

12 HABITS OF SUCCESSFUL TRAINERS

INFO LINE

TIPS, TOOLS, AND INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAINERS

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Reprinted 2006



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Printed in the United States of America.

Training Foundations

In 2004, ASTD published the *ASTD Competency Study: Mapping the Future*, a landmark book that outlined the key professional competencies for trainers and the broader field of workplace learning and performance (WLP). The ASTD Competency Model™ describes the expanded role of the WLP professional and forms the basis for the ASTD Certified Professional in Learning and Performance® (CPLP) credential (for more information, see the sidebar *Certification for the Workplace Learning and Performance Professional*).

The 12 habits of this *Infoline*'s title derive from the middle tier of the model—the areas of expertise—specifically delivering training. However, to understand how these 12 habits were developed and the ideas they are based on, it's helpful to start with a brief introduction to the model and another closely related area of expertise, designing learning, before proceeding to the 12 habits.

Introducing the Model

The sidebar *The ASTD Competency Model*™ illustrates the model, which is shaped like a pyramid and has three tiers: foundational competencies, areas of expertise, and roles.

■ Foundational Competencies

The bottom tier contains the foundational competencies. The foundational competencies underlie the successful completion of many tasks that trainers perform. These competencies are grouped into three clusters: interpersonal, business/management, and personal. The sidebar *Foundational Competencies* describes these clusters and their implications for trainers.

Although you will certainly find similar foundational competencies in many professions, their presence in this model highlights their important role in your success as a trainer and that of your organization.

■ Areas of Expertise

The middle tier contains nine areas of expertise. These are the specific technical and professional knowledge and skills required for success in the field. The areas of expertise are:

- career planning and talent management
- coaching

- delivering training
- designing learning
- facilitating organizational change
- improving human performance
- managing organizational knowledge
- managing the learning function
- measuring and evaluating.

Although some professionals are highly specialized, many demonstrate expertise in more than one area.

■ Roles

Roles are broad areas of responsibility within the profession that require a certain combination of competencies and expertise to perform effectively. Roles are at the top of the model because they require a vast body of skills and knowledge to execute. Brief definitions of the four roles follow:

1. Learning strategist.

Determines how training and other WLP strategies can best be leveraged to achieve business success and add value.

2. Business partner.

Applies business and industry knowledge to partner with clients to identify opportunities by evaluating and recommending solutions.

3. Project manager.

Plans, resources, and monitors the effective delivery of training and other learning and performance solutions to support the organization.

4. Professional specialist.

Designs, develops, delivers, or evaluates learning and performance solutions and maintains and applies an in-depth working knowledge in any one or more of the areas of expertise.

Certification for the Workplace Learning and Performance Professional

It seems that every industry has a certification of some sort. The IT industry has more certifications than we could possibly mention; teachers have certification requirements; even personal trainers have certification requirements. But what about the workplace learning and performance professional (WLP)? With such a broad, important industry, it's hard to believe that certification doesn't exist. Until now, it didn't. In 2003, however, ASTD embarked on building this important program because of the value it brings to the profession. To do so, ASTD first created a Certification Institute (CI) as the entity responsible for managing professional certification.

