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CHALLENGES OF TRANSFERRING BUSINESS PRACTICES: THE CASE OF "ECOSERVICE 2022" AND "BAV"

(СКЛАДНОСТІ ПЕРЕДАЧІ БІЗНЕС-ПРАКТИК МІЖ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯМИ: ПРИКЛАД "ЕКОСЕРВІС-2022" ТА "BAV")

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Challenges Of Transferring Business Practices:

The Case Of "Ecoservice 2022" and "BAV"

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Abstract

This study analyzed the challenges of transferring business practices by conducting a case study involving two companies, examining the practical application of cross-cultural knowledge transfer and evaluating its effectiveness using the Kirkpatrick model. The significance of this research lies in its practical implications for organizations aiming to transfer business practices across different cultural contexts. The paper contributes to the existing body of knowledge by offering specific insights into the transfer of business practices from BAV to Ecoservice. By employing the Kirkpatrick model, the research provides valuable recommendations for fostering successful transfer of business practices in a globalized world.

Key words: business practices, knowledge transfer, Kirkpatrick model, Reaction, Learning, Behavior, Results.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper will scrutinize the challenges of transferring business practices in the framework of a peer-to-peer partnership between the municipal waste management association “Bergischer Abfallwirtschaftsverband” (BAV) from Germany and the municipal waste management enterprise “Ecoservice 2022” from Poltava Region, Ukraine. The business practices will include knowledge and experience of practically tested, proven know-how on operational, technical, financial, and managerial topics aiming to strengthen competences and skills of Ecoservice 2022.

The paper is based on the research conducted during an internship, when the partner enterprise in Germany was identified, needs analysis of the Ukrainian enterprise prepared, and initial meetings to discuss the partnership options between the two companies was conducted. In this research process, the paper reveals a defined concept of cooperation and outlines crucial activities essential for the effective transfer of business practices.

Initiating a peer-to-peer partnership is a complex project that involves understanding the theory of project management (project cycle, project planning, implementation, and evaluation), managerial communication and international management as well as entrepreneurship and management of technology and innovation. The following focus areas have been identified by German and Ukrainian utilities for further exchange: strategic planning, customer focus, data system and monitoring, landfill, and environmental education and responsibility. The capacity development methods include organization of the study visit and job shadowing/short internship programs for Ukrainian peers in Germany, as well as process-oriented trainings via virtual exchange.

The focus of this research is to practically initiate and investigate the effectiveness of a training program between companies representing different countries and managerial cultures.

This project will support preparation of recommendations for companies on how to prepare and implement the knowledge transfer process in the most effective and efficient way, methods to distribute knowledge and ways to measure the success of the knowledge transfer program.

The research will evaluate the effectiveness/challenges of transferring business practices and experience within the framework of international cooperation and the effective use of resources and the results of such activities. It will provide practical recommendations to local authorities on how to grow and advance their municipal companies, how to build knowledge sharing culture and higher levels of innovations. In addition, the barriers and obstacles hindering knowledge transfer will also be analyzed.

The research will help municipal companies effectively plan and implement their knowledge transfer programs, establish sustainable structures for partnerships and networking, and distribute knowledge. It will also provide effective tools to evaluate the effectiveness of capacity development measures.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the 1980s, studying knowledge transfer within organizations has been a subject of considerable interest in business management, organizational learning, and human resources. Many scientific articles and research provide empirical evidence about effective mechanisms to transfer knowledge and methods to evaluate training effectiveness. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) define knowledge transfer as "a process that involves the exchange of knowledge between individuals or groups, with a focus on both tacit and explicit knowledge." The success of knowledge transfer depends on the recipient's ability to retain the knowledge shared (Cummings and Teng, 2003). Furthermore, there are significant barriers that hinder the effective transfer of knowledge within organizations (Sun and Scott, 2005).

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) is a seminal work in the field of knowledge management and organizational learning. The paper has profoundly impacted knowledge management, influencing how organizations approach the creation and transfer of knowledge to foster innovation and competitive advantage. Their model, known as the SECI (Socialization, Externalization, Combination, and Internalization) model, provides a framework for understanding and managing knowledge transfer processes. Socialization involves learning by doing and observing within the organization. Externalization involves articulating and sharing explicit knowledge. Combination involves applying and adapting explicit knowledge in new situations. Internalization involves integrating new knowledge into the organization's existing knowledge base. These modes are essential for organizing, creating, capturing, and distributing knowledge within organizations to ensure its availability for future users.

According to Nonaka and Takeuchi, organizations capable of effectively transferring knowledge retain a competitive advantage and sustain higher productivity. Additionally, they are more likely to withstand external pressures compared to organizations with less proficiency in knowledge transfer. They argued that successful organizations are those that can continuously create, transfer, and exploit both tacit and explicit knowledge. Storytelling was highlighted as a powerful mechanism for sharing tacit knowledge. Narratives and anecdotes help convey context, experiences, and practical wisdom in a way that formal documentation may not capture. The authors argue that knowledge transfer processes fail due to poorly timed transfer methods and that information technology (IT) systems can increase knowledge transfer. They propose using IT to speed up knowledge transfer, enable transfer at later stages, and influence internal stickiness, causal ambiguity, and knowledge barriers in arduous relationships.

As we explore the dynamics and barriers of knowledge transfer within organizations, Argote and Ingram (2000) underscored the significance of interpersonal interactions, learning by doing, and the interplay between tacit and explicit knowledge. By defining knowledge transfer as the process by which the experience of one unit impacts another, they identified several barriers and factors that influence its effectiveness. Cummings and Teng (2003) take a broader perspective, examining the relationship between R&D activities and knowledge transfer channels within science-based firms, engaged in industries where scientific knowledge and advancements play a crucial role in the creation and improvement of products, services, or processes. The authors introduce a model of transfer success encompassing nine key factors and four contextual domains. Their work illuminates the crucial elements influencing the successful transfer of R&D knowledge, providing valuable insights for organizations seeking to foster innovation and improve performance through effective knowledge transfer practices.

While knowledge transfer yields positive outcomes such as enhanced competitive advantages for firms, improved organizational performance, and overall business improvement, it is not exempt from encountering critical issues and barriers to knowledge transfer (Yih-Tong Sun and Scott's, 2005). The authors identify several barriers to knowledge transfer, including lack of trust and motivation, lack of time and communication, lack of incentives and organizational support as well as lack of knowledge management systems. By identifying these barriers, organizations can take steps to address them and create an environment that fosters knowledge transfer. For example, organizations can implement knowledge management systems, provide incentives for knowledge sharing, and create a culture of trust and collaboration.

