warranted its inclusion as a potential and likely future monitoring and measurement technique that may be implemented in some of the corporates.

An interviewee explained that in using the performance management appraisals, line managers would be able to compare an employee's competency ratings before and after training. Using the reports, the line manager potentially could assess whether the employee's performance had improved, although the corporate currently did not link training and the performance management system.

"We could use the performance management system to see if there has been some sort of increase and improvement". But there is no system [or process] that pulls everything together [referring to the appraisal scores before and after training]. So there isn't a direct link between the two, unless there's an issue".

(Interviewee from corporate three)

A fourth interviewee described how the performance management system in their corporate was used to investigate possible training programme deficits. In this corporate, a lack of improvement in performance management scores could highlight a possible problem with the training provided. The corporate used the performance management system to identify individuals who had not improved despite going on training. As a result, it prompted an investigation into the effectiveness of the training programme. The investigation aimed to determine whether it was the programme or the employees who were responsible for the lack of improvement.

"We do their personal development plan, then send them on a particular training programme. When we do the PM again the following year, we see they haven't improved. [This prompts an] investigation and the employee brings up the fact that the training didn't actually equip them. Then that information is get fed to line, and then line feed it back to HRD to obviously investigate [the training]".

(Interviewee from corporate nine)

Summarising the Results from Phase Two

In summary, respondents from Phase One of this research reported that a small number of South African corporates were collecting training evaluation data to assess trainee reactions and knowledge, transfer of learning, results and/or outcomes of training, and the return on investment of training programmes. The interviews conducted as part of Phase Two of the research aimed to explore these training evaluation methods and approaches in more detail as well as how the evaluation data obtained was used for organisational learning.

Results from Phase Two indicate, however, that no systematic training evaluation was performed in any of the nine corporates interviewed. In fact, the interviewees expressed somewhat negative perceptions of training evaluation and explained that within their organisations training evaluation was not viewed as an important business practice. Given the highly demanding and pressurised corporate environments, other business functions were given precedence. Despite the views that training evaluation was not worthwhile and did not add value, the corporates were still using some form of data collection and monitoring. These systems, as described in this chapter, did not conform to the theoretical or academic training

evaluation models, methods and approaches but were rather idiosyncratic measurement techniques that served the information needs of the organisation. A contradictory result was also revealed in that some of the interviewees acknowledged that training evaluation could be advantageous. The results from both phases of the research raise certain important questions that are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Eight: Discussion

This exploratory research aimed to investigate: a) the extent to which South African corporates are engaging in systematic training evaluation and what these practices are; and b) the extent to which South African corporates recognise the importance of, and use, training evaluation as a vehicle for organisational learning and change. The research used a sequential two-phase design. Phase One of the research involved the surveying of over 300 South African corporates so that an audit on the current training and evaluation trends in the country could be documented. Phase Two sought to explain the rationale(s) underpinning these practices (or the lack thereof) as well as elicit perceptions about training evaluation in the corporate domain.

The chapter reflects on the key results from both phases of the research, followed by a discussion of the implications of these findings for individual and organisational learning. Recommendations for improvements to current business practices are then provided as well as directions for future research.

Training Evaluation is a Somewhat Dormant Discipline in South Africa

In the past few decades, researchers have concluded that organisations worldwide are not adequately evaluating their training efforts (Abernathy, 1999; Alkin, 2013; Berge, 2008; Brinkerhoff, 2005; Brinkerhoff, 2006b; Eseryel, 2002; Giangreco et al., 2010; Griffon, 2014; Karim, Huda & Khan, 2012; Kraiger, Ford, & Salas, 1993; Kumpikaitė, 2007; Mann & Robertson, 1996; McEvoy & Buller, 1990; Nickols, 2005). Phillips (1995) and Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2010) argued some years ago that the lack of training evaluation was cause for concern in the field. Despite this, in almost every recently published training and development textbook reviewed (Bhattacharyya, 2015; Blanchard & Thacker, 2013; Coetzee et al., 2012; Erasmus et al., 2015; Ford, 2014; Noe, 2016) training evaluation still has a dedicated chapter as an essential step in the training process. These recent texts argue for the necessity of training evaluation as an important business practice and include many of the same methods for evaluating training and its impact offered in texts published during the last thirty years.

Results from the quantitative exploratory survey utilised for Phase One of this research demonstrate that the majority of South African corporates sampled claim to be doing some form of training evaluation, but the quality is poor and frequency of the practice is scarce. Only one third of the sampled corporates (31%) consistently collected reaction-level data once training had been delivered. The frequency of the collection of evaluation data at the levels of learning, results, behaviour and ROI, ranged from 14% - 21% of the time training programmes were run. Table 13 compares the frequency of training evaluation reported in the current research to the statistics of the global surveys (outlined in Chapter Four), that is, The Practice of Training Evaluation Around the Globe (Al Athari & Zairi, 2002; Blanchard et al., 2000; Bramley, 2003; Brandenburg, 1982; Eseryel, 2002; Geber, 1995; Meyer & Bushney, n.d; Saari et al., 1988; Singal, 2009; Twitchell et al., 2000).

Table 13

Comparison of Training Evaluation Frequency Statistics

Level of evaluation	Frequency range in global surveys	Frequency in current research
Reactions	68.3% - 85%	32%
Learning	10% - 47.05%	21%
Behaviour	11% - 46.9%	16%
Results	10% - 48%	15%
ROI	8% - 9%	14%

Note. The types of corporates, industry, and sample sizes do differ between the research in the global surveys and the current research. This should be considered when reviewing the comparison.

As seen from Table 13, the frequency of training evaluation practices in the South African sample shows that engagement in training evaluation has been considerably lower than the historically recorded global trends. Kirkpatrick's level one remained the most popularly used evaluation methodology for several of the corporates sampled. This result on the popularity of reaction-level data is echoed in international surveys which have assessed training trends (Al Athari & Zairi, 2002; Blanchard et al., 2000; Bramley, 2003; Brandenburg, 1982; Eseryel, 2002; Geber, 1995; Meyer & Bushney, n.d; Saari et al., 1988; Singal, 2009; Twitchell et al., 2000).

Similar results were found during Phase Two of the research. After analysing the qualitative data, the HR executives interviewed confirmed that their corporates did not use formal, consistent data collection and measurement to investigate the effectiveness of their training and development interventions. It was, therefore, concluded that no systematic training evaluation was conducted in any of the nine corporates sampled.

Respondents explained that training evaluation was not seen as a worthwhile or strategic business practice and that there was little prospect of this perception changing in the future. A number of interesting reasons emerged from these interviews which help to understand why there may have been little appetite for training evaluation within South African corporates sampled. These are: 1) training is provided to employees predominantly for legislative compliance; 2) training is not viewed, nor implemented, strategically; and 3) the established theoretical approaches for training evaluation are inappropriate for the contextual realities of the South African corporate environment. The results reflect a disjuncture between what is still currently being presented as theoretically sound training practice and what is taking place in reality. This presents an opportunity for researchers, theorists and academics to rethink how we approach the evaluation of corporate training interventions and how we maximise individual and organisational learning.

1) Training for legislative compliance.

Despite the lack of systematic, textbook training evaluation, the results demonstrate that the sampled corporates were highly committed to training their employees. This commitment was strong despite the lack of evidence that the training was effective. The corporates sampled made generous monetary investments for the provision of training and development interventions. On average twenty-two million Rand per annum was spent on training.

Some generic reasons underpinned the sampled corporates' rationale for implementing training interventions. These included: to improve job performance; to provide development opportunities to employees; because training is viewed as part of the corporate strategy; and because training is aligned to the corporates' performance management system. Although these reasons were highlighted as

influencing the training practices in the sampled corporates, respondents from both phases of the research emphasised legislative compliance as being the key driver for why they trained and invested in training and development.

When asked *'Why does your organisation train'*, three interviewees responded immediately saying they trained solely for Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BEEE) points and four interviewees stated they trained because they were legally mandated to by the Skills Development Act (SDA) (No. 97 of 1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA).

Results therefore demonstrated that commitment to and investment in training and development in South Africa is fundamentally based on the fact that a) providing training is legislated by the SDA (No. 97 of 1998); b) investment in training is mandated by the SDLA (No. 9 of 1999) in order to receive rebates and funding; and c) in order for a corporate to work with government and state organisations they need to earn B-BBEE points and status through the training they provide as per the B-BBEE Amended Act (No 46. of 2013).

Skills Development, and Skills Development Levies Act.

The SDA (No. 97 of 1998) and the SDLA (No. 9 of 1999) were initially implemented by the South African post-apartheid government to increase the amount of training provided to employees, specifically Black[5] South African employees from previously disadvantaged groups. Not only do these two legal frameworks mandate training for employees, but organisations who provide evidence of training are rewarded with rebates and funding. One can therefore argue that the legislation is in fact fulfilling its objective and is responsible for the substantial monetary investments observed in this research.

While investment in training and development was an anticipated result, given that this research is located within the South African context, with its comprehensive skills legislation, the actual training budgets were higher than expected. The results indicated that the sampled corporates were allocating on average 3.3% of their

[5] According to the Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998) Black is a generic term which includes African, Coloured, Indian, and Chinese persons who are citizens of South Africa by birth or descent or became citizens of South Africa by naturalisation before April 1994.

annual compensation budget to training and development. This amount is greater than the mandatory 1% required by the skills development legislation (SDLA, No. 9 of 1999).

This higher-than-expected training spend was an encouraging result and prompted me to ask the interviewees to further unpack the rationale behind this high investment. The question was, why their corporates invested more than the legal requirement to upskill and develop employees. Interestingly, the tax rebates and funding obtainable from the South African skills legislation did not feature as the only key driver for the training investment decisions. Instead, the importance of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and its influence on training and development practices was another dominant theme among interviewees.

Black Economic Empowerment.

The term BEE is technically known as Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) although the terms are used interchangeably. Like the SDA (No. 97 of 1998) and the SDLA (No. 9 of 1999), the B-BBEE Amended Act (No. 46 of 2013) aims to a) facilitate the participation of Black South Africans in the country's mainstream economy, and in so doing b) advance the economic transformation of these individuals. South African organisations are required to attain equitable representation across all levels in organisation as well as increase Black ownership and/or management of the enterprise. Organisations that fulfil these obligations earn B-BBEE points and achieve B-BBEE compliance, which means the enterprise can do business with the Government or with any organ of the State, for example, a municipality. Based on their B-BBEE status and B-BBEE points, enterprises are also provided with preferential procurement; are able to apply for tenders, licences and concessions; can enter into public-private partnerships; and can purchase state-owned assets (B-BBEE Amended Act, No 46. of 2013). With these benefits, South African enterprises can gain a competitive advantage and grow their business.