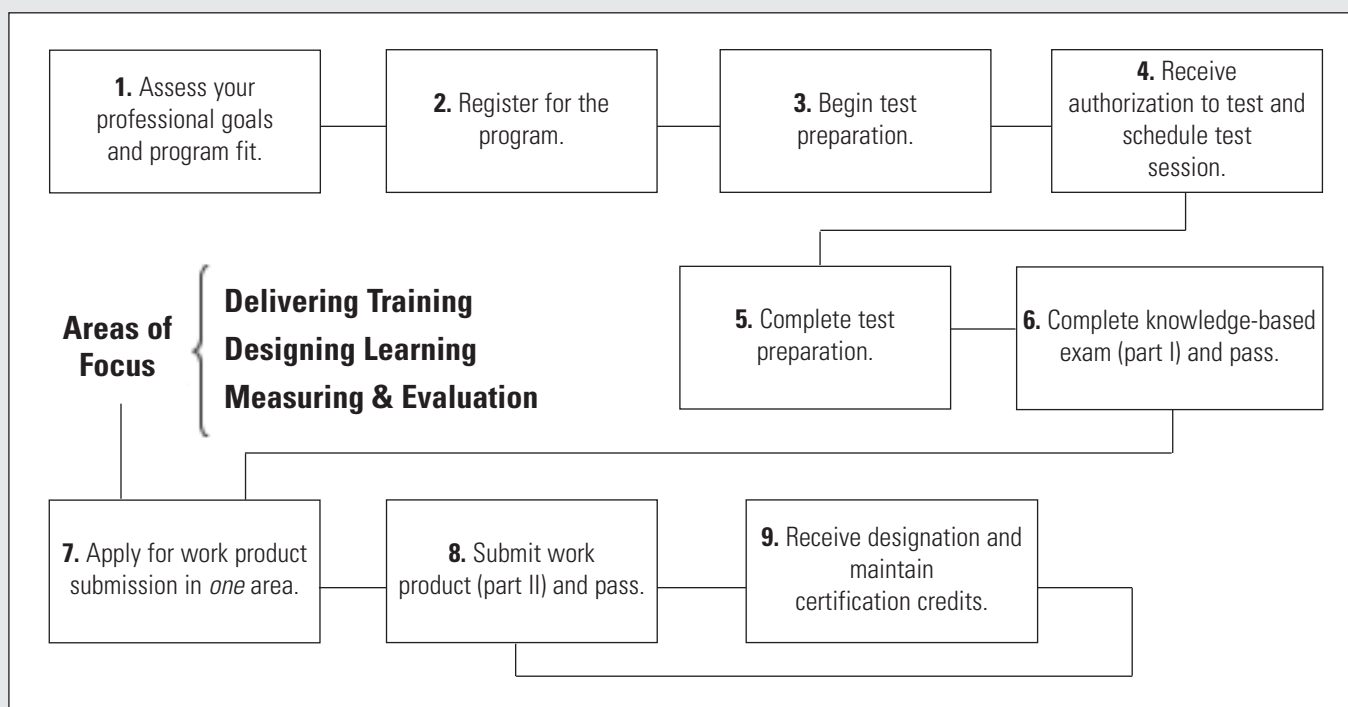
So why do all these certifications exist? And why do it for the workplace learning and performance professional? In a word: **credibility**. First of all, professional credentials benefit the profession by codifying it and creating standards; second, it benefits the individual by offering a means to prove his or her value and identify a path for continued professional development. Third, it provides employers a reference point from which they can evaluate job candidates.

The ASTD CI certification program is based on the body of work first published in 2004 in *The ASTD Competency Model: Mapping the Future*, which is depicted by graphic representation on page 4. Upon completion of the certification program, successful candidates will be awarded the ASTD CI Certified Professional in Learning and Performance™ (CPLP) credential.

This certification is intended as the baseline certification. Participants must have two to three years of related education or experience to be eligible to take the exam. The certification has two parts: a knowledge-based exam and a work product. The knowledge-based exam (part I) is a computer-based multiple choice exam that covers nine areas of expertise (the middle tier of the model). Not all areas are weighted equally on the exam. The operational phase of certification will begin in 2006.

Only participants who pass the knowledge exam can proceed to part II. At the time of writing, the candidate's work product submission (part II) must relate to one of three areas of expertise: designing learning, delivering training, and measuring and evaluating. Each area of expertise will have different presentation options. For example, if you choose training delivery as your area of focus, the demonstration options may include submitting a video of a stand-up presentation. Learning design, however, may include the submission of a course that you have developed. The raters will evaluate each demonstration based on guidelines that will be shared with the participant in advance.

Steps to Becoming a Certified Professional in Learning and Performance™ (CPLP)



Designing Learning

Two important theories/models/processes are associated with good instructional design: the training cycle and ADDIE (analyze, design, develop, implement, and evaluate). The training cycle (purpose, preparation, presentation, performance) refers to specific processes used to design and develop training. ADDIE is a classic model that depicts the training design cycle (for more, see the sidebar *ADDIE Model*). Note that this process often is circular to enable continuous improvement.

However, sound instructional design does not rest on ADDIE alone. Even if you spend most of your time as a stand-up trainer, it is important for you to be familiar with theories and principles related to designing learