

# The Importance of the Transfer Process for Understanding Outcomes of Leadership Training

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# What do we know about outcomes of leadership training?

- Leadership training has a positive impact across a wide range of theories, outcomes, leadership levels, and organization types (Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan, 2009).
- The range of effects of leadership training have been found to be inconsistent (Avolio et al., 2009).



# Transfer of Training (Baldwin & Ford, 1988)

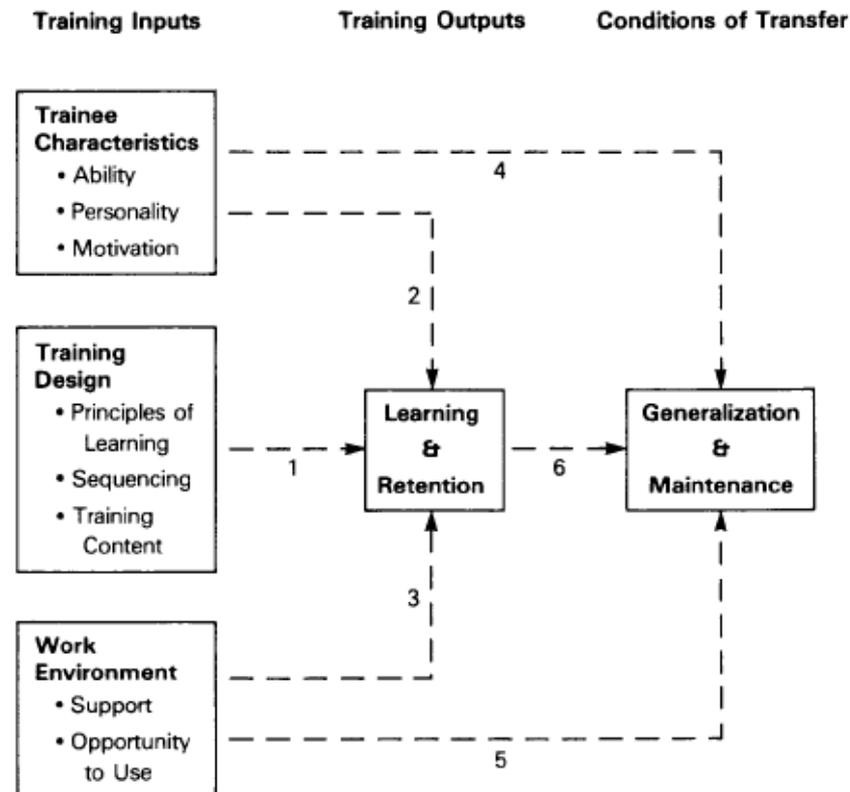
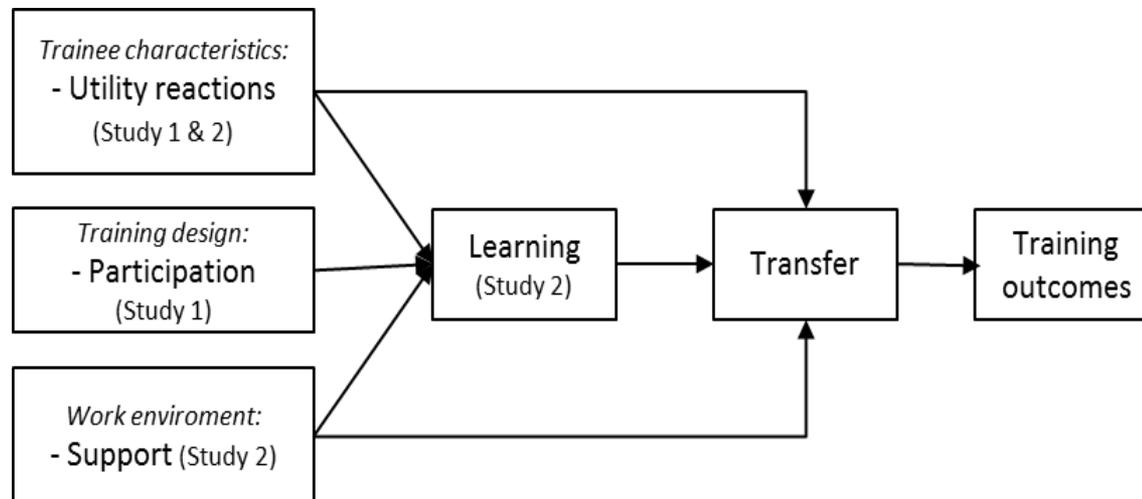


Figure 1: A Model of the Transfer Process

# Purpose of the study

- To examine how factors related to transfer of training influence outcomes of leadership training in two studies in two different countries.