Of specific interest to this research, organisations can increase their B-BBEE status by earning points through their training and development practices. Enterprises can earn up to 20 B-BBEE points for skills development (B-BBEE Amended Act, No 46. of 2013). Points for skills development are awarded based on:

how much training is provided to Black employees; learnerships[6], internships and apprenticeships provided to employed and unemployed Black South Africans; and most importantly training expenditure. Small to medium enterprises are targeted to spend 3% of their enterprise's annual payroll on training and development, whereas large enterprises are targeted to spend 6%.

The above information on B-BBEE provides support for why the training expenditure observed was on average 3.3% of annual payroll. This statistic is in line with the overall expenditure target set by the B-BBEE Amended Act (No 46. of 2013). Given the benefits of B-BBEE compliance it also supports why organisations use BEE as a key rationale guiding their commitment to and investment in training and development.

The emphasis on training provision for compliance reasons, as opposed to a real investment in human capital development, could explain why there is a lack of training evaluation observed in the country and why corporates do not devote time and money to ensure that training is evaluated. The responses from the interviewees indicated that training was a routine, operational function. They trained because they had to. What was deemed important by the sample was not whether training outcomes had been achieved, but rather that they were able to grow their B-BBEE status through the provision of training and that they had complied with the skills legislation mandate.

If corporates are training predominantly for compliance purposes, then training will not be viewed as a strategic business practice but rather as a cost (Abernathy, 1999). In these circumstances, it is somewhat intuitive that training evaluation would be viewed as unnecessary and seen as an additional cost. This, thus, supports the lack of engagement in training evaluation amongst the sample.

[6] Learnerships are work-based training and development programmes. An individual is appointed into an occupation and is provided with on-the-job training to become qualified in that field of work. Learnerships commonly range from six months to three years depending on the occupation and skill. Permanent employment is not guaranteed after the learnerships conclude, but they help to graduate qualified individuals into the industry and in so doing respond to the country's skills shortages.

2) The absence of a strategic training lens.

Only two of the interviewees referred to a learning culture existing in their corporate. In these corporates, the importance of individual learning and its ability to enhance organisational learning and influence the achievement of strategic objectives was acknowledged. The overall impression portrayed, however, in Phase Two was that training was not viewed as a strategic practice.

Traditionally, the provision of training was based on reactive training needs with the objective of bridging the skills deficits of employees and as such improving individual job performance (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013; Erasmus et al., 2015; Karim et al., 2012). While the interviewees discussed their performance management systems and how these were used to inform the training needs of individual employees, none of them stressed the importance of this HR process. The relationships between training, individual learning, and performance were not mentioned. Thus, amongst this sample of South African corporates, the learning and performance development reasons to train and the importance of training for strategic purposes were not explicitly apparent.

In a recently published local training and development textbook, Botha and du Plessis (2017, p. 257-258) listed the following reasons for why organisations dedicate time and money to the continual training and development of staff:

- The job knowledge and skills of employees improves
- Employees are developed for future positions
- It can lead to improved profitability and/or better customer service
- The morale of employees is improved and employee turnover is reduced
- The image of the organisation is enhanced
- Interpersonal relationships are further improved
- It contributes to organisational development
- It contributes to increased productivity and quality of work
- It reduces costs and wastage because of more efficient work practices
- The organisational climate is improved
- Employees can adjust more readily to change

- A positive climate for growth and communication is created.

Similar lists are found in most training textbooks (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013; Bhattacharyya, 2015; Coetzee et al., 2012; Erasmus et al., 2015; Noe, 2016). Upon reviewing this and other lists, it is evident that the ideas of organisational learning, innovation, knowledge generation and sharing, and competitive advantage are absent. In my opinion, the strategic human resource development lens is missing from these lists. This lens and the way training is framed has implications for how organisations may view the importance of training. With a lack of acknowledgement that training can contribute to HR's role as a strategic partner, the likelihood of training evaluation being practised is weakened.

Griffon (2014) explained that the failure of an organisation to carry out training evaluation carries the risk that training functions will continue to have low status in an organisation. Results from this research suggest that this is already the case amongst the corporates included in this sample. Without being able to show the contribution and impact that training has had on the learning and business outcomes, corporates will be unable to recognise the actual worth of training. Thus, the value of training and development to bring about individual learning, organisational learning and change will not be fully understood. Likewise, without engaging in training evaluation, the opportunities for learning and growth are minimised. Corporates could be benefiting from practising training evaluation and using the evaluation feedback to support and enhance training practice and organisational learning. There is something sadly wasteful about this… This is an opportunity lost.

3) Misalignment between theory and contextual reality.

Berge (2008) argued that the evaluation of impact is required by most organisations so that the learning and development department can show the effects that training has had on business profits. Given the amount of money being spent on training, it is sensible to think that the South African corporates sampled would want to know the impact of their investments. According to the interviewees, however, the need to prove accountability for monies spent and being able to show how training

has impacted the organisation was not required by their executive management. Similarly, the previously mentioned HRD or training and development textbooks propose the ideal way to conduct training evaluation to ascribe causality from intervention to performance improvement, but this is also not seemingly important.

Without a mandate for training evaluation, the practice is reliant on the perceptions held by individuals within the organisation as well as the drive from executive management to engage in systematic and objective training evaluation. The HR executives interviewed, however, did not hold training evaluation in high regard. Instead, training evaluation was viewed as a waste of time and ROI was deemed nonsense in several of the corporates sampled.

These negative opinions and perceptions stem from the fact that the HR executives viewed the theoretically positioned training evaluation practices as impossible to perform within their corporate environments. In the sampled corporates there was insufficient budget, employees already had high workloads and training evaluation would add to this overburden, there was insufficient time, and a lack of training evaluation knowledge and/or competencies. Thus, the methods, approaches and models of training evaluations as prescribed in theory, do not take the highly demanding South African corporate environment into account, nor the factors that hinder these corporates from engaging in training evaluation. The way that training evaluation is conceptualised and operationalised in the textbooks reviewed reveals a disconnect between theory and contextual reality.

Even though training was provided predominantly for legislative compliance, training was usually not viewed strategically, and the systematic, theoretical training evaluation methodologies were not practiced, it is important to note that the corporates sampled have not disregarded measurement and monitoring completely. All nine corporates engaged in ad hoc activities to sporadically collect training and development data. These activities will be discussed in the next section.

Training Feedback and Reporting Activities

The sampled South African corporates use idiosyncratic mechanisms and methods to monitor and report on their training and development. Even though these practices: a) were not formalised; b) were not implemented consistently; and c) did

not conform to what is prescribed in academic textbooks nor follow established training evaluation models, the activities fulfilled the human resource analytics and information needs of the corporates. Thus, the different mechanisms can be viewed as alternative methods for the collection of training information and feedback. The activities have been integrated into business operations and this may be as good as it gets in terms of ‘training evaluation’ in the South African corporate context.

Table 14 depicts the mechanisms and techniques used by the corporates as well as the kinds of training information these techniques are intended to yield.

Table 14

Forms of Measurement and Monitoring Used by the South African Corporates Sampled

Technique used	Description	Most closely aligned to what type of evaluation data
Project work and presentations	Knowledge assessed through presentations	Learning
	Transfer of learning assessed through delivery of project work	Behaviour
Portfolios of evidence	Knowledge assessed through varied assessments	Learning
HR metrics	Indirectly linking organisational outcomes to the provision of training	Outcome
360 Degree feedback	Changes in trainees are assessed by employees themselves, subordinates, peers and superiors	Behaviour
Attendance registers	Provides company with information on number of employees trained and their demographics	N/A
Performance appraisals	Performance appraisal scores pre-training compared to those obtained after training	Learning & Behaviour
Reactions	Smile sheets occasionally collected	Reaction
Return on expectations	Whether training has met expectations	Outcome
Online technology*	Daily performance logs pre- and post-training	Behaviour
Knowledge checks	Informal knowledge tests	Learning
Line manager observations	Line managers provide feedback to HR on employee changes observed	Learning & Behaviour
Informal discussions	Informal communication between line manager and employee pre- and post-training	Reaction
Story telling	Employees share success stories of their transfer of learning	Behaviour & Outcome

*Note. Available but not currently utilised

Before I discuss the individual practices, it is important to restate the purpose of conducting evaluations. Posavac and Carey (2007) explained that evaluations are conducted to investigate whether individuals were serviced based on their needs identified. From a training perspective, this would refer to whether the identified training needs of employees have been responded to using a training and development intervention (Kumpikaitė, 2007). Data emanating from the training evaluation should provide evidence that the training has been effective and as such has merit and worth (Alkin, 2013; Karim et al., 2012; Mann & Roberton, 1996; Weiss, 1998). The objective of the training evaluation is therefore to report on the extent to which the training has shifted a behaviour, and/or attitude towards a more desirable organisational outcome. When reflecting on the practices currently being implemented in the sampled corporates, it is worthwhile to also reflect on the extent to which the activities fulfil this purpose.

Alkin (2013) argued that essentially, evaluations are conducted because individuals need to make decisions. Nickols (2005) concurred, stating that evaluation is about making judgements. In the training evaluation context, evaluation feedback should therefore enable stakeholders to: a) determine whether a particular training intervention was the best solution to the problem identified; b) determine whether the training objectives have been achieved; c) improve a training programme; d) decide whether the programme should be continued or whether a different programme would be more suitable given the needs identified; e) determine whether the training has resulted in increased job performance; and/or f) determine return on investment (Alkin, 2013; Chen, 2005; Kraiger et al., 1993; Kumpikaitė, 2007; Mann & Robertson, 1996; Posavac & Carey, 2007; Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004; Weiss, 1998). Training evaluation, therefore, enables an organisation to understand a programme and its effects (Alkin, 2013; Weiss, 1998) and it is through this feedback that an organisation can learn and change.

It is a favourable result that the nine corporates who took part in Phase Two of this research were doing some form of post-intervention data collection. In their current form, however, the measurement and monitoring activities utilised are unlikely to provide sufficient data and evaluation feedback to enable the important decisions and conclusions listed in a) to f) in the paragraph above.

Merits of the practices used.

This section will discuss the merits of each of the practices or techniques used as well as provide suggestions for their improvement. They have been clustered under the following subheadings: archetypal training evaluation methodology; techniques that provide demonstrable data; metrics; novel mechanisms; and approaches used by line managers.

Archetypal training evaluation methodology.

The collection of reaction-level data, storytelling, and the use of 360-degree appraisal systems are three commonly cited training evaluation techniques that were used by some of the corporates sampled. Each technique is discussed in the next section.

Reaction-level data collection.

