

14/10/2022

## Tools to improve the effectiveness of e-learning transfer at work



To what extent do workers, after taking a virtual training course provided by their companies, apply the skills acquired to their workplace? Could this low transfer rate be prevented before the training takes place? How can organisations promote a good transference of knowledge? Researchers at the UAB and UDIMA address these questions in a study in which they provide key tools to move towards a more effective European professional training system.

Istockphoto/metamorworks

Vocational learning implies the acquisition of skills necessary to perform a skilled work. We can understand transfer as the degree to which the skills acquired in training are later applied at work. Understanding these two concepts is key to Europeans to build a training system that work for us. We need to understand how transfer occurs, what influences it, and how the transfer produces observable desirable behaviours at work.

Scholars have traditionally performed research in transfer in North America and Western Europe, therefore we believed that we had the opportunity of performing research in online training in Southern Europe to help to gain a more globalized perspective. To better understand transfer and the motivation that leads trainees to apply the learnings at work, we depicted a model in 2015<sup>(1)</sup>: The Unified Model of Motivation for Training Transfer (MTT). The model conceives three stages: forming transfer intentions, actualizing implementation intentions for transfer, and strengthening transfer commitment.

We focused on the analysis of initial transfer intention and transfer in three Spanish organisations after the delivery of online training. To participate in the study, we recruited 204 employees who had participated in 22 online courses of different organisations. They filled in two questionnaires which measured initial transfer intention and transfer. The questionnaires had been previously developed for research in similar contexts. Participants answered the initial transfer intention questionnaire three days before the training and the transfer questionnaire four months after the training.

In the analysis, we identified that there were groups of employees based on their intention to transfer (low and high). Participants with low and high initial intention to transfer showed different profiles, with different factors involved. We found common characteristics among people with low levels of transfer.

Our results can help understand what type of employee will transfer less and provide cues on how to prevent this from happening in the future. Based on our results we developed an easy-to-follow guide to help practitioners diagnose potential low transfer before training, and to boost transfer based on the strategy of the organizations. Our research contributes to the understanding of transfer following eLearning interventions. These results can help understand the controversy on training effectiveness based on the training modality.

**Carla Quesada-Pallarès (1), Aitana González Ortiz de Zárate (2)**

(1) Department of Applied Pedagogy

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

(2) Universidad a Distancia de Madrid

[Carla.quesada@uab.cat](mailto:Carla.quesada@uab.cat), [aitana.gonzalez@udima.es](mailto:aitana.gonzalez@udima.es)

**References**

(1) Quesada-Pallarès, C., Gegenfurtner, A. **Toward a unified model of motivation for training transfer: a phase perspective.** *Z Erziehungswiss* 18 (Suppl 1), 107–121 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11618-014-0604-4>

Quesada-Pallarès, C., González-Ortiz-de-Zárate, A., Pineda-Herrero, P. *et al.* **Intention to Transfer and Transfer Following eLearning in Spain.** *Vocations and Learning* 15, 359–385 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12186-022-09292-w>

[View low-bandwidth version](#)