# Study 1: The training

- Leadership training in the Swedish forest industry
  - Focus on transformational leadership and safety using behavioural analysis (OBM)
  - 18 days of training over the course of 1.5 years
- Participants: 78 managers
  - Age: 47 years, 82% men, tenure: 6 years
  - Response rate: 88 %
- Employees (n= 281)
  - Age: 47 years, 78 % men, tenure position: 11 years, tenure at the company: 22 years!
  - Response rate: 72 %



# Study 1: Method

## Measures

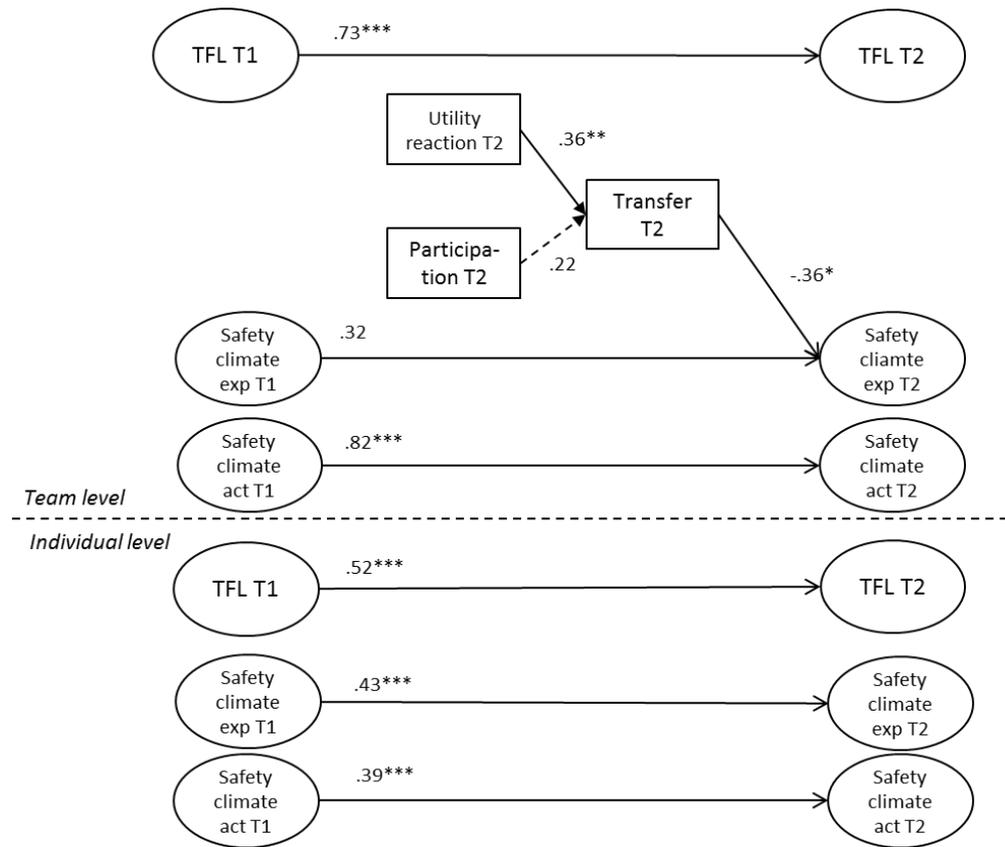
- The transfer process (manager rated):
  - Utility reactions (Randall et al., 2009)
  - Participation (Randall et al., 2009)
  - Transfer (Randall et al., 2009)
- Training outcomes (employee rated):
  - Transformational leadership (MLQ, Bass & Avolio)
  - Safety climate (Zohar, 2002).

## Analyses

- Multilevel modeling in Mplus

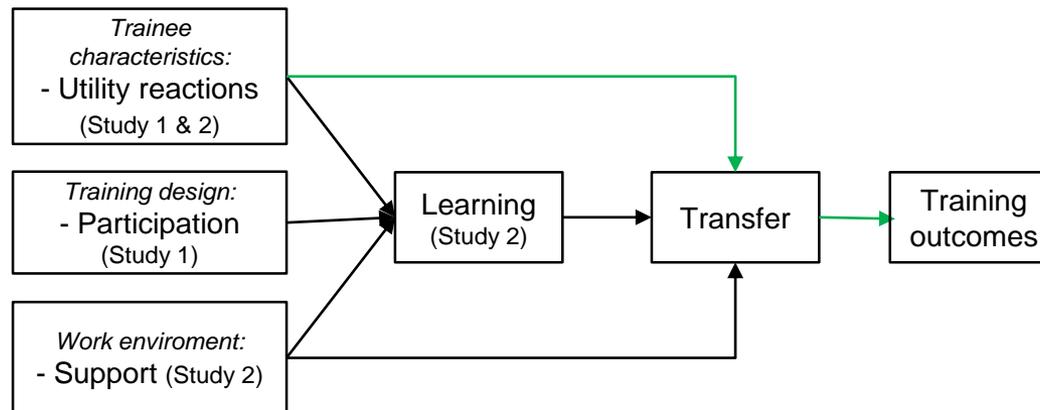


# Study 1: Results



# Study 1: Conclusion

- Initial support of the importance of the transfer process for understanding outcomes of leadership training



## Study 2: The training

- Leadership training in two Danish organizations: an elderly care centre and an accountancy firm
  - Focus on managing and implementing teams as well as on transformational leadership
  - Six days of training over a period of 6 months
- Participants: 36 managers
  - 41 years, 58% female, tenure: 11 years
- Employees (n=298)
  - 37 years, 76 % female



# Study 2: Method

## Measures

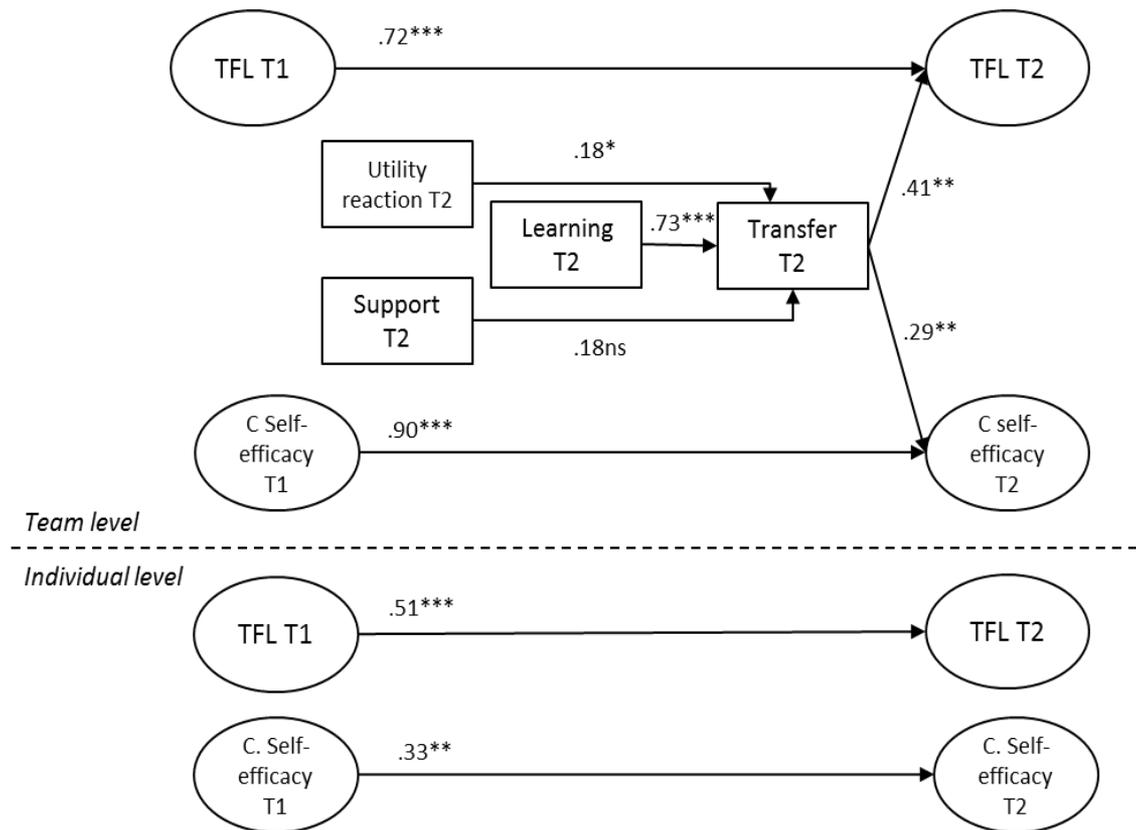
- The transfer process (manager rated):
  - Utility reactions & support
  - Learning (Randall et al., 2009)
  - Transfer (Randall et al., 2009)
- Training outcomes (employee rated):
  - Transformational leadership (Carless et al., 2000)
  - Collective self-efficacy (Salanova et al., 2003).