Several of the corporates reported using reactionnaires or smile sheets as a training evaluation method. Noting participants' reactions is a common training evaluation technique used globally (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 2002; Casey, 2006; Faerman & Ban, 1993; Giangreco et al., 2010; Hashim, 2001; Hung, 2010; Lee & Pershing, 2000). The feedback obtained from these smile sheets should enable an organisation to assess employee satisfaction with the training provided, however, this form of data collection does not provide information on whether the training programme has had any impact.

While reactions do not provide objective results on training effect, they can be somewhat useful for some decision-making purposes. The affective responses obtained enable an organisation to identify whether trainees perceived the training as valuable and applicable to their jobs. The responses also allow the organisation to see the general perceptions of the overall quality of the intervention. It is for these reasons that reactions are commonly used by corporates around the world because they are easily implemented and provide good initial data about the training and the training environment.

I recommend that corporates continue with this form of data collection, but that this form of data collection should not be used in isolation. The results from the reactionnaires / smile sheets should be analysed and then used to inform follow-up performance discussions with the trainees. These discussions can provide the organisation with more in-depth information about the training. This is especially important if negative responses were reported by the trainees. With this data, the organisation can learn more about the

specific training intervention as well as the learning experiences of employees when they return to work.

Storytelling.

Storytelling is a novel data collection technique that was used in two of the corporates for leadership training. Employees, identified as having increased their knowledge and engaging in learning transfer, are asked to write a training success story. These stories are shared on the companies' intranet and in newsletters. In the stories, employees recount how the training they attended helped them in their jobs. The corporates use these stories as an indication of training effectiveness for leadership training.

While, story-telling forms part of Brinkerhoff's (2003) Success Case Method (SCM), this is not a typical training evaluation method. The manner in which storytelling is used in the two corporates allows them to share positive feedback about the training, but this feedback focuses only on those who have been success. In this way it provides a somewhat skewed representation of the training.

Some adjustments to this practice could, however, result in the corporates obtaining more credible data. As opposed to a line manager identifying a successful trainee, the organisation should follow the SCM more closely. A short survey should be utilised and sent to all trainees to objectively identify both success and non-success cases (Brinkerhoff, 2003). Following this, interviews could be held with a sample of both cohorts of employees to document their stories.

These corporates could also use the logic of the SCM to elicit more training evaluation data from the success cases. In this way, the focus of the story is not only on the employee's success but on how the training specifically contributed to and played a role in their successful individual learning. Using the logic of the SCM technique would also provide information on non-success cases. This information was not collected as part of the storytelling process in these two corporates. Brinkerhoff (2003) argues that important training and training evaluation data can be obtained from non-success cases. Thus, it would be more helpful for organisations to focus on both successful and non-successful trainees.

Analysis of both cohorts of trainees is necessary to obtain an overall picture of the training, the organisation's learning culture and the organisational learning environment.

This more balanced information could then be used for organisational learning. Through these adjustments, the corporates would have more useful information about what works, what doesn't, and for whom. All this information can be used for decision-making about both the intervention and the necessary changes required within the organisation to encourage and facilitate learning.

I also suggest that as opposed to sporadic data collection, the practice of the SCM should be implemented after a high-level training intervention has been completed, for example, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme. The corporate could identify which programmes they wish to use this technique for, formalise the data collection and give the responsibility to perform the approach to the line managers.

360-Degree feedback systems.

360-Degree feedback systems were cited as a mechanism used to evaluate the effectiveness of leadership training and development. The 360-degree feedback appraisal system is used to measure behavioural outcomes of training and is well-cited in the literature. During Phase Two of this research, it was reported that this technique was used by some of the corporates to ascertain whether leaders' behaviours had changed upon returning to work after completing a leadership intervention.

360-Degree feedback systems are usually conducted over time, which provides the corporate with longitudinal data that can be analysed. This methodology does not produce data that can be analysed for causality, that is, it does not have the capacity to confirm that the training resulted in the observed changes in behaviour. However, inferences can be made, and data can be obtained about changes in leadership behaviours pre- and post-training.

The 360-degree appraisal should be designed to assess the competencies that the leadership training ought to have improved. Based on feedback from the 360-degree system, a follow up interview could be held with the leader, where the results are discussed. Specifically, one could look at the areas where great improvement is observed and ask the leader to what extent the training influenced these results. This feedback can supplement the hard data from the 360 and provide some details about the role that the intervention played.

As with storytelling, corporates are already using the 360-degree technique, but adjusting their current practices will enable more meaningful data to be obtained. The

corporates who utilise the 360-degree feedback system do not use it consistently. I suggest that this method be standardised as part of the training cycle. Ensuring that a pre-360-degree appraisal is conducted will enable more robust pre- and post-training outcome comparisons to be made and this provides more credible data on the effectiveness of the training programme. The analysis of this data provides feedback on the training intervention from which the corporates can learn.

Techniques that provide demonstrable data.

Portfolios of evidence (PoEs) and performance management systems were two mechanisms used by some of the sampled corporates to provide demonstrable data on changes in programme participants. Similarly, online technology systems were set up in two of the corporates in order to collect demonstrable performance data, although these systems were not utilised. Each of these mechanisms is discussed below.

Portfolios of evidence.

PoEs are often used for training and development interventions as a way of assessing learning. In South Africa, PoEs form part of mandatory and technical training interventions regulated by a Skills Education and Training Authority (SETA)[7]. While they are not a traditional training evaluation method, the formative and summative assessments included in PoEs are designed to assess knowledge gained from the training provided. These assessments either take the form of theory-based questions the employees must answer, or application-based questions where employees need to apply their new knowledge to their workplace setting.

To complete the various assessments, employees must have the requisite knowledge and it is assumed that this knowledge is gained in the training. These corporates could, however, use the PoEs in a more experimental or creative way. For example, a corporate could gain more meaningful data if the submissions from the PoEs were assessed against previous work submitted by the employee. This would provide comparative data which could be used to demonstrate behavioural change of the employee. The analysis is unable to conclude a training effect, and as such should not be

[7] SETA's implement and monitor skills and development training within their particular industry. Training providers must be accredited with the authority for individuals to obtain National Qualification credits for the courses they successfully complete.

used as the only mechanism to obtain feedback about the training. However, using PoEs in this way can provide a narrative, and supplementary results to other more formalised training evaluation approaches. Through relatively minor adjustments to this already established practice, more evaluation-type data could be obtained to infer the substantive results from the training programme.

Performance management system.

One interviewee described how their performance management system was used to assess employee performance after training. The corporate assumed that an increased score in the appraisal was an indication that the employee had likely increased their knowledge and was applying this learning to their job. Alternatively, if there had been no improvement in the appraisal ratings, it might prompt the corporate to investigate the effectiveness of the training programme. These performance evaluation appraisal scores do not provide training evaluation data. Instead they are a possible proxy indicator for trainee learning. They are, however, unable to link the training intervention to the increased knowledge.

Performance appraisals form part of standard HR practice that takes place in most corporates once or twice a year. Given that these meetings are already set up, a corporate could encourage line managers to document the qualitative responses about the training programmes that were attended. This data coupled with the performance appraisal scores could be used to infer possible effects of a training programme (but these cannot be used as causal conclusions about the training). The use of qualitative responses during the performance review could enable the corporate to learn more about the training programmes provided to the employees. This feedback could aid decision-making and highlight changes needed to the training's design or implementation and/or how the employee's learning can be further supported when they return to work.

Online technology systems.

Results from Phase Two indicated that two corporates had online technology systems which tracked the daily performance logs of most of their employees. With this continual data collection, these corporates could compare the performance of employees pre- and post-training to determine whether employee performance has improved. Like the performance appraisal scores, the comparison data cannot conclude training effectiveness, but could be used as a supplementary approach to training evaluation.

While the systems enable comparisons to be made, neither of the corporates use the data collected. The lack of will or interest to use the systems is directly aligned to the fact that the senior leadership did not require it. This is therefore viewed as a missed opportunity for the corporates to obtain data on possible employee learning.

Coupled with other measures, corporates could learn a great deal from the data of these online technology systems, if there was a willingness to engage and do more. The interviewees reported, however, that because top management did not require these results, line managers would not analyse the data. This is a sad reality because of the lost opportunity for potential learning and for continual improvement. Lack of management support is a commonly cited reason in the literature for why training evaluation doesn't take place (See Table 10 in Chapter Four: The Practice of Training Evaluation Around the Globe).

Metrics.

Two of the methods reported by interviewees aligned to typical metrics that were used in most corporates, namely, HR metrics and attendance reports.

HR metrics.

HR metrics, such as the number of promotions, the results of climate surveys, and retention statistics were used by some of the corporates as an indicator of training effectiveness. Executives within these corporates believed that if the results of the HR metrics improved each year, the training that the company provided may have influenced this improvement. Abernathy (1999) explained that it is common practice for corporates to link training to business results like customer satisfaction, employee retention, company performance, and employee satisfaction.

While these measures cannot directly show causality of the training implemented, they could be used differently to extract more objective data about the training's influence and effect. HR metrics and analytics are embedded as part of business practice, but they could be used in a more sophisticated way for training evaluation purposes. For example, one could cluster employees into two groups: those who went on a training intervention and those who did not. The number of promotions could then be compared between the two groups. One cannot conclude that the training led to the promotions observed, but if more promotions were obtained by employees who underwent training, the corporate may

infer from the data that the training likely played a role, or at the very least that a relationship existed between training attended and promotion. This approach utilises an HR metric already in place but analyses the data more creatively and links it to training.

Another example is a corporate's climate survey. These are conducted as part of generating HR analytics. The survey could, however, have a section dedicated to the perceptions of training provided. In this way, one can investigate the extent to which training may have influenced the overall climate in the corporate.

Attendance registers.

Attendance registers were discussed as a form of training evaluation. While this is not an evaluation method, it was a form of monitoring used by the corporates to assess how many employees had been trained, how often, and what their demographics were. This kind of data forms part of typical monitoring and evaluation frameworks. This information was consistently collected because it formed part of the training reports that must be completed by the corporate as mandated by the SDA (No. 97 of 1998) and the SDLA (No. 9 of 1999). It is important to note, however, a corporate cannot learn from this data nor obtain information about training effectiveness.

Novel mechanisms.

Two novel methods were reported by interviewees that were used to assess employee knowledge and behaviour changes, namely, project work and presentations, and Return on Expectations (ROE). These are discussed below.

Project work and presentations.

The data analysed showed that in five corporates, once an employee returned to work after a leadership intervention, they were given the opportunity to lead a project team. Upon completion of the project, these individuals were required to prepare a presentation for the board of executives in their corporate. As part of the presentation, the trained leader had to discuss what they did and the outcomes that had been achieved. Typically, the board of directors in these corporates would have had exposure to the employee and would know their strengths and weaknesses. From the presentation, the board of executives could discuss the employee's performance and the changes they believed had occurred. This assessment allowed them to speculate whether or not the employee likely learnt from the leadership training and whether they had transferred that

knowledge to their project. Thus, the technique aimed to provide anecdotal evidence on the effectiveness of the leadership training and development.

There are some limitations with this method. Firstly, the board of executives could not confirm that the training was responsible for the perceived knowledge and behavioural changes. No training evaluation approach can conclude causality. At the same time, while these individuals led the project, they worked in teams. Thus, the success of the project could not be attributed to the trained employee alone. This limitation links to the first in that one is unable to delineate what influence the actual training had on the employee and the project. Lastly, the presentation was subjective and was based on what the employee portrayed. Thus, the board of executives relied on what the employee inferred that they received from training instead of a more objective data source.

Despite these limitations, I consider this to be an interesting and worthwhile practice. It is a novel way to share information and the outcomes of projects. It brings various stakeholders together and the emergent leaders get exposure to the board of executives. At the same time, the executives gain a sense of whether the leadership training and development programme is likely to be effective. It provides an opportunity for more than one executive to review the leader and give their opinions on the knowledge and behavioural changes of the individual.

This approach could be modified to extract more nuanced training evaluation-type feedback. For instance, as part of the presentation, the board of executives could ask the leader to discuss how the training they attended was used during the project, whether any challenges were encountered, and how the training could be improved based on the project experience and what they learned. This feedback could then produce more valuable information on the actual training which the corporate could learn from and use for decision-making purposes.

Return on expectation.

ROE was another novel data collection method that emerged in the analysis of the data. ROE was used by four of the corporates in the sample. When an organisational objective is achieved, executives and top managers estimate the extent to which training contributed to the attainment of this expectation. This return on expectation is documented as a percentage. For example, if the corporate has increased their sales by 20% over a

year, executives may attribute 12% of the increase to the training and development that they provided to their employees.

These ROE percentages were estimations made by executive management, so no objective data informed the decision. Thus, this approach produced no evaluation feedback regarding the actual impact of training. The advantage of the ROE appraisal, however, is that through the allocation of these percentages HR is given acknowledgement and the importance of training and its role in helping to meet business objectives is highlighted. This enabled some form of accountability for the HR departments and their training function, and as such supports the notion of HR as a strategic partner in the corporate.

Approaches used by line managers.

Knowledge checks, observations and informal discussions emerged as approaches used to elicit evaluation-type feedback by line managers. These are discussed below.

Knowledge checks.

Knowledge checks are an informal on-the-job technique utilised by line managers at their own discretion and involves them questioning employees following their return from training. The aim of this technique is to assess whether the employee has learnt new knowledge from the training. The line manager will then informally report to HR about whether they believe the training was successful or not.

This practice appeared to be taking place in a number of the sampled corporates where it was reported that line managers observed their employees when they returned to work and also informally reported back to HR on whether they had witnessed changes in knowledge or behaviour of the trained employees. These are subjective observations conducted sporadically and are thus not credible results of the training, but they do present an opportunity to elicit data about the individual's learning (even if subjective) in an accessible and timely fashion, with little effort.

Informal discussions.

Like the knowledge checks, line managers in all the sampled corporates were encouraged to have informal discussions with employees before and after training. The purpose of these discussions pre-training is for employees to state their expectations of

the training. After training, a follow-up conversation should take place between the line manager and the employee to assess whether the training met the objectives expected. These conversations are not formalised but line managers are expected to relay the information back to HR.

With these techniques there is the potential to get more meaningful training data that can be used to foster learning. For example, observations could be made mandatory and line managers could be required to use a checklist before and after training. The results could then be compared and inferences about the training could be made more objectively.

Likewise, the pre- and post-training discussions could be encouraged as best practice. Line managers could be made responsible for documenting these and writing a report after the post-training discussion is held with the employee. Making these adjustments would provide more useful data from which a corporate could learn. Given that these are subjective data collection methods, however, it is important that these are used as supplementary approaches to other, more typical training evaluation methods.

Overall assessment of the corporate activities.

Reflecting on these various activities, it is important to determine the extent to which they enable the corporates to make the kinds of decisions and judgements described by Alkin (2013) and Nickols (2005). Ideally, the activities should enable a corporate to judge the merit and worth of their training interventions, obtain feedback on individual and organisational learning, and/or provide reliable information that can be used for decision making and change. Each technique described above has been assessed to determine whether the data collected can enable these functions. A summary of this analysis is shown in Table 15.

Table 15

The Judgements and Decisions Possible Through the Training Feedback and Reporting Activities in Their Current Form

Technique used	Corporate can speculate / use data to determine whether the:
Reactions	Training programme requires improvement
Story telling	Training objectives were achieved
	Training resulted in increased performance
360-degree feedback	Training objectives were achieved
	Training resulted in increased performance
Portfolios of Evidence	Training objectives were achieved
	Training resulted in increased performance
Performance appraisals	Training resulted in increased performance
Online technology	Training resulted in increased performance*
HR metrics	N/A
Attendance registers	N/A
Project work and presentations	Training objectives were achieved
	Training resulted in increased performance
Return on expectations	N/A
Knowledge checks	Training objectives were achieved
Line manager observations	Training objectives were achieved
	Training resulted in increased performance
Informal discussions	Training objectives were achieved
	Training resulted in increased performance

*Note: Available but not currently utilised

Overall, after reviewing these activities, the following is evident:

i.) The processes are generally not formalised and thus the information or data obtained is not documented. Additionally, some of the practices are heavily reliant on the commitment of the line manager to engage with their employees and provide the feedback obtained to HR;

ii.) The techniques are not implemented consistently. HR personnel and line managers decide sporadically when to use the various techniques. As such, data is not always collected;

iii.) Very few activities make use of objective data collection measures. Relying on subjective data and the opinions of data providers may not produce reliable evaluation data; and

iv.) In their current form, the techniques used may not enable the corporate to make valid decisions about the training provided nor the training environment.

To counter some of these limitations, I have suggested ways in which these practices could be performed differently. These relatively minor adjustments may enable the corporate to obtain more meaningful data on training results, which provides a defensible story that the training is beneficial (Brinkerhoff, 2003). Additionally, the feedback can be used to assess individual and organisational learning and identify where change is required to improve the learning processes. Understanding what practices have been used by corporates most recently has implications for how training evaluation could be changed to engender more meaningful engagement with it.

Implications of the Results of This Research and Recommendations for Future Practice: A New Era of Training Evaluation

Given the apparent disinterest in, and resistance to, traditional training evaluation recorded in this thesis, I suggest that a shift in how researchers, theorists, academics and practitioners conduct training evaluation is needed. As researchers, we need to rethink the practice so that there is an increased likelihood that some form of training evaluation takes place and the data obtained can be used to maximise individual and organisational learning.

The need for a shift in training evaluation practice is a sentiment shared by Griffon (2014), who argues that the nature of learning has changed over the past 30 years. As such, the training evaluation models and methods are outdated and do not fit the current organisational learning and training environments in modern workplaces. In his textbook 'Complete training evaluation' Griffon (2014) calls for a change to the traditional training evaluation methods. It was encouraging considering the results from this research, yet as I progressed through his textbook, I found variations of the traditional training evaluation methods. Ultimately, the chapters involved how to assess reactions, transfer of learning, and training outcomes from trainees who have gone on training. Although framed differently, Griffon's (2014) textbook is still too close to the traditional training evaluation methods. There was no radical shift in the practises proposed.

Other researchers have also argued that the way we conduct evaluation needs to change (Abernathy, 1999; Berge, 2008; Giangreco et al., 2010) but there has been little advancement here. One of the contributions of this research has been the identification of a set of activities that have most recently been, and are likely still being, used in our national context and how these activities could be enhanced to improve the information they provide on individual and organisational learning. This information provides a basis for future research. Researchers need to assess on a larger scale what corporates are doing and use this data to formulate new methodologies or training evaluation designs that easily map on to current business processes. The results from this research dictate that the defined training evaluation should not be stringent designs, but rather easily implemented practices that are good enough and that take the corporate environment into account. The proposed approaches also cannot be too demanding or expensive otherwise executives will choose to ignore the practice.

The redesigned training evaluation approaches should not be limited to investigating an intervention and the changes in the employees who attended the programme. They should be more holistic. For example, academics and HRD researchers should encourage the collection of useful data about the training climate, context and trends, whether employees are motivated to learn, the extent to which employees share knowledge once back at work, and whether the organisation's learning culture and practices enable transfer of learning to take place (Griffon, 2014). They should also encourage the collection of data about what barriers to learning exist, what helps facilitate individual learning and transfer, and how the learning and development function in the organisation has contributed to the achievement of organisational objectives (Griffon, 2014). This would ensure that the training evaluation feedback ties into the concept of organisational learning and would provide information on the extent to which learning at both the individual and organisational level is taking place. The value of this feedback could then also prompt corporates to investigate individual training programmes and their outcomes. Engaging in both the evaluation of training interventions as well as the evaluation of the training climate and environment would therefore support and facilitate organisational learning.

For an organisation to engage in the full cycle of organisational learning, individual learning is a necessary first step. Individual knowledge acquisition (Huber, 1991) and knowledge generation (Pawlowsky, 2001) are cited as the initial processes of

organisational learning, with training being the commonly used mechanism for employees to acquire these new skills and knowledge (Farjad, 2012). The high commitment of the South African corporates to provide learning opportunities and invest in training is therefore a positive result of this thesis. Thus, the South African corporates sampled are completing the first step in the organisational learning cycle through the provision of training and development opportunities to their employees.

Contribution to New Knowledge

This thesis has provided an audit on the current training spend and training evaluation practices in corporate South Africa. The research has also emphasised the disparities between academic and business practice in corporate South Africa. Typically, theory informs practice, but I have argued that practice and, more specifically, context should inform the development of new training evaluation methodologies for the South African corporate environment. If researchers, theorists and academics want corporates to engage in this important training and business function, we must work with what people are doing in their HR environments and find solutions to enable them to extract greater understanding about and meaning from the training they provide.

The idea that training evaluation results are helpful and useful is undeniable, and the fact that people are not doing it doesn't negate the necessity of the practice. If we can better integrate training evaluation with current practices, it could shift the perspective that training evaluation is important and initiate engagement.

We cannot continue to punt traditional training methods in the hope that someday this will find receptive ears and corporates will begin to engage. Instead, we need to think critically about the changes needed in the field.

Conclusion

In his book, *The Evaluation Society*, Dahler-Larsen (2012) recounted how the practice of evaluation has become a common and integrated administrative process in many institutions in the USA and Europe. In South Africa, programme evaluation is a relatively well-established field within non-profit organisations, and public and government enterprises. Organisations in these contexts are increasingly having to evaluate their interventions in order to be more accountable for their work as well as secure funding from local and international donors (Boodhoo, 2017). Although there is generally a growing

interest in evaluation, this research established how little is known about the local practices of training evaluation in corporate contexts, which is a sub-category of programme evaluation.

This thesis confirmed that there has been limited recent research conducted to determine whether corporate organisations in South Africa implement evaluations to determine the merit and worth of their training and development interventions. In addition, little was publicly known about the extent to which organisations maximise their learning potential by engaging in training evaluation and using evaluation data as an important feedback loop to enhance individual learning, organisational learning and change. It is in this knowledge vacuum that this study makes a contribution.

After individual learning has been obtained via training, the conceptualisation and distribution of this learning to other members in the organisation increases the likelihood of organisational learning (De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Huber, 1991; Kim, 1993; Levitt & March, 1988; Lipshitz et al., 2007; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000). When the learning is shared and collective action is taken to change organisational mental models and routines, organisational learning has occurred. Thus, training is not only an important business function to increase individual knowledge, but organisational knowledge and learning too (Curado, 2006; Oliver, 2009). When employee's competencies are enhanced and the transfer of learning occurs, increased performance, innovation and competition are likely follow-on business results (Curado, 2006; De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Tucker et al., 2002; Oliver, 2009; Pemberton & Stonehouse, 2000).

South African corporates will continue to invest in training and development because they are legally required to do so. However, a mind shift is needed so that these corporates conduct some form of training evaluation, and as such engage in organisational learning. To ensure that the training they do provide is not a wasted investment, the corporates should be evaluating their training and development efforts. The commitment to training, learning and development is already established, but a great deal more could be done with training evaluation data to advance the current skills development of staff.

With enhanced learning capacity, South African corporates can respond quickly to changes in their internal and external environments, and in so doing the corporate is able to grow, remain productive and effective, and thus increase their competitive advantage (Casey, 2006; Clifford & Thorpe, 2006; De Holan & Phillips, 2004; Pemberton &

Stonehouse, 2000; Ross et al., 1995; Schwandt & Marquadt, 2000; Song & Chermack, 2008). The growth of an organisation is, therefore, largely dependent on how much individual learning takes place among the employees (Ross, 1995). Organisations that are committed to individual learning and foster an environment that supports individual learning should achieve enhanced company performance and as a result should learn faster than their competitors (Torres, 1994). But it is only through continual learning, feedback and change, that organisations can reap the benefits of individual learning and improve their learning capacity (Schwandt & Marquadt, 2000). Therefore, training evaluation must be practised so that corporates are not only able to assess the effectiveness of their training programmes, but also the extent to which their environment fosters organisational learning and growth.

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Appendix A: South Africa's Legal Frameworks

South Africa has comprehensive skills legislation that not only mandates training for employees, but also rewards organisations who train. The implementation of the skills legislation was as a result of the country's history. Given that this research will be read by non-South Africans this appendix outlines the South African apartheid era, specifically highlighting the inequalities in education and training during that time. This knowledge is necessary to gain an understanding of a) why the training legislation was established, and b) how these legal frameworks influence monetary investment in training and development in the country.

South Africa's Current Challenges

South Africa is faced with a number of social and economic ills, one of the most pressing being the acute shortage of skilled personnel in the formal sector and the high unemployment rates in the rural and informal sectors (Burger, Steenekamp, Zoch, & van der Berg, 2017; Dugger, 2010; Erasmus et al., 2015). The previous apartheid government laws, specifically those related to education and training, are one source of these problems (Burger et al., 2017; Daniels, 2007).

Education and training pre-1994.

The racial division of labour and unequal level of skills development is a legacy of the apartheid era which was synonymous with discrimination and inequality in the economic, social and political domains (Daniels, 2007; Davies, 1996; Dolamo, 2006; Enslin & Pendlebury, 1998; Fiske & Ladd, 2004; Ka'Choeu, 1991; Lemon, 2004; Loots, 1997; Newman, Maruno, Hunt, & Bing, 2008; Seekings, 2008; Twalo, 2010). South African legislation, pre-1994, created racial divide due to the country's laws serving White interests only. The economic, educational, and political policies during this time (1948 - 1994) advantaged the White population in an attempt for the Afrikaner government to maintain power and suppress opposition from other population groups (Akoojee, Gewer, & McGrath, 2005; Davies, 1996; Fiske & Ladd, 2004; Kallaway 2002). Essentially the education and training laws implemented during this time aimed to create a high-skilled

White population and a low-skilled Black[8] population. The discrimination during apartheid resulted in the Black youth having poor quality education and Black employees having few to no development opportunities (Chang, 1998).

The education system under apartheid rule promoted unequal rights between White and Black learners. This resulted in inferior education being provided to the Black population as well as disadvantages in terms of opportunities (Akoojee, et al., 2005; Davies, 1996; Dolamo, 2006; Enslin & Pendlebury, 1998; Fiske & Ladd, 2004; Kallaway 2002; Ka'Choeu, 1991; Lemon, 2004; Loots 1997; Luthuli, 1982; Twalo, 2010; van der Berg, 2007). Resources were provided to White-only schools while Black populated schools received limited funding, had under qualified teachers and no teaching aids (books and stationary) (Fiske & Ladd 2004; Luthuli, 1982; van der Berg, 2007). The government justified these inequalities by arguing that a Black South African's sole purpose was to be a labourer in either the mining, domestic, or farming industries (Fiske & Ladd 2004) and therefore Government took the stance that these learners did not need quality education. As such, the Bantu Education System which was developed for Black learners taught the Black population about the Afrikaner culture and focused on producing subservient labourers for the country (Dugger, 2010; Pavlich & Others, 1993). As a result of the Bantu education system Black learners were further disadvantage in terms of employment and career opportunities after their schooling. This legacy and its resulting consequences still remain an issue in the country today.

Similar to the educational injustices of apartheid, Black workers were seldom provided with developmental opportunities in the workplace (Cooper, Andrew, Grossman, & Vally, 2002). During apartheid, vocational training and development opportunities for employees were based on race classification (Newman et al., 2008). Black workers were denied access to interventions which aimed to increase skills and knowledge (Cooper, et al., 2002) while White workers were afforded development opportunities (Loots, 1997).

[8] According to the Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998) Black is a generic term which includes African, Coloured, Indian, and Chinese persons who are citizens of South Africa by birth or descent or became citizens of South Africa by naturalisation before April 1994.

The outcome of both the education and training inequities of apartheid resulted in the Black population being severely disadvantaged and these effects are still observed today. Seven percent of the economically active population is illiterate, half of South African citizens are living in poverty-stricken areas with poor services, there is an under supply of skilled workers, an oversupply of semi-skilled workers and more than one quarter of the South African workforce is unemployed (Daniels, 2007; Dugger, 2010; Erasmus et al., 2015). The skills shortage is a direct result of the supply of labourers in South Africa not meeting the demand for skilled labour. Majority of the economically active population in South Africa lacks the necessary skills, qualifications and experience to apply for high-skilled jobs (Daniels, 2007).

In order to address the skills shortage and achieve social and economic growth, the post-apartheid South African government fore-grounded education and training as significant areas requiring attention by implementing legal frameworks to govern these (Chang, 1998; Erasmus et al., 2015). The following section will, however, focus specifically on how training was reformed and institutionalised, proving support for why South African corporates are investing in training and development.

A focus on training post-1994.

In 1994, The National Training Strategy Initiative (NSTI) was developed as a framework to begin to address the inherent problems of the South African workforce, namely poverty, poor education, lack of quality training, and unemployment (Lagetan, 2007). This strategy aimed to enhance the skills and abilities of South African employees by: promoting equal access to training and development opportunities; proposing a levy grant system for training; establishing sectoral education and training authorities and highlighting the need for learnerships[9] (Akoojee et al., 2005). The NTSI was used to develop the Skills Development Act (SDA) (No. 97 of 1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA) (No. 9 of 1999) (Daniels, 2007, Grawitzky, 2007; Meyer, Mabaso, Lancaster, & Nenungwi, 2004). These two statutory laws are the current legislative frameworks that govern training and development in South Africa. The purpose of this

[9] Learnerships are work-based training and development programmes. An individual is appointed into an occupation and is providing with on-the-job training to become qualified in that field of work. They commonly range from six months to three years depending on the occupation and skill. Permanent employment is not guaranteed after the learnership concludes, but they help to graduate qualified individuals into the industry and in so doing respond to skills shortages.

training legislation is to grow the level of investment in training and development, up skill the South African workforce, increase the possibility of employment prospects of South Africans, and as such respond to the unemployment and poverty related problems in the country (Horwitz, 1999; Lategan, 2007).

The Skills Development Act and the Skills Development Levies Act.

The SDA (No. 97 of 1998) and the SDLA (No. 9 of 1999) were implemented because they directly respond to Government's intention to address the skills shortages in the country. Together, this legislation aims to build an active labour market (Meyer et al., 2004). The SDA (No. 97 of 1998) encourages employers to invest in training and development and in so doing up skill their current workforce and improve the employment prospects of previously disadvantaged South Africans (van Dyk, Nel, Loedolff & Haasbroek, 2002; Meyer et al, 2004). The Act aims to encourage employers to use the workplace as a learning environment where employees are able to increase their knowledge and acquire new skills in order to be more productive (SDA, 1998). As mandated by the SDA (No. 97 of 1998), South African corporates are required to produce and submit annual workplace skills plans for their employees. These plans articulate what training and development interventions the organisation will be investing in and what other strategies will be employed to up skill employees. Not only should this mandate result in the enhancement of skills within the South African labour force, but the previously disadvantaged should be given preference to learning and development opportunities. These individuals would thus be able to increase their employability, enter the labour market, earn money and improve their quality of life (SDA, 1998).

In order to further increase the amount of monetary investment in training and development the SDLA (No. 9 of 1999) was implemented. This Act incentivises employers to train and up skill their workers. All employers (except those exempted) have to pay a skill levy every month. The amount paid usually equates to 1% of the organisation's monthly payroll. Employers, who establish, implement, and report on the progress of their workplace skills plan qualify for a refund on the levy paid and/or to apply for grants for future training and development initiatives in the organisation (Meyer et al., 2004).

As a result of these two legal frameworks organisations are making large investments to develop skilled employees within their respective workplaces and industries.

Appendix B: Blanchard, Thacker, & Way's (2000) Training Evaluation Questionnaire (p.303)

Does your Organization have a formal training program in place?
1. No
2. Yes

If **yes**, to the above question please complete the following four questions.

