

Increased Results from Fewer Resources: How Maersk Line Accomplished It



By Jim Kirkpatrick, Ph.D.

Greetings from somewhere over the Atlantic. I am just returning from Denmark where I was working with Maersk Line, one of the largest shipping lines in the world. This is a very sophisticated group that has been applying New World Kirkpatrick principles since 2007.

You have probably heard of a “community of practice”. I believe there is also “community of challenges” when it comes to evaluation. No matter where we go, Wendy and I find the same questions, no matter how seasoned the group:

- How do we get employees to apply what they learn?
- How do we get a seat at the executive table in order to provide input during strategic planning?
- How do we get active executive and supervisor support for training?
- How do we demonstrate value to our business sponsors in terms that are meaningful to them?
- How do we do all of these things without increasing the training budget?



Maersk Line’s learning leaders identified with all of these common challenges and committed to overcoming them. In the past four years, Chris Jephson, the leader of Maersk Line Learning and his team have reduced the global learning spend significantly, while increasing (internal) learner satisfaction, on-time-delivery of products and profitability. This is significant in an industry where awards are given to companies with the largest training budget.

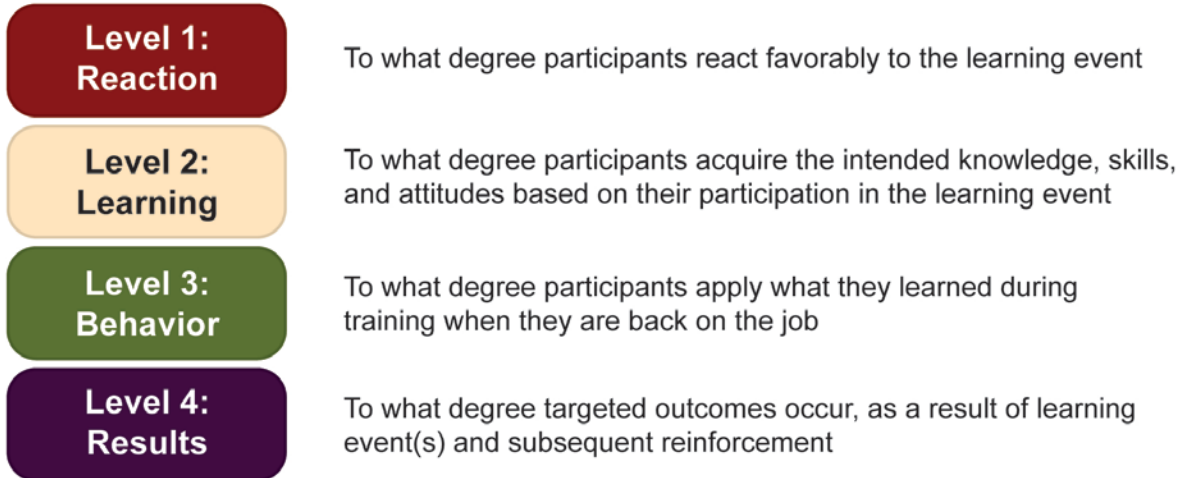


What is their secret? They have worked with senior leaders to clearly define mission goals (Level 4 Results); the critical behaviors that will bring about those desired results (Level 3 Behaviors); which initiatives will most likely help to bring about those goals (Level 3 Required Drivers); and what type of learning and performance interventions will best set the stage for the all-important Level 3 application (Level 2 Learning). In short, they have cut tens of millions of dollars in needless training that creates buzz and strong Level 1 and Level 2 data, but little more.

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Here are some specific ways that Maersk Line has been able to streamline training and maximize results:

- Anchoring Learning & Development at the strategic level
- Embedding a learning culture through manager's driving "performance through learning" and employees taking responsibility for their own development
- Connecting Level 4 leading indicators (short term observations and measurements that suggest that critical behaviors are on track to create a positive impact on desired results) to Level 3 critical behaviors and Level 4 results
- Redeploying resources from Level 2 to Level 3 support and accountability processes that increase the transfer of learning to behavior
- Replacing expensive and non-targeted instructor led training with focused, business-critical e-learning, mobile-learning, and job aids
- Leveraging on-the-job learning

What I liked most about Maersk is their spirit. They are eager to share what they have learned, eager to learn more, and gracious hosts to a first-time visitor! I hope you are able to translate their approach to create business value within your organization.

Jim Kirkpatrick, PhD, is a Senior Consultant for Kirkpatrick Partners.

Jim consults for Fortune 500 companies around the world including Harley-Davidson, Booz Allen Hamilton, L'Oreal, Clarian Health, Ingersoll Rand, Honda, the Royal Air Force, and GE Healthcare.

Jim has co-written 3 books with his father, Don Kirkpatrick, the creator of the Kirkpatrick Four Levels. He has written two new books with his wife, Wendy: *Kirkpatrick Then and Now* (2009 Kirkpatrick Publishing) and *Training on Trial* (2010 AMACOM Books).

For more information, please visit kirkpatrickpartners.com.

Jim can be reached at jim.kirkpatrick@kirkpatrickpartners.com.