In a global world, understanding and considering cultural characteristics are crucial for organizations engaged in knowledge transfer as they can enhance the effectiveness and acceptance

of those initiatives. Knowledge transfer depends on national cultural characteristics which are power distance, performance orientation, in-group collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance (Wilkesmann, Fischer, and Wilkesmann, 2009). These cultural characteristics can impact knowledge transfer within organizations operating in different countries, and by understanding these characteristics, organizations can tailor their knowledge transfer strategies to the cultural context in which they operate. The authors explore the impact of national cultural characteristics on knowledge transfer in Hong Kong and Germany. By understanding these cultural characteristics, organizations can tailor their knowledge transfer strategies to the cultural context in which they operate. Cross-cultural knowledge transfer expands our comprehension of knowledge transfer processes across diverse cultural contexts.

Gupta and Govindarajan (2000) provide a nuanced exploration of knowledge flows within multinational corporations, emphasizing the pivotal role of context and cultural factors in shaping the dynamics of knowledge transfer. Their findings highlight that successful knowledge transfer is contingent upon an understanding of the cultural nuances within organizations, shedding light on the contextual intricacies that influence the efficacy of knowledge dissemination and absorption. On the other hand, Tsai and Ghoshal (1998) focus on the examination of social capital and its direct implications for value creation in cross-cultural settings. Their research offers valuable insights into the significance of interpersonal relationships in the facilitation of knowledge transfer. Specifically, the study underscores how strong social capital within a cross-cultural context acts as a catalyst for effective knowledge sharing, thereby enhancing the overall process of value creation. In essence, Gupta and Govindarajan emphasize the contextual and cultural dimensions of knowledge transfer within multinational corporations, while Tsai and

Ghoshal highlight the role of social capital and interpersonal relationships in fostering successful knowledge transfer within cross-cultural settings.

Among the various approaches to initiating knowledge transfer, establishing partnerships between companies emerges as an effective strategy. Nevertheless, forming partnerships typically demands significant time and effort to identify suitable collaborators and establish procedures that facilitate smooth interaction. The paper by Milagres and Bucharth (2019) contributes to the development of a systemic and dynamic model of knowledge transfer in such partnerships, aiming to deepen the understanding of the mechanisms and implications of knowledge transfer in the context of interorganizational collaborations. The research provides valuable insights into the antecedents, processes, and outcomes of knowledge transfer in interorganizational partnerships, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities associated with this dynamic process. In addition, the authors introduce the knowledge transfer evaluation issue and propose suggestions for practitioners referred to the environment development for learning in the inter-organizational partnership.

Evaluating knowledge transfer can be challenging, as it often involves quantifying a process that is often qualitative and intangible. However, there are several methods and metrics that can be used to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of knowledge transfer: Kirkpatrick's model, Bloom's taxonomy, Transfer of learning, Return on investment and Feedback and reflection.

Introduced in 1959, Kirkpatrick's model continues to be useful, appropriate, and applicable in a variety of contexts. It is adaptable to various training environments and demonstrates high efficacy in assessing training outcomes. A review of publications on the Kirkpatrick model indicates that research employing the model is a dynamic and expanding field.

Kirkpatrick's evaluation model has been subject to critique and criticism by many evaluation theorists, researchers, and practitioners. The model's four-level approach presents an oversimplified view of training effectiveness that does not consider individual or contextual influences in the evaluation of training programs (Bates, 2004). Some scholars have developed their models using Kirkpatrick's theoretical framework, while others have proposed alternative models that address the limitations of the Kirkpatrick model. Critiques of the Kirkpatrick model have focused on several issues, including the lack of research to support its effectiveness, the focus on learner reactions rather than results and the difficulty in implementing all four levels of the model (Reio, Rocco, Smith, Chang, 2017). Some scholars have proposed flipping the model on its head, starting with the end in mind and focusing on results rather than learner reactions (Kruse, 2023).

Despite these critiques, the Kirkpatrick model remains a popular and widely used approach to evaluating training programs. The model finds primary application in the evaluation of medical training, followed by computer science, business, and social sciences.

While existing literature extensively delves into the framework conditions, processes, and technologies of knowledge transfer, a less-explored subtopic within this domain is the transfer of business practices, both within and between companies. This study addresses this gap by conducting a case study involving two companies, examining the practical application of cross-cultural knowledge transfer and evaluating its effectiveness using the Kirkpatrick model.

The significance of this research lies in its practical implications for organizations aiming to transfer business practices across different cultural contexts. The paper contributes to the existing body of knowledge by offering specific insights into the transfer of business practices from BAV to Ecoservice. By employing the Kirkpatrick model, the research not only analyzes the

effectiveness of the process but also provides valuable recommendations for fostering successful transfer of business practices in a globalized world.

3. FRAMEWORK

The Kirkpatrick Model of Training Effectiveness, developed by Donald L. Kirkpatrick, serves as a comprehensive framework for evaluating training programs and assessing their impact on organizational performance. This theoretical framework consists of four levels, each focusing on different aspects of training effectiveness.

Level 1: Reaction

Level 1 assesses participants' immediate response and satisfaction with the training. This level seeks to understand the participants' perceptions of the knowledge transfer process, including clarity of communication, accessibility to knowledge sources, and overall satisfaction. Participants are prompted to rate the usefulness of the knowledge received and whether it met their expectations. Gathering participants' perspectives on the training may identify gaps in learning needs, highlight strengths and weaknesses of the training, and reveal barriers to learning.

The evaluation begins by exploring the participants' overall engagement and enjoyment of the training experience. It investigates the effectiveness of training materials and delivery methods in facilitating a meaningful learning experience. Participants are prompted to reflect on the relevance of the training content to their respective roles, examining whether the training met their expectations and aligns with their professional responsibilities. The clarity of the training objectives is also scrutinized to ensure participants have a comprehensive understanding of the intended outcomes.

The evaluation of the initial level typically employs various methods, including post-training surveys, feedback forms, participant interviews, and focus group discussions. A Likert

scale is a commonly used tool to assess satisfaction with the training program, its content, and practicality.

Level 2: Learning

Level 2 evaluates the extent to which participants acquire new knowledge, skills, or attitudes. Pre- and post-training assessments and interviews are commonly used to measure the increase in expertise and competence resulting from the training, but other approaches, such as simulations, and on-the-job observations, can also be utilized.

