

BUILDING MANAGERS' AND STAFF MEMBERS' CAPACITY TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT WORK PERFORMANCE

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Businesses in Canada invest billions of dollars to foster innovation and efficiency, and some of these funds support training to improve communications between managers and staff that can enable this process. This article reports on an evaluation of a professional communications training program delivered to managers at one Canadian business. The research found strengths and some weaknesses in the training program and the institutional support for it. Managers receiving the training felt most empowered by the training, but a smaller share of staff noticed a positive effect. More ongoing and universal training would foster a stronger outcome.

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2015, a consulting training company undertook a pilot training project on “Having Difficult Conversations” with managers from a department at a major corporation based in Winnipeg. The purpose of the training project was threefold: (1) to raise the awareness, consciousness, and attitude of participating managers on the importance of continuously working at effective feedback and communication with staff; (2) to train participating managers in a series of models to better understand and regularly apply the skills to improve their feedback and conversations with

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