What types of training programs are available? (Check all those applicable)

- ☐ Management
- ☐ Organisational specific
- ☐ Technical (job related)
- ☐ General skill
- ☐ Personal improvement

What level of employee is training programs made available to? (Circle all those applicable)

1. Non-management
2. Management

For management training, at what level do you evaluate its effectiveness? (Circle all those applicable)

1. We do not evaluate training
2. We ask trainees how they feel about the training
3. We test the degree of learning after training
4. We assess the level of transfer of the learning to the job
5. We assess the impact of the training on organizational results

For non-management training, at what level do you evaluate its effectiveness? (Circle all those applicable)

1. We do not evaluate training
2. We ask trainees how they feel about the training
3. We test the degree of learning after training
4. We assess the level of transfer of the learning to the job
5. We assess the impact of the training on organizational results

Appendix C: Training Evaluation Practices in South Africa (Exploratory Survey)

Dear Respondent

Thank you for participating in this research.

Please note that this research is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time.

The survey has been designed for those individuals who work in, or closely with, the Human Resource Department in their organisation.

The aim of this questionnaire is to assess the current training evaluation practices implemented in your organisation. We have no information on what South African organisations are currently doing to evaluate their training and development efforts. It is, therefore, important to receive your responses to this questionnaire.

To incentivise your participation, all individuals who complete the survey will go into a draw to win a R1000 gift voucher of your choice.

In order to have accurate data, you are requested to answer the questionnaire honestly. The information provided will be kept confidential

The questionnaire has been approved by the Commerce Faculty's Research in Ethics Committee.

The questionnaire consists of three sections and should take 15 minutes to complete.

Please feel free to contact me (details provided below) should you have any questions.

Yours Sincerely, Carren Field
Carren.field@uct.ac.za
(021) 650 3428

SECTION A: TRAINING IN YOUR ORGANISATION

1. What percentage of the organisation's total annual budget is allocated to training and development?

2. Please estimate what your organisation's annual training and development budget is? (e.g. approximately....)

3. To what extent is your organisation committed to training?

	Not at all committed	Slightly committed	Moderately committed	Very committed	Extremely committed
.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Answer If To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Moderately committed Is Selected Or To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Very committed Is Selected Or To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Extremely committed Is Selected – then question 4

4. To what extent do the following reasons influence your organisation's commitment to training?

	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
They want employee job performance to improve	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Employees view personal development opportunities as a job benefit	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The South African training legislation mandates that training must take place (legally compliant)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
They would like to obtain rebates from the Skills Development Levies Act	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
Training is closely aligned to organisational strategy	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Employees require training for accreditation purposes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Answer If To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Moderately committed Is Selected Or To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Very committed Is Selected Or To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Extremely committed Is Selected – then question 5

5. Is there another reason influencing your organisation's commitment to training that is not listed above?

Answer If To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Not at all committed Is Selected Or To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Slightly committed Is Selected – then question 6

6. To what extent do the following reasons influence your organisation's lack of commitment to training?

	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
The organisation views other areas / functions in the business as more important	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organisation does not see any value in training and development	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organisation lacks capacity	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
The organisation lacks resources for training	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Answer If To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Not at all committed Is Selected Or To what extent is your organisation committed to training? - Slightly committed Is Selected – then question 7

7. Is there another reason influencing your organisation's lack of commitment to training that is not listed above?

8. Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My organisation conducts a thorough needs analysis before deciding on the training needs of the employees.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
My organisation views the evaluation of their training efforts as an important business practice.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There are individuals in my organisation with training evaluation competencies	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

SECTION B: TRAINING EVALUATION PRACTICES AND APPROACHES

9. Does your organisation offer management training and development programmes? E.g. leadership development, team leader training, supervisory training, MBA, etc.)

❍ No
❍ Yes

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Question 11. If Yes Is Selected continue to question 10.

10. For these management training and development programmes...

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on the trainees' reactions after a training programmes?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on the trainees' increase in knowledge as a result of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on whether the employees are transferring the learning from the training to their job?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on how the training has impacted the business?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on the return on investment of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

11. Does your organisation offer intra- organisational training and development programmes? E.g. induction, policies/procedures, diversity, team building, etc.)

❍ No
❍ Yes

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Question 13. If Yes Is Selected continue to question 12.

12. For these intra-organisational training and development programmes...

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on the trainees' reactions after a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on the trainees' increase in knowledge as a result of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on whether the employees are transferring the learning from the training to their job?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on how the training has impacted the business?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on the return on investment of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

13. Does your organisation offer technical, job specific training and development programmes? (E.g. production, finance, HR, general business management, accounting, marketing, sales, IT, etc.)

❍ No
❍ Yes

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Question 15. If Yes Is Selected continue to question 14.

14. For these technical, job specific training and development programmes...

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on the trainees' reactions after a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on the trainees' increase in knowledge as a result of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on whether the employees are transferring the learning from the training to their job?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on how the training has impacted the business?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on the return on investment of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

15. Does your organisation offer general skills training and development programmes? (E.g. communication, presentation skills, business writing, conflict management, etc.)

❍ No
❍ Yes

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Question 17. If Yes Is Selected continue to question 16.

16. For these general skills training and development programmes...

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on the trainees' reactions after a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on the trainees' increase in knowledge as a result of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on whether the employees are transferring the learning from the training to their job?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on how the training has impacted the business?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on the return on investment of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

17. Does your organisation offer personal improvement training and development programmes? (E.g. financial planning, wellness programmes, etc.)

❍ No
❍ Yes

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Question 19. If Yes Is Selected continue to question 18.

18. For these personal improvement training and development programmes...

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	I don't know
How often is data collected on the trainees' reactions after a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on the trainees' increase in knowledge as a result of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on whether the employees are transferring the learning from the training to their job?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on how the training has impacted the business?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How often is data collected on the return on investment of a training programme?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

SECTION C: YOUR PERSPECTIVES OF TRAINING EVALUATION

19. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think my organisation is doing enough in terms of evaluating their training	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Answer If Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Disagree Is Selected Or Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Strongly Disagree Is Selected – then question 20

20. To what extent do the following reasons influence your organisation's lack of training evaluation?

	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
It is not supported by top management	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There is a lack of training evaluation knowledge in my organisation	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There is insufficient time	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There is insufficient budget	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Everyone has a high work load - no one wants to take on this additional responsibility	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
Not seen to add value - if performance is increasing why evaluate further?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Answer If Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Disagree Is Selected Or Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Strongly Disagree Is Selected – then question 21

21. Is there another reason influencing your organisation's lack of training evaluation that is not listed above?

Answer If Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Agree Is Selected Or Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Strongly Agree Is Selected – then question 22

22. To what extent do the following reasons influence your organisation's rationale for evaluating their training efforts?

	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
We evaluate to obtain data on return on investment	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
We evaluate so HR can show their accountability	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Training evaluation is viewed as a good business practice	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
We use evaluation data for decision making purposes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
We use evaluation data for training programme improvement	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
We link training programmes results to our performance management system	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Answer If Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Agree Is Selected Or Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Strongly Agree Is Selected – then question 23

23. Are there other reasons why your organisation engages in training evaluation that are not listed above?

Answer If Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Neither Agree nor Disagree Is Selected – then question 24

24. To what extent did the following reasons influence your decision of a neutral response (neither agree nor disagree) to the previous question?

	Not all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
We do well evaluating some training programmes but not others	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I do not know enough about our evaluation practices to answer this question	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Not all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential
It is difficult to answer because I do not know what best practice is in order to critique whether we do enough	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Answer If Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: - Neither Agree nor Disagree Is Selected – then question 25

25. Are there other reasons for your answer "neither agree nor disagree" that are not listed above?

26. What is your opinion on the necessity / value of conducting training evaluations?

27. Please indicate which of the following HR Metrics your company makes use of. A possible example of an item for each metric is provided in brackets.

	Yes	No	I don't know
Overall workforce productivity metric (E.g. the % improvement in workforce productivity)	❍	❍	❍
Employee engagement metric (E.g. the % of employees who look forward to coming to work)	❍	❍	❍
Recruiting metric (E.g. the number of days that a key position is vacant)	❍	❍	❍

	Yes	No	I don't know
Retention metric (E.g. overall employee turnover)	❍	❍	❍
Overall HR costs metric (E.g. HR costs vs. revenue generated)	❍	❍	❍
Compensation and benefits metric (E.g. the % of employees who are satisfied with their compensation)	❍	❍	❍
Employee relations metric (E.g. the % of employees who report negative experiences in the workplace)	❍	❍	❍
Training and development metric (E.g. the % of employees who report that they are satisfied with the learning and growth opportunities provided by the organisation)	❍	❍	❍
Generalist activities metric (E.g. the % of managers who are satisfied with the HR generalists in the organisation)	❍	❍	❍
Manager satisfaction metric (E.g. the % of employees who participate in management performance assessments such as 360 degree feedback)	❍	❍	❍
Climate metric (E.g. % participation in organisational climate survey)	❍	❍	❍
Absenteeism metric (E.g. employee absenteeism rates)	❍	❍	❍

FINAL SECTION: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

I would like to conduct brief interviews with a small number of respondents from a variety of organisations based on the outcomes of this survey.
If you are willing to participate in a further follow-up interview please provide your name and contact details below:

In order for me to contact the winner of the R1000 gift voucher, please enter your email address below.

28. Please estimate how many employees are currently working for your organisation?

29. What department do you work in?

- ❍ Executive Management
- ❍ Human Resource
- ❍ Finance
- ❍ Marketing
- ❍ Production
- ❍ Sales
- ❍ IT
- ❍ Other

Answer If What department do you work in? Other Is Selected – then question 30

30. Please specify your department:

PLEASE CLICK NEXT TO SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSES
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Appendix D: 1st Ethics Approval

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Faculty of Commerce
Ethics in Research Committee

Courier: Room 2.21 Leslie Commerce Building Upper Campus University of Cape Town
Post: University of Cape Town • Private Bag • Rondebosch 7701
Email: Irwin.brown@uct.ac.za
Telephone: +27 21 650-2311
Fax No.: +27 21 689-7570

March 17, 2014

Carren Field
Management Studies

Dear Researcher

Project title:
Investigating the training evaluation practices in South Africa

This letter serves to confirm that this project as described in your submitted protocol has been approved. Please note that if you make any substantial change in your research procedure that could affect the experiences of the participants, you must submit a revised protocol to the Committee for approval.

Regards,

Harold Kincaid

Professor Harold Kincaid
Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee

Appendix E: Phase Two – Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Questions pertaining to initial survey responses:

Each interviewee was provided with a copy of their responses from the exploratory survey in Phase One and the researcher asked for more information about their responses.

Examples about the training and development responses: You said you do training, so:

- What is the nature of the training, e.g. what types of leadership training
- If you vet training providers, do you ask for evaluation results?
- What is the reason for implementing training and development? *(Researcher was interested in understanding whether the rationale for training is partly due to the Skills Development Levies Act).*
- You said training is aligned to organisational strategy – how do you achieve this?

Examples about the training evaluation responses: You said in the survey that you are evaluating, so:

- How does evaluation fit into business processes
- How does it link to HR systems
- How does it connect to performance
- How much of the evaluation data is actually being used? To what end is it being used?
- Do you use a specific evaluation model? Where does it come from? Who authorised its use?
- What is enabling training evaluation? Why is it being done?
- Who is doing the evaluations / whose responsibility is it?
- What are the levels of leadership support for training evaluation? How much / what are the levels of management buy-in?
- How does the system accommodate it? How does the system support it?
- Who is driving evaluation? Is there an HR Champion / T&D Specialist who is passionate about evaluation who says we need evidence, need to talk numbers and money?
- What is the nature of ROI culture
- What status does training evaluation give the HRD dept.?
- How often does HRD account on it (reports)?

Questions pertaining to evaluation results and use:

- What facilitates evaluation use?
- How is training evaluation applied practically in the workplace?
- Who gets the evaluation results?
- Who uses the results?
- How frequently are they used?
- How is the evaluation data used?
- Were there any barriers?
-

Questions pertaining to training evaluation and performance:

- How closely is learning linked to business and performance needs?
- Is training and the evaluation thereof directly linked to performance? How is it embedded into performance management, employee KPAs, TDPs?
- How well is training integrated with other performance systems and factors?

Questions pertaining to the feedback that is provided to the training function:

- How much learning is being achieved through evaluation?
- How much and how well is this learning applied?
- How are results integrated into business decisions?

Questions pertaining to the value of training evaluation:

The researcher then led a discussion about whether the respondent has observed merit in the practice of training evaluation. The kinds of / nature of the questions included:

- **What value has the training evaluation had?**
    - What benefits has the organisation reaped as a result of conducting training evaluations?
    - Can you assign a value to each of these benefits (monetary or otherwise)?
    - Does the benefit and value obtained outweigh the costs of conducting a training evaluation?
    - To what extent has the training evaluation provided data on whether the training current / anticipated training need has been resolved?

- **Are any of the following goals achieved through evaluation?**
    - Greater business impact from training
    - Increased capability to achieve business results from learning
    - Greater capability to meet emerging business needs

    *talk about these

General questions:

- What SETA does your organisation fall under?
    - How active is the SETA in what you do?
- How do you understand organisational learning? How do you think organisational learning happens? In what ways does an evaluation tie into this?

Appendix F: 2nd Ethics Approval

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
Igniting Knowledge and Opportunity

Ethics Approval Request for the Study entitled:

Unmasking the Unknown: Is Training Evaluation a Useful Investment For South African Corporates?

Signed by:

	Full name and signature	Date
Principal Researcher/Student: CARLEN FIELD		09/08/16

This application is approved by:

Supervisor Suki Goodman		02/08/16
Co- Supervisor	N/A	

Approved 9.08.2016

Prof U Rivett
Chair
Ethics in Research Committee
Commerce Faculty, University of Cape Town

Com Ethics_V4

Appendix G: Interview Consent Letter

Consent for Participation in Interview

I, the undersigned:

1. Have volunteered to participate in the second phase of Mrs Carren Field's doctoral research.
2. Understand that she will be interviewing me about responses provided on a survey relating to the training and training evaluation practices of my organisation.
3. Am aware that the purpose of the interview is to get more detailed information about these initial survey responses and for her to ask some further questions about our training, and evaluation practices and processes.
4. Am aware that the interview will take approximately an hour.
5. Understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time without penalty.
6. Can chose not to answer any question asked.
7. Give permission for the interview to be recorded so that the interview can be transcribed.
8. Am aware that Mrs Carren Field will hire a transcriber, but will make this individual sign a confidentiality agreement.
9. Am aware that my responses to the questions are confidential. Carren Field will not publish our organisation's name or any identifying information when writing up the results of the interview. I will also not be identified.
10. Am aware that the research has been approved by the Commerce Faculty's Ethics in Research Committee at the University of Cape Town.
11. Have read the above points, and if I had any questions these were answered to my satisfaction.
12. Have been given a copy of this consent form.
13. Understand that should I have any further questions I can contact Mrs Carren Field directly either via email (carren.field@uct.ac.za) or telephone (021 650 3428).

Interviewee's Name	Interviewee's Signature	Date
Researcher's Name	Researcher's Signature	Date

Appendix H: Confidentiality Agreement (Provided to Each Interviewee)

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

PhD in Organisational Learning and Training Evaluation

Carren Field (Researcher):

As the primary researcher I understand that I may have access to confidential information about study sites and participants. By signing this statement, I am indicating my understanding of my responsibilities to maintain confidentiality and agree to the following:

- I understand that names and any other identifying information about study sites and participants are completely confidential.
- I agree not to divulge, publish, or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons or to the public any information obtained in the course of this research project that could identify the persons who participated in the study.
- Copyrighted and company specific information that could be used by competitors or any of other for private gain will not be published.
- I understand that all information about study sites or participants obtained or accessed by me in the course of my work is confidential.
- Vignettes of each interview will be documented in the PhD in order to give the reader a sense of what training and development and training and evaluation practices are being conducted without risking the confidentiality of the company or participant.
- I understand that I am not to ask questions of study participants for my own personal information but only to the extent and for the purpose of this research project.
- I agree to notify the Commerce Ethics in Research Committee immediately should I become aware of an actual breach of confidentiality or a situation which could potentially result in a breach, whether this be on my part or on the part of another person.

_____	_____	_____
Signature of principal investigator	Date	Printed name

Appendix I: Confidentiality Agreement with Transcriber

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

PhD in Organisational Learning and Training Evaluation

Carren Field (Researcher)

On Time Transcribers (Transcriber)

As the transcriber I understand that I have access to confidential information about study sites and participants. By signing this statement, I am indicating my understanding of my responsibilities to maintain confidentiality and agree to the following:

- I understand that names and any other identifying information about study sites and participants are completely confidential.
- I agree not to divulge, publish, or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons or to the public any information obtained in the course of this research project including information that could identify the persons who participated in the study.
- I understand that all information about study sites or participants obtained or accessed is confidential.
- I agree to notify the Commerce Ethics in Research Committee immediately should I become aware of an actual breach of confidentiality or a situation which could potentially result in a breach, whether this be on my part or on the part of another person.
- I acknowledge that disciplinary action will be taken against me if I am found guilty of violating the terms of this agreement.

_Elaine Grobbelaar_____	_11/01/2017_____	_ On Time Transcribers_____
Signature of transcriber	Date	Printed name

Appendix J: Frequency Tables: Reasons for Organisations' Commitment to Training

Table J1

The Organisation Is Committed To Training Because They Want Job Performance to Improve

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	1	0.4	0.4
Slightly influential	14	5.3	5.6
Somewhat influential	32	12.0	17.7
Moderately influential	97	36.5	54.1
Extremely influential	122	45.9	100.0
Total	266		

Table J2

The Organisation Is Committed To Training Because They View Personal Development Opportunities as a Job Benefit

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	3	1.1	1.1
Slightly influential	20	7.5	8.7
Somewhat influential	68	25.7	34.3
Moderately influential	91	34.3	68.7
Extremely influential	83	31.3	100.0
Total	266		

Table J3

The Organisation Is Committed To Training Because South African Legislation Mandates That Training Take Place

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	6	2.3	2.3
Slightly influential	22	8.3	10.5
Somewhat influential	59	22.2	32.7
Moderately influential	84	31.6	64.3
Extremely influential	95	35.7	100.0
Total	266		

Table J4

The Organisation Is Committed To Training Because They Want Rebates through the Skills Development Levies Act

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	21	7.9	7.9
Slightly influential	24	9.0	16.9
Somewhat influential	54	20.3	37.2
Moderately influential	80	30.1	67.3
Extremely influential	87	32.7	100.0
Total	266		

Table J5

The Organisation Is Committed To Training Because Training Is Closely Aligned To Organisational Strategy

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	4	1.5	1.5
Slightly influential	14	5.2	6.7
Somewhat influential	50	18.7	25.4
Moderately influential	96	35.8	61.2
Extremely influential	104	38.5	100.0
Total	268		

Table J6

The Organisation Is Committed To Training Because Employees Require Training for Accreditation Purposes

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	19	7.2	7.2
Slightly influential	36	13.6	20.8
Somewhat influential	66	25.0	45.8
Moderately influential	82	31.1	76.9
Extremely influential	61	23.1	100.0
Total	264		

Appendix K: Frequency Tables: Reasons for Organisations' Lack of Commitment to Training

Table K1

The Organisation Lacks Commitment to Training Because Other Areas / Functions in the Business Are Viewed As More Important

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	1	2.8	2.8
Slightly influential	1	2.8	5.6
Somewhat influential	8	22.2	27.8
Moderately influential	10	27.8	55.6
Extremely influential	16	44.4	100.0
Total	274		

Table K2

The Organisation Lacks Commitment to Training Because No Value In Seen In Training and Development

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	7	20.6	20.6
Slightly influential	8	23.5	44.1
Somewhat influential	9	26.5	70.6
Moderately influential	5	14.7	85.3
Extremely influential	5	14.7	100.0
Total	276		

Table K3

The Organisation Lacks Commitment to Training Because the Organisation Lacks Capacity

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	3	8.3	8.3
Slightly influential	9	25.0	33.3
Somewhat influential	9	25.0	58.3
Moderately influential	9	25.0	83.3
Extremely influential	6	16.7	100.0
Total	274		

Table K4

The Organisation Lacks Commitment to Training Because the Organisation Lacks Resources for Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	9	25.0	25.0
Slightly influential	8	22.2	47.2
Somewhat influential	4	11.1	58.3
Moderately influential	6	16.7	75.0
Extremely influential	9	25.0	100.0
Total	274		

Appendix L: Frequency Tables: Management Training and Development Training Evaluation Trends

Table L1

How Often Reaction-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Management Training and Development

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	9	3.8	3.8
Rarely	28	11.9	15.7
Sometimes	42	17.9	33.6
Often	49	20.9	54.5
Always	105	44.7	99.1
I don't know	2	0.9	100.0
Total	235		

Table L2

How Often Learning-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Management Training and Development

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	16	6.8	6.8
Rarely	44	18.6	25.3
Sometimes	58	24.5	49.8
Often	55	23.2	73.0
Always	62	26.2	99.2
I don't know	2	0.8	100.0
Total	237		