The inquiry investigates the specific knowledge and skills acquired by participants throughout the training. It explores the extent to which participants successfully attained the prescribed learning objectives. Additionally, attention is given to identifying any challenges encountered by participants in comprehending the training content. Furthermore, an assessment is made regarding the impact of the training on participants' confidence in applying newfound knowledge and skills.

In expanding the evaluation to incorporate Level 2 of Kirkpatrick's model, the focus shifts to examining the transfer of knowledge and skills from the training environment to real-world scenarios. Key considerations include evaluating the application of acquired skills in practical situations, measuring the effectiveness of the training in fostering on-the-job performance improvements, and identifying obstacles or enhancers that impact the application of learning in the workplace. This multi-dimensional approach provides a comprehensive perspective on the training's impact beyond the immediate learning outcomes.

Level 3: Behavior

Level 3 explores how well participants integrate the transferred knowledge into their work routines and decision-making processes. This level analyzes changes in behavior and practices

within the organization due to the knowledge transfer, emphasizing the importance of aligning training outcomes with organizational goals. It's crucial to acknowledge that not all training initiatives are designed with the explicit goal of inducing behavioral changes, and the extent of these changes often correlates with the intensity and duration of the training.

To effectively gauge the impact of learning on behavior change and its subsequent influence on job performance, specific questions are incorporated into the evaluation process. The evaluation investigates whether participants are integrating their acquired knowledge into their daily work routines. Key aspects include the frequency and specific situations in which participants apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the assessment explores the tangible impact of these behavioral changes on their overall job performance. Typical Level 3 evaluations utilize supervisor assessments, self-assessments or self-reporting, observation of on-the-job behavior, or follow-up surveys and interviews.

Level 4: Results

Level 4 assess the organizational impact of the knowledge transfer, focusing on improvements in project outcomes, innovation rates, customer satisfaction scores, and other tangible benefits. In the assessment of results, a set of standard inquiries is deployed to delve into the tangible improvements witnessed within the organization following the training intervention. The focus extends beyond individual behavior and job performance to scrutinize the broader impact on organizational outcomes. The evaluation explores the quantitative and qualitative enhancements observed in the organization as a direct consequence of the training. An essential aspect of Level 4 evaluation involves comparing the achieved training outcomes with the initial organizational goals and expectations. This analysis ensures that the training initiatives are aligned with the overarching objectives of the organization, providing valuable insights into the program's

strategic impact. It also investigates unintended consequences and unanticipated benefits that may have arisen from the training. This comprehensive approach ensures that all aspects of the organizational impact, whether expected or unexpected, are considered. Key performance indicators, cost-benefit analysis, and comparative analysis against pre-training benchmarks are commonly used in this evaluation.

Customized Evaluation

Organizations tailor their evaluation strategies to align with specific training objectives and desired outcomes. The information gathered at each level aids organizations in making data-driven decisions regarding the value of their training investments and identifying areas for improvement.

In this research, the Kirkpatrick's Model is used to assess the training that was designed to transfer business practices across organizations and cultures. The four levels of the model provide a structured approach to assess participants' reactions, learning outcomes, behavior changes, and overall organizational results, offering a comprehensive understanding of the process to transfer business practices. This approach ensures that transfer of business practices becomes an ongoing, impactful process, rather than a one-time event.

The tailored evaluation aimed to capture nuanced insights at each level of Kirkpatrick's Model, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the training initiative. Hence, gathering feedback from participants was crucial, encompassing insights on both the overall organization of the learning process and specific topics and practices integral to their daily work. The questions focused to uncover instances where participants recognized the tangible benefits of the knowledge and skills gained during the study trip. They focused on linking training involvement to work impact and aimed to extract specific examples in making technical or practical decisions within the participants' work domains.

4. ANALYSIS

Data Description

The data for analysis were obtained during an informational visit to Germany, conducted from December 4 to 8, 2013. This visit was organized within the framework of the utility-to-utility partnership between the association BAV and the joint utility company Ecoservice 2022. The visit's itinerary encompassed the presentation of practical experiences from BAV association enterprises, with a focus on the transfer of business practices in the domain of waste management.

The Ukrainian delegation comprised 10 participants, including 4 women and 6 men. The participants represented institutions at various hierarchical levels, spanning the national level (Ministry for Communities, Territories, and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine), regional administration, and local self-governing authorities (heads of territorial communities and communal enterprise). Additionally, the delegation included specialists and experts with a specific focus on waste management. Notably, six participants were experienced managers, consisting of four heads of territorial communities and two heads of departments within state institutions.

The interviews were conducted with all 10 participants between December 22, 2023, and January 4, 2024. Each interview lasted about 45 minutes. The survey was structured into two parts: (1) the first section involved a questionnaire with Likert scale responses aligned with the four levels of Kirkpatrick's model of training effectiveness, while (2) the second section elicited responses to three open-ended questions.

As limitations, we should acknowledge that the interviews were conducted in-person, a factor that may introduce specific distortions in participants' responses. This methodological approach carries the risk of response bias or individual subjectivity. Furthermore, the individual characteristics of the participants contribute an additional layer of complexity, as not all

respondents were equally adept at furnishing comprehensive answers to the open-ended questions. The variability in participants' openess to provide detailed responses has impacted the overall depth of the qualitative data collected during the interviews. As such, the interview format and individual participant characteristics on the data obtained will be taken into account when interpreting the findings.

Data Analysis

To conduct qualitative data analysis the narrative analysis method was chosen. The narrative analysis approach centers on interpreting human experience through stories or narratives. In addition, the chosen approach was inductive. Unlike deductive approaches that start with predefined theories or hypotheses to test, the inductive nature of this method means that interpretations and conclusions were derived exclusively from observations within the data itself, allowing themes and patterns to emerge organically rather than being guided by pre-established frameworks.

The selection of the narrative analysis method stems from its suitability for investigating individual experiences and perspectives. This method aligns with the research goal of exploring the intricacies of participants' responses qualitatively. Narrative analysis focuses on the stories individuals tell, providing a holistic understanding of their experiences, emotions, and subjective interpretations. The method involves identifying themes and patterns within narratives, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the underlying meanings embedded in their accounts.

In executing narrative analysis, we could closely examine the structure, content, and language of individual stories. Specifics of this method involve identifying key narrative elements such as plot, characters, and settings, as well as analyzing the use of language to convey meaning. This approach aims to uncover the unique perspectives of participants.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of narrative analysis. The individual nature of interviews may introduce subjectivity, and the interpretation of narratives can be influenced by the researcher's preconceptions. To mitigate any potential bias the following steps were taken: conducting in-depth interviews, cross-verification of the received insights, and maintaining reflexivity by acknowledging and addressing any potential biases in the analytical process.

