

Abstract

THE TRAINING IRONY: THE “REAL” IMPACT OF TRAINING MAY NOT BE OBERVABLE

By: Ellen Lederman

Objective

This study examined the role that the course entitled, “The Integrated Management System (IMS™)”, played in preparing health and safety consultants for a change in thinking/practice. The Stages of Change Model was used to illustrate changes to thinking and behaviour as a result of training

Method

Two questionnaires were developed using an adapted version of the Stages of Change Model. A pre-course questionnaire was given to learners prior to training to self-assess in five key content learning areas. Three months following training, a mailed post-course questionnaire was completed and returned by learners. The pre and post course questionnaires were compared to see if changes in thinking and practice had occurred.

Results

Seventy consultants participated in this research with a total response rate 87 percent. For each question presented in the pre and post course questionnaires, learners were in different stages of their current thinking and practice in the key learning areas. A preponderance of learners resided in the stage where learners were practising various skills but believed that they needed further improvement. Significant statistical findings for learner movement across the stages of change were found in four out of the five question categories. Globally, statistical significance was found in thinking about changing practice and actually implementing new practice. The role the course played in influencing change was to consolidate information, facilitate further inquiry, reinforce the importance of the change and provide practice opportunities. During the three-month period post training, learners engaged in further formal and non-formal learning activities. Of the non-formal learning undertaken, the majority engaged in collegial discussions.

Conclusions

In general, the IMS training course appeared to play a role in influencing Consultant’s thinking and practice as it related to understanding and using the IMS™ course concepts in practice.