Table L3

How Often Behaviour-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Management Training and Development

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	24	10.1	10.1
Rarely	57	24.1	34.2
Sometimes	50	21.1	55.3
Often	53	22.4	77.6
Always	47	19.8	97.5
I don't know	6	2.5	100.0
Total	237		

Table L4

How Often Results-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Management Training and Development

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	30	12.7	12.7
Rarely	52	21.9	34.6
Sometimes	58	24.5	59.1
Often	51	21.5	80.6
Always	38	16.0	96.6
I don't know	8	3.4	100.0
Total	237		

Table L5

How Often Return On Investment Evaluation Data Is Collected For Management Training and Development

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	36	15.2	15.2
Rarely	63	26.6	41.8
Sometimes	45	19.0	60.8
Often	48	20.3	81.0
Always	39	16.5	97.5
I don't know	6	2.5	100.0
Total	237		

Appendix M: Frequency Tables – Intra-Organisational Training Evaluation Trends

Table M1

How Often Reaction-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Intra-Organisational Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	17	6.8	6.8
Rarely	35	13.9	20.7
Sometimes	51	20.3	41.0
Often	47	18.7	59.8
Always	100	39.8	99.6
I don't know	1	0.4	100.0
Total	251		

Table M2

How Often Learning-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Intra-Organisational Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	27	10.8	10.8
Rarely	46	18.4	29.2
Sometimes	50	20.0	49.2
Often	62	24.8	74.0
Always	61	24.4	98.4
I don't know	4	1.6	100.0
Total	250		

Table M3

How Often Behaviour-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Intra-Organisational Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	32	12.7	12.7
Rarely	51	20.3	33.1
Sometimes	58	23.1	56.2
Often	52	20.7	76.9
Always	51	20.3	97.2
I don't know	7	2.8	100.0
Total	251		

Table M4

How Often Results-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Intra-Organisational Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	36	14.3	14.3
Rarely	54	21.5	35.9
Sometimes	54	21.5	57.4
Often	52	20.7	78.1
Always	49	19.5	97.6
I don't know	6	2.4	100.0
Total	251		

Table M5

How Often Return On Investment Evaluation Data Is Collected For Intra-Organisational Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	43	13.9	17.3
Rarely	60	19.4	41.4
Sometimes	49	15.8	61.0
Often	43	13.9	78.3
Always	43	13.9	95.6
I don't know	11	3.5	100.0
Total	249		

Appendix N: Frequency Tables – Technical / Job Specific Training Evaluation Trends

Table N1

How Often Reaction-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Technical / Job Specific Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	15	6.4	6.4
Rarely	29	12.3	18.7
Sometimes	39	16.6	35.3
Often	49	20.9	56.2
Always	95	40.4	96.6
I don't know	8	3.4	100.0
Total	235		

Table N2

How Often Learning-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Technical / Job Specific Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	19	8.2	8.2
Rarely	31	13.3	21.5
Sometimes	52	22.3	43.8
Often	54	23.2	67.0
Always	70	30.0	97.0
I don't know	7	3.0	100.0
Total	233		

Table N3

How Often Behaviour-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Technical / Job Specific Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	22	9.4	9.4
Rarely	39	16.6	26.0
Sometimes	48	20.4	46.4
Often	64	27.2	73.6
Always	54	23.0	96.6
I don't know	8	3.4	100.0
Total	235		

Table N4

How Often Results-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Technical / Job Specific Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	29	12.4	12.4
Rarely	38	16.3	28.8
Sometimes	54	23.2	51.9
Often	58	24.9	76.8
Always	46	19.7	96.6
I don’t know	8	3.4	100.0
Total	233		

Table N5

How Often Return On Investment Evaluation Data Is Collected For Technical / Job Specific Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	35	15.0	15.0
Rarely	45	19.3	34.3
Sometimes	48	20.6	54.9
Often	55	23.6	78.5
Always	42	18.0	96.6
I don’t know	8	3.4	100.0
Total	233		

Appendix O: Frequency Tables – General Skills Training Evaluation Trends

Table O1

How Often Reaction-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For General Skills Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	13	5.7	5.7
Rarely	35	15.4	21.1
Sometimes	40	17.6	38.8
Often	43	18.9	57.7
Always	89	39.2	96.9
I don’t know	7	3.1	100.0
Total	227		

Table O2

How Often Learning-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For General Skills Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	23	10.1	10.1
Rarely	37	16.2	26.3
Sometimes	54	23.7	50.0
Often	47	20.6	70.6
Always	61	26.8	97.4
I don’t know	6	2.6	100.0
Total	228		

Table O3

How Often Behaviour-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For General Skills Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	24	10.6	10.6
Rarely	46	20.3	30.8
Sometimes	53	23.3	54.2
Often	47	20.7	74.9
Always	51	22.5	97.4
I don’t know	6	2.6	100.0
Total	227		

Table O4

How Often Results-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For General Skills Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	30	13.3	13.3
Rarely	46	20.4	33.8
Sometimes	55	24.4	58.2
Often	39	17.3	75.6
Always	49	21.8	97.3
I don’t know	6	2.7	100.0
Total	225		

Table O5

How Often Return On Investment Evaluation Data Is Collected For General Skills Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	34	14.9	14.9
Rarely	55	24.1	39.0
Sometimes	46	20.2	59.2
Often	42	18.4	77.6
Always	43	18.9	96.5
I don’t know	8	3.5	100.0
Total	228		

Appendix P: Frequency Tables – Personal Development Training Evaluation Trends

Table P1

How Often Reaction-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Personal Development Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	17	8.4	8.4
Rarely	35	17.2	25.6
Sometimes	36	17.7	43.3
Often	41	20.2	63.5
Always	70	34.5	98.0
I don't know	4	2.0	100.0
Total	203		

Table P2

How Often Learning-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Personal Development Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	22	10.8	10.8
Rarely	40	19.7	30.5
Sometimes	48	23.6	54.2
Often	38	18.7	72.9
Always	49	24.1	97.0
I don't know	6	3.0	100.0
Total	203		

Table P3

How Often Behaviour-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Personal Development Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	24	11.9	11.9
Rarely	44	21.8	33.7
Sometimes	45	22.3	55.9
Often	44	21.8	77.7
Always	38	18.8	96.5
I don't know	7	3.5	100.0
Total	202		

Table P4

How Often Results-Based Evaluation Data Is Collected For Personal Development Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	28	13.7	13.7
Rarely	45	22.1	35.8
Sometimes	43	21.1	56.9
Often	40	19.6	76.5
Always	39	19.1	95.6
I don't know	9	4.4	100.0
Total	204		

Table P5

How Often Return On Investment Evaluation Data Is Collected For Personal Development Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Never	33	16.3	16.3
Rarely	45	22.3	38.6
Sometimes	36	17.8	56.4
Often	40	19.8	76.2
Always	39	19.3	95.5
I don't know	9	4.5	100.0
Total	202		

Appendix Q: Frequency Tables – Reasons for Organisations' Lack of Training Evaluation

Table Q1

The Organisation Lacks Training Evaluation Because It Is Not Supported By Top Management

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	27	18.1	18.1
Slightly influential	30	20.1	38.3
Somewhat influential	37	24.8	63.1
Moderately influential	30	20.1	83.2
Extremely influential	25	16.8	100.0
Total	149		

Table Q2

The Organisation Lacks Training Evaluation Because There Is a Lack of Evaluation Knowledge Within The Organisation

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	15	9.9	9.9
Slightly influential	30	19.9	29.8
Somewhat influential	43	28.5	58.3
Moderately influential	28	18.5	76.8
Extremely influential	35	23.2	100.0
Total	151		

Table Q3

The Organisation Lacks Training Evaluation Because There Is Insufficient Time

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	28	18.5	18.5
Slightly influential	33	21.9	40.4
Somewhat influential	30	19.9	60.3
Moderately influential	30	19.9	80.1
Extremely influential	30	19.9	100.0
Total	151		

Table Q4

The Organisation Lacks Training Evaluation Because There Is Insufficient Budget

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	34	22.8	22.8
Slightly influential	24	16.1	38.9
Somewhat influential	21	14.1	53.0
Moderately influential	30	20.1	73.2
Extremely influential	40	26.8	100.0
Total	149		

Table Q5

The Organisation Lacks Training Evaluation Because No One Wants To Take On the Responsibility

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	27	18.0	18.0
Slightly influential	28	18.7	36.7
Somewhat influential	28	18.7	55.3
Moderately influential	24	16.0	71.3
Extremely influential	43	28.7	100.0
Total	150		

Table Q5

The Organisation Lacks Training Evaluation Because Training Evaluation Is Not Viewed As Adding Value

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	37	24.7	24.7
Slightly influential	31	20.7	45.3
Somewhat influential	31	20.7	66.0
Moderately influential	32	21.3	87.3
Extremely influential	19	12.7	100.0
Total	150		

Appendix R: Frequency Tables – Reasons Supporting Organisations' Training Evaluation Practices

Table R1

The Organisation Evaluates Training to Obtain Data on Return On Investment

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	5	6.2	6.2
Slightly influential	4	4.9	11.1
Somewhat influential	18	22.2	33.3
Moderately influential	32	39.5	72.8
Extremely influential	22	27.2	100.0
Total	81		

Table R2

The Organisation Evaluates Training So HR Can Show Their Accountability

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	7	8.6	8.6
Slightly influential	8	9.9	18.5
Somewhat influential	14	17.3	35.8
Moderately influential	33	40.7	76.5
Extremely influential	19	23.5	100.0
Total	81		

Table R3

The Organisation Evaluates Training Because It Is Viewed As a Good Business Practice

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	2	2.4	2.4
Slightly influential	1	1.2	3.7
Somewhat influential	10	12.2	15.9
Moderately influential	40	48.8	64.6
Extremely influential	29	35.4	100.0
Total	82		

Table R4

The Organisation Evaluates Training Because They Use the Data for Decision Making Purposes

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	4	4.9	4.9
Slightly influential	4	4.9	9.8
Somewhat influential	12	14.6	24.4
Moderately influential	35	42.7	67.1
Extremely influential	27	32.9	100.0
Total	82		

Table R5

The Organisation Evaluates Training Because They Use the Data for Training Programme Improvement

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	1	1.2	1.2
Slightly influential	3	3.7	4.9
Somewhat influential	13	15.9	20.7
Moderately influential	30	36.6	57.3
Extremely influential	35	42.7	100.0
Total	82		

Table R6

The Organisation Evaluates Training Because They Link Training Programme Results to Their Performance Management System

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not at all influential	3	3.8	3.8
Slightly influential	5	6.3	10.0
Somewhat influential	10	12.5	22.5
Moderately influential	27	33.8	56.3
Extremely influential	35	43.8	100.0
Total	80		