While narrative analysis was chosen for its compatibility with the research objectives, other methods were also deliberated upon. Thematic analysis was considered due to its capacity to identify and analyze patterns within qualitative data. However, the decision to opt for narrative analysis over thematic analysis was grounded in the emphasis on exploring the depth and richness of individual stories. Narrative analysis allows for a more holistic interpretation of the participants' lived experiences, capturing not only the themes but also the emotional nuances.

Narrative thematic analysis, which combines elements of both approaches, was also considered. However, the distinction between the two methods lies in their primary focus – narrative analysis prioritizes the overall storytelling structure, while thematic analysis centers on the identification and categorization of themes within the data. Given the specific aim of unraveling the individual narratives in their entirety, narrative analysis was deemed more suitable for this study.

In choosing the narrative analysis method and excluding thematic analysis or narrative thematic analysis, the research design aligns with the qualitative exploration of individual experiences, allowing for a deep understanding of the intricate stories shared by the participants. The methodological choice reflects a deliberate alignment with the research objectives, ensuring

that the selected analysis method is best suited to capture the essence and richness of the participants' narratives.

The survey was structured into two parts: (1) the first section involved a questionnaire with Likert scale responses aligned with the four levels of Kirkpatrick's model of training effectiveness (see Annex 1), while (2) the second section elicited responses to three open-ended questions.

The subsequent phase involves a detailed examination of the responses aligned with each of the four levels of the Kirkpatrick model. Level 1 assesses participants' reactions to the program components, focusing on their overall satisfaction with the training program. At this stage, participants were asked to express their general impressions of the training program.

Chart 1 shows high levels of satisfaction with the curriculum and alignment with participants' professional interests and expectations. Notably, 9 out of 10 participants expressed high satisfaction with the program, and 8 out of 10 participants indicated a willingness to recommend it to other peers. Despite the overall positive feedback, 6 participants strongly agreed that the training provided content relevant to their daily job and only 5 participants strongly agreed the training enhanced their knowledge of the subject matter. Participants come from diverse professional backgrounds, leading to differing levels of familiarity with certain aspects of the training content. In addition, participants have entered the training with specific expectations regarding the balance between practical relevance and theoretical knowledge enhancement. Variances in these expectations contribute to the observed differences in responses.

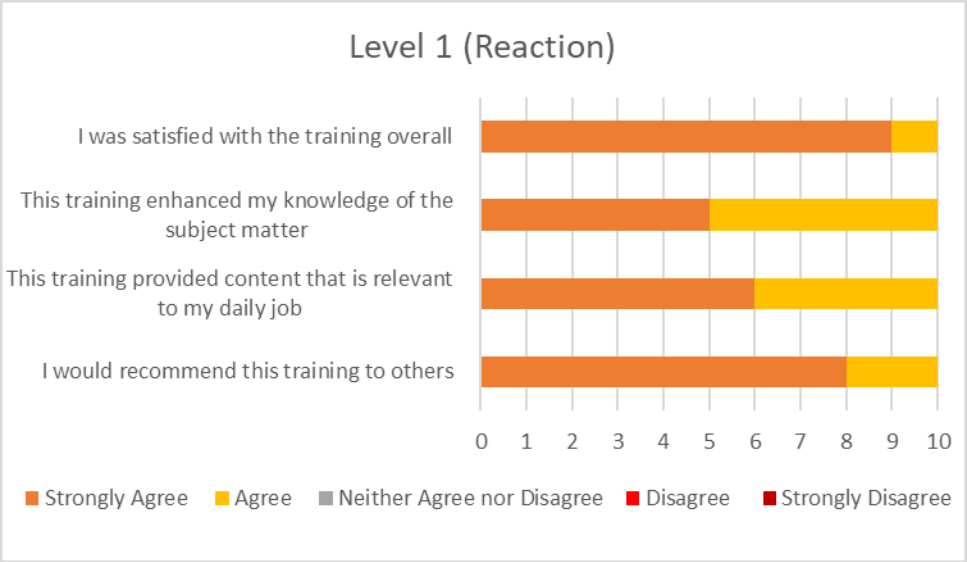

Chart 1: Satisfaction with the training program

Level 2 delves into the knowledge transfer process, evaluating the acquired knowledge within specific blocks of the training program, such as strategic planning, customer focus, data system and monitoring, waste disposal and landfill, and environmental education.

As illustrated in Chart 2, participants generally provided positive evaluations for all five program blocks, expressing high levels of knowledge acceptance. Noteworthy agreement was observed regarding strategic planning, landfill issues, and environmental education. However, participants exhibited less familiarity with the topics of "customer orientation" and "data and monitoring systems," signaling potential areas for improvement. The overall complexity of the concepts and insufficient clarity in explaining "customer orientation" and "data and monitoring systems" have led to participants feeling less confident in their understanding and agreement with these topics. The lower familiarity with these topics highlights potential areas for improvement, such as revisiting the content delivery methods or emphasizing these aspects more during the training sessions. Moreover, participants perceive certain topics as more critical to their daily tasks and organizational goals.

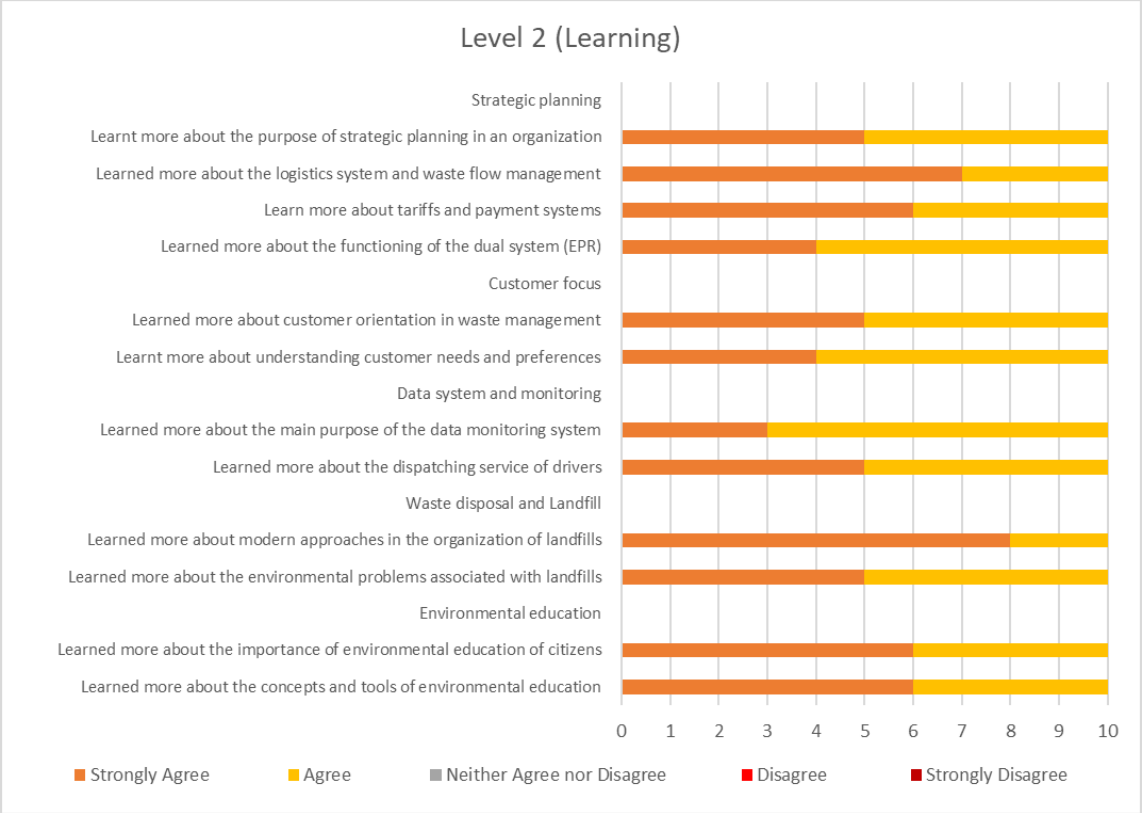

Chart 2: Transfer of knowledge

Level 3 focuses on behavioral changes resulting from the training program, assessing participants' application of acquired knowledge in their work patterns and organizational alignment. Chart 3 indicates that participants excel in achieving work goals and enhancing activities related to environmental education (6 participants "strongly agree") and strategic planning (5 participants "strongly agree"). While high levels of agreement were also noted for the other three topics (landfill, data system and monitoring, customer focus with 4 "strongly agree"), further time is deemed necessary for effective adaptation. In addition, an open-ended question explored situations where participants applied new knowledge or skills in their work.

The slightly lower ratings for "landfill," "data system and monitoring," and "customer focus" in Level 3 may be attributed to various factors. The possible reason is the complexity and novelty of the content in these areas compared to the more familiar topics of environmental

education and strategic planning. Participants have also found it challenging to immediately integrate and apply knowledge related to landfill management, data systems, and customer-oriented approaches into their daily work. This discrepancy underscores the importance of considering participants' diverse roles and responsibilities when designing and implementing training programs, ensuring that the content is tailored to their specific needs and contexts.

The drop in satisfaction levels from Level 1 to Level 3 could be influenced by initial expectations and realized impact, as they progress through Levels 2 and 3, their assessment may shift from the perceived value of the program to the actual impact on their knowledge and behavior. Hence, the realization of the difficulties in translating knowledge into practical application might contribute to a decline in satisfaction. Moreover, as Level 3 focuses on behavioral changes, it's common for participants to need time to adapt and integrate new practices into their routines.

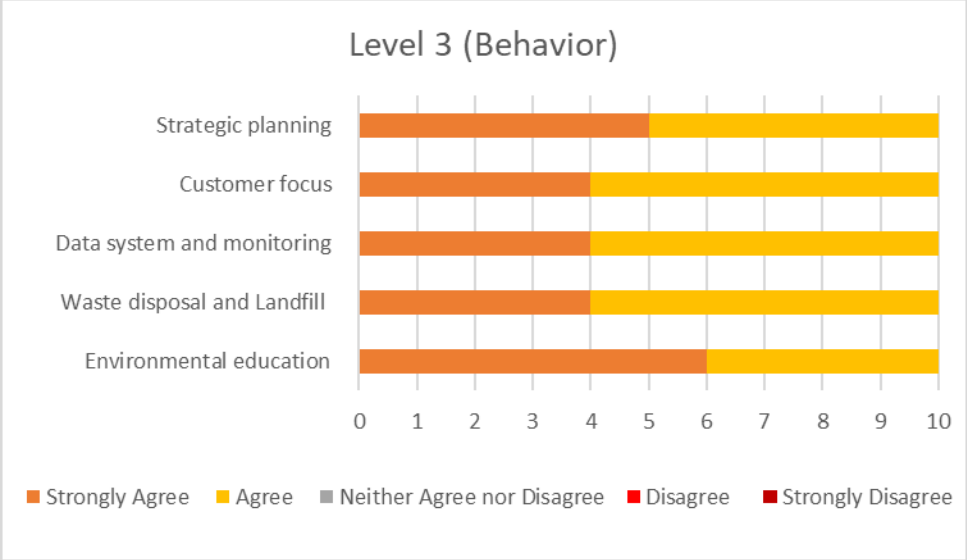

Chart 3: Behavioral changes

Level 4 scrutinizes the training program's impact on performance, gauging improvements in learning topics. Chart 4 highlights the substantial positive impact of the program on participants' performance, particularly in problem-solving within environmental education (with 5 participants

both "strongly agree" and "agree') and strategic planning (3 and 7 accordingly). A noteworthy observation is the emergence of neutral responses for the first time, underscoring the complexity of the assessment process and the time required for implementing acquired knowledge and skills. The neutral responses attributed to the time required for participants to fully implement the acquired knowledge and observe tangible outcomes. Behavioral changes and performance improvements take longer to materialize, especially in areas with more extended implementation timelines. Participants have also diverse job roles, and the applicability of these topics vary across the group. For participants representing national and regional levels, "customer focus" is a less relevant aspect of their responsibilities, leading to neutral responses.

The overall drop in satisfaction from Level 1 to Level 4 can be attributed to the increasing depth and complexity of the evaluation levels in the . While Level 1 captures immediate reactions and satisfaction, Level 4 assesses the overall impact on performance, requiring participants to reflect on tangible changes in their work. The drop reflects the progression from subjective impressions to more critical evaluations based on observed outcomes.