## Analyses

- Multilevel modeling in Mplus



# Study 2: Results



# Conclusion

- Transfer of training may be a useful framework for understanding outcomes of leadership training
  - Utility reactions and learning were positively related to transfer among managers
  - Self-rated transfer among managers were related to employee rated outcomes in terms of transformational leadership, safety climate, and collective self efficacy
- However, transfer of leadership training may be different from other forms of training
  - The role of peer and superior support

# Practical implications

- **Understanding the transfer process is important when designing and implementing leadership training**
- Perceptions of usefulness is important for leadership training to transfer:
  - Make sure that the training is relevant to the leaders
  - Use scenarios and role plays based on their everyday activities
  - We interviewed leaders about difficult situations before the training and based our role plays on this information

# Practical implications

- Understanding the transfer process is important when designing and implementing leadership training

- Learning is important for leadership training to transfer:
  - Use multiple training techniques
  - Opportunities to practice skills learned during training

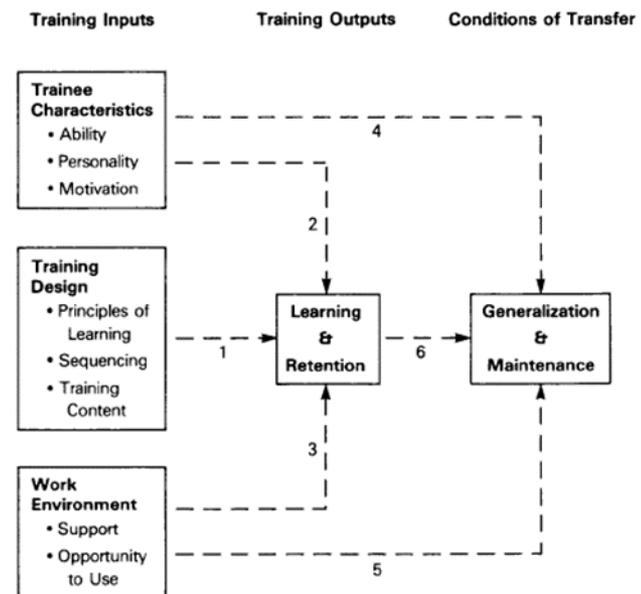


Figure 1: A Model of the Transfer Process

# Practical implications

- **Understanding the transfer process is important when designing and implementing leadership training**
- Participation may be important for leadership training to transfer
  - Before the training: include managers in a steering committee
  - During training: autonomy, choice, and feedback



# Future research



- Future studies may:
  - Investigate other well-known predictors of transfer in relation to leadership training
  - Identifying additional factors influencing transfer that may be specific to leadership training such as the role of followers
  - Integrate models of transfer with relevant theoretical frameworks such as self-determination theory

**Thank you for your attention!**

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