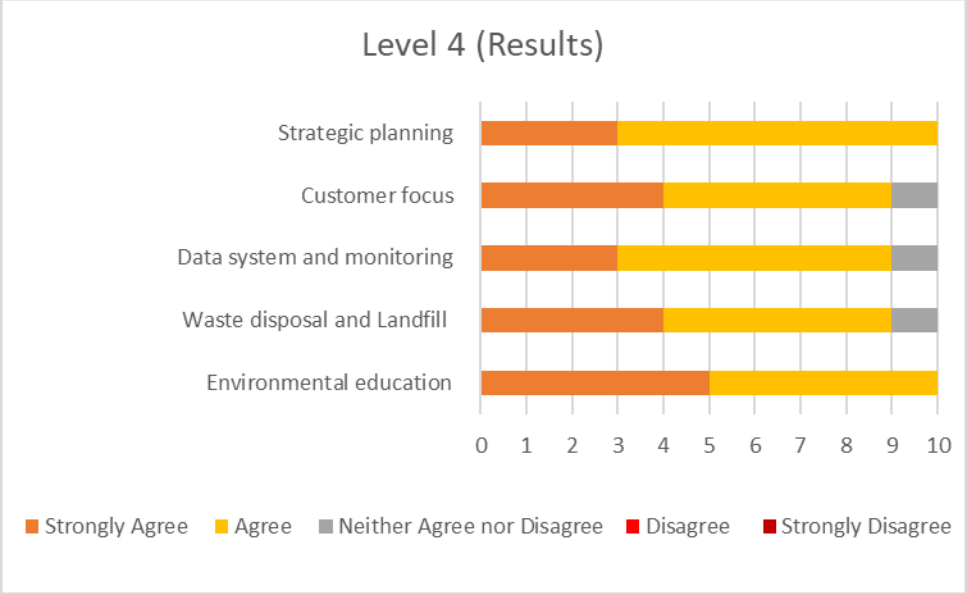

Chart 4: Influence on performance across main areas of training

Open-ended questions

The participants were asked to respond to the following open-ended questions:

Question 1: Describe situations or problems where you realized that the knowledge or skills gained during the study trip helped you.

Question 2: Describe how your participation in the training has affected your work and the work of your organization/institution.

Question 3: Give one or more specific examples of how you can apply the information and knowledge you have learned (for example, technical or practical work-related decisions that the information has helped you solve).

The rationale behind these questions lies in obtaining rich, qualitative data that complements the quantitative findings from the Kirkpatrick model. The open-ended nature allows participants to articulate their experiences, challenges, and successes in a narrative format, offering insights that might not be captured through standardized rating scales alone. Additionally, the responses aid in validating and contextualizing the quantitative results, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of the training program.

In essence, the participants of the trip represented diverse institutions and organizations from national, regional, and local levels. This diversity was evident in the responses, with representatives from central executive authorities primarily focusing on state policy in waste management, sectoral legislation development and the application of European legislation. At the regional level, the emphasis was on regional development and disseminating good practices, while participants at the local level and municipal enterprise Ecoservice 2022 addressed community-level waste management, associated economic challenges and tariffs.

Major insights

The exploration into the transfer of business practices in waste management offers profound insights across several areas. Firstly, the transfer plays a pivotal role in disseminating and implementing foreign expertise within Ukraine. This not only contributes to the adoption of a new management culture but also integrates successfully tested technologies and solutions. Secondly, the success of municipal enterprises serves as a powerful motivator for neighboring communities, demonstrating effective task execution within the constraints of Ukrainian legislation and local financial resources. Thirdly, the heightened quality of services prompts citizen engagement in environmental awareness, fostering competition among communities to deliver services on par with their neighbors. The collaborative aspect, particularly inter-municipal cooperation, emerges as a crucial tool for improving service quality and achieving economies of scale. Additionally, the necessity for greater involvement of community leadership is highlighted in implementing effective waste separation systems, emphasizing both educational initiatives and practical measures. The insights underscore the importance of clear communication and incentivizing citizens for successful waste sorting, as even the best technology may falter without well-informed and engaged communities. Overall, these insights collectively signify a shift towards a more integrated, forward-thinking, and citizen-centric approach in addressing waste-related challenges.

The transfer of business practices contributes to the dissemination and rapid implementation of leading foreign experience in Ukraine. The successful performance of a municipal enterprise serves as a powerful motivational factor for other neighboring communities, demonstrating effective task execution within the framework of existing Ukrainian legislation and the financial resources of local self-governments. The improved quality of services in communities

will encourage citizen engagement in environmental awareness. This will enhance competition among communities, as residents will expect their community leadership to provide services of no lesser quality than those in neighboring communities. Positive experiences at the local level will be presented at the national level, contributing to the development of corresponding state policies.

The transfer of business practices contributes to the creation of a new management culture in municipal enterprises, where decisions are made not sporadically but with foresight and based on a development strategy. In particular, participants demonstrated a notable commitment to advancing waste management strategies, characterized by the implementation of a comprehensive and strategic approach. This insight underscores a shift from conventional, fragmented approaches to a more integrated and forward-thinking methodology in addressing waste-related challenges. On a practical level, for communities, this means universally shaping logistics and communal property. According to one of the community leaders, such an approach in the future will allow for "standardizing the collection and transportation of waste by a joint communal enterprise."

Collaboration between territorial communities is a crucial tool for improving service quality, as any community alone cannot solve the waste problem, and scale is needed for effective operations. The example of BAV demonstrates that the efficient operation of the enterprise became possible through the collaboration of communities from two large districts with over 700 thousand residents. In addition, inter-municipal cooperation allows municipalities to pool resources, leading to cost savings in shared services, joint procurement, and infrastructure development. Joint efforts enable municipalities to achieve economies of scale, making it more cost-effective to implement projects, services, or programs. Collaboration can lead to more significant infrastructure projects. In other words, planning and delivering services become more efficient when municipalities work together to identify common needs, allocate resources, and coordinate strategies. According to one

of the mayors, "these findings will impact future strategic decisions and directions in the development of municipal enterprises." For representatives at the regional level, the experience of inter-municipal cooperation in the Oberbergisch region of the North Rhine-Westphalia federal state, "demonstrates the effectiveness and efficiency of this mechanism in waste management, as the Association has transformed from a waste disposal center into a modern innovative enterprise with significant practical experience in this field."

New approaches in the work of municipal enterprises require even greater involvement of community leadership. The implementation of an effective waste separation system should start with simple solutions (installing containers, developing logistics, sorting), and gradually move towards a more complex system (organizing an extended producer responsibility system). The participants demonstrated emphasizes on both active educational initiatives and the adoption of separate waste collection practices. This dual focus signals the importance of engaging citizens at various levels, from educational programs targeting children to implementing practical waste separation measures. Notably, the adoption of a resident-centric perspective further underscores a commitment to addressing waste-related issues at the grassroots level. Another important insight was the presentation of foreign examples of what doesn't work and how to avoid mistakes (for example, the use of very expensive waste disposal technologies). The recommendation here would be to start low and make it step by step, do not delay but start here and now.

Despite varied perspectives, a common topic that united all participants was the issue of environmental education and educational activities. The best technology will be futile, if citizens are not informed well enough and are not incentivized to proceed with separate waste collection. All participants recognized the need for quality communication with citizens in this regard. The training program yielded a profound impact on the awareness and understanding of modern

approaches and technologies in waste management, as well as the principles of the circular economy. The main task in working with people is to keep them constantly involved and make them aware of the importance of waste sorting. If the company fails to do this in clear language, its operations will not make much sense, because people will not care about sorting their waste, which would result in extra costs for sorting operations exceeding the actual costs of PR and communication efforts.

The insights gleaned from the transfer of business practices in waste management align with Kirkpatrick's model of training evaluation. At the first level, the positive response and engagement of participants signify a favorable reaction to the training program. Their active involvement in shaping waste management legislation, commitment to strategic approaches, and emphasis on community involvement and education showcase a high level of engagement. Moving to the second level, the acquired knowledge and skills are evident in the demonstrated commitment to advancing waste management strategies and the implementation of a comprehensive and strategic approach. The participants' ability to articulate a resident-centric perspective and propose standardized waste collection processes indicates a practical understanding of the material. The third level, covering behavioral changes, is exemplified by the shift from conventional to integrated waste management methodologies and the emphasis on educational initiatives and separate waste collection practices. Finally, at the fourth level, the organizational impact and results are observable in the collaboration between territorial communities, leading to the efficient operation of municipal enterprises, resource pooling, and cost savings.

The major story that emerges from the insights is the transformative impact of the transfer of business practices in waste management. This process not only facilitates the infusion of foreign expertise but also drives the adoption of innovative technologies and solutions within Ukrainian

municipalities. The success of municipal enterprises serves as a catalyst, motivating neighboring communities to follow effective practices despite challenges presented by Ukrainian legislation and financial constraints. The importance of inter-municipal cooperation becomes evident in its role as a crucial tool for enhancing service quality. The positive experiences at the local level contribute to a national discourse, influencing the development of state policies.

Minor insights

The training program provided valuable insights into the collaborative dynamics among diverse institutions. The success of the program was attributed to meticulous planning and coordination by German colleagues, showcasing institutional coherence. Additionally, the collaboration between private sector and educational institutions demonstrated the well-established partnerships. Moreover, the commitment to transparency through thorough documentation and the incorporation of cultural sensitivity in educational materials were notable aspects of the insights gained.

The participation of representatives from various institutions in the training program has facilitated the effective exchange of information and dialogue. Often, insufficient interaction and communication between central and local authorities can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. The collaborative dynamics within the diverse group of participants representing various institutions provided the opportunity for stronger horizontal communication and exchange of experiences among delegation members. This collaborative environment played a pivotal role in creating a synergistic atmosphere conducive to shared learning. As was pointed out by one delegation participant, representatives of local self-government had the opportunity to clarify aspects of new legislation, national standards, and requirements, as well as possibilities for financing environmental initiatives at the regional level. At the same time, representatives of

central and regional authorities had the opportunity to better understand the challenges and issues in waste management at the local level.

The success of the visit program can be attributed to meticulous planning and coordination by German colleagues. The clarity in the division of roles and responsibilities, coupled with the professionalism and preparedness of speakers, reflected institutional maturity and coherence. These elements contributed to a structured and effective knowledge transfer process. In addition, Ukrainian participants had the opportunity to better understand German approaches to organizing training programs and their cultural context. In particular, the training program was meticulously planned, often well in advance, with strict schedules, ensuring that sessions start and end on time, organized in a structured manner, with a clear sequence of topics and activities. The involved speakers were typically highly knowledgeable and experienced in their respective fields. There was a strong emphasis on professionalism, ensuring that presenters were well-prepared and could convey information with authority. A well-balanced approach between theoretical elements, such as presentations and lectures, and practical components, including excursions and visits to enterprises, characterized the knowledge transfer process. These characteristics collectively reflect the German commitment to excellence, efficiency, and a holistic approach to training and knowledge transfer.

An interesting insight was the established work and collaboration between BAV and Cologne Technical University. In Germany, partnerships between educational institutions, government bodies, and private sector organizations are common. Such collaborations bring together diverse perspectives and resources, enriching the educational content. Within the enterprise, there are many laboratories where students and research collaborators work. Significant attention is given to scientific research and innovative projects that contribute to energy efficiency

and resource-saving. Scientific developments are tested and documented. The commitment to thorough documentation of all educational materials and the preparation and distribution of a comprehensive knowledge transfer report underscored a commitment to transparency and the dissemination of valuable information. At the same time, educational materials incorporated cultural sensitivity, recognizing and respecting diverse cultural backgrounds. This ensures that the content is relatable and applicable to a broad audience.

The insights gained from the training program and visitation align well with Kirkpatrick's model. The meticulous planning and coordination by German colleagues, along with the clarity in roles and responsibilities, contributed to a positive learning environment. The knowledge transfer process, characterized by well-prepared speakers, a balanced approach between theoretical elements and practical components, and a focus on professionalism, reflects successful learning outcomes. The insights into the collaborative work between BAV and Cologne Technical University highlight a collaborative behavior that goes beyond the training program. The commitment to thorough documentation, preparation of a comprehensive knowledge transfer report contribute to transparent and disseminated information.

In conclusion, the described insights here revolve around the successful collaboration, transparency, and cultural adaptability, contributing to a comprehensive and shared knowledge base in waste management practices.

Recommendations for improving transfer of business practices

To enhance the effective transfer of business practices between companies, the following recommendations are outlined based on the conducted research, encompassing five key stages: 1) Situation Analysis and Identification of Company Needs, 2) Defining the Desired Situation, 3) Organization of Activities, 4) Implementation, and 5) Providing Feedback.

1) Situation analysis and identification of company needs,

This initial stage entails a comprehensive audit of the company's current state, evaluating production and financial indicators, and scrutinizing personnel policies. The analysis can involve external experts or internal resources, provided objectivity is maintained. Company needs typically arise from identified deficits and specific interests.

2) Defining the desired situation,

A pivotal stage involves translating the company's needs and interests into clear and defined goals concerning the transfer of business practices (organizational, managerial, technological). It addresses fundamental questions of "why" and "for what" purpose. Clear criteria for assessing goal success should be established at this stage, emphasizing the importance of considering the interests of the partner company.

3) Organization of Activities,

This stage involves initiatives to seek partnerships or engage with partner organizations. Existing partnerships among communities, business associations, chambers of commerce, and other specialized institutions can be instrumental. Initiating collaboration includes identifying a contact person and initiating the first exchange or company presentations. Understanding the business and cross-cultural nuances of the partner company's country is crucial. Determining content and coordinating the format of transferring business practices, whether through training programs, knowledge exchange, internships, etc., is paramount.

4) Implementation

The implementation phase encompasses the actual transfer of business practices in a defined form and content, such as tailored training modules, interactive workshops and peer learning, learning platforms, etc. Meticulous documentation of business practices and case studies

is critical. Preparing and documenting reports and protocols contribute to building a robust knowledge management system within the organization. The acquired knowledge and recommendations are put into practice and evaluated for effectiveness.

5) Providing Feedback.

This critical stage enables the evaluation of the intervention's effectiveness by addressing three key questions: what was planned, what was achieved, and how to improve in the future. This evaluation can be conducted using the four-level Kirkpatrick model.

These recommendations are broadly applicable across sectors, including municipalities, private enterprises, and governmental authorities. They are designed to be adaptable to various organizational contexts, fostering effective knowledge transfer regardless of size or industry. However, limitations include potential dependencies on resources, both financial and human, which may impact the extent to which recommendations can be executed. Continuous monitoring and adaptation are essential for sustained effectiveness, considering external factors like regulatory changes or economic shifts that may impact implemented practices. Organizations should remain adaptable to external developments.

CONCLUSIONS

The paper contributes to the existing knowledge by offering specific insights and recommendations into the transfer of business practices. The examples presented in this paper underscore the practical relevance of knowledge transfer in waste management. These real-world applications not only validate the effectiveness of knowledge transfer initiatives but also provide a roadmap for future endeavors, emphasizing the need for continuous collaboration and the integration of business practices to achieve sustainable waste management outcomes.

The data for analysis were obtained during an informational visit to Germany and analyzed using the Kirkpatrick Model of Training Effectiveness. The following focus areas have been identified for transfer of business practices: strategic planning, customer focus, data system and monitoring, landfill, and environmental education. The survey involved a questionnaire and responses to open-ended questions aligning with the narrative analysis method, allowing for investigating the individual experiences and stories shared by the participants.

The major story that emerges from the insights is the transformative impact of the transfer of business practices. This process not only facilitates the infusion of foreign expertise but also drives the adoption of innovative technologies and solutions within Ukrainian municipalities. The success of municipal enterprises serves as a catalyst, motivating neighboring communities to follow effective practices despite challenges presented by Ukrainian legislation and financial constraints. The importance of inter-municipal cooperation becomes evident in its role as a crucial tool for enhancing service quality. The positive experiences at the local level contribute to a national discourse, influencing the development of state policies.

The recommendations for enhancing the effective transfer of business practices between companies are divided into five key stages: Situation Analysis and Identification of Company Needs, Defining the Desired Situation, Organization of Activities, Implementation, and Providing Feedback. The initial stage involves a comprehensive audit of the company. This sets the foundation for defining clear goals aligned with the company's needs. The organization of activities includes seeking partnerships, understanding cross-cultural nuances, and coordinating the transfer of practices. The implementation phase ensures the actual transfer through various means, with meticulous documentation being crucial. Providing feedback becomes paramount for evaluating effectiveness, using models like the Kirkpatrick model. These recommendations are

universal, applicable to diverse sectors, yet acknowledge potential resource dependencies. Continuous monitoring and adaptability are emphasized for sustained effectiveness, considering external factors that may impact practices, urging organizations to remain flexible in response to evolving circumstances.

Future research could delve deeper into the role of institutions in transfer of business practices. Exploring how institutional frameworks influence knowledge transfer effectiveness. Investigating how cultural norms and values may act as barriers or facilitators to the adoption of business practices could inform more culturally sensitive and effective training programs.

Future research could delve deeper into the role of institutions in shaping waste management practices. Exploring how institutional frameworks influence knowledge transfer effectiveness and how organizational structures impact the adoption of sustainable waste management strategies would provide valuable insights. Investigating how cultural norms and values may act as barriers or facilitators to the adoption of business practices could inform more culturally sensitive and effective training programs.

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Annex 1

Questionnaire for evaluating the effectiveness of the training program

Level 1 (Reaction) - *Satisfaction with the training program*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I was satisfied with the training overall	9	1	0	0	0
This training enhanced my knowledge of the subject matter	5	5	0	0	0
This training provided content that is relevant to my daily job	6	4	0	0	0
I would recommend this training to others	8	2	0	0	0

Level 2 (Learning) - *Transfer of knowledge*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Strategic planning					
Learnt more about the purpose of strategic planning in an organization	5	5	0	0	0

Learned more about the logistics system and waste flow management	7	3	0	0	0
Learn more about tariffs and payment systems	6	4	0	0	0
Learned more about the functioning of the dual system (extended producer responsibility)	4	6	0	0	0
Customer focus					
Learned more about customer orientation in the field of waste management	5	5	0	0	0
Learnt more about understanding customer needs and preferences	4	6	0	0	0
Data system and monitoring					
Learned more about the main purpose of the data monitoring system	3	7	0	0	0
Learned more about the dispatching service of drivers	5	5	0	0	0
Waste disposal and Landfill					

Learned more about modern approaches in the organization of landfills	8	2	0	0	0
Learned more about the environmental problems associated with landfills	5	5	0	0	0
Environmental education					
Learned more about the importance of environmental education of citizens	6	4	0	0	0
Learned more about the concepts and tools of environmental education	6	4	0	0	0

Level 3 (Behavior) - *Behavioral changes*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Strategic planning	5	5	0	0	0
Customer focus	4	6	0	0	0
Data system and monitoring	4	6	0	0	0
Waste disposal and Landfill	4	6	0	0	0
Environmental education	6	4	0	0	0

Level 4 (Results) - *Influence on performance across main areas of training*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Strategic planning	3	7	0	0	0
Customer focus	4	5	1	0	0
Data system and monitoring	3	6	1	0	0
Waste disposal and Landfill	4	5	1	0	0
Environmental education	5	5	0	0	0

Open-ended questions:

1. Describe situations or problems where you realized that the knowledge or skills gained during the study trip helped you.
2. Describe how your participation in the training has affected your work and the work of your organization/institution.
3. Give one or more specific examples of how you can apply the information and knowledge you have learned (for example, technical or practical work-related decisions that the information has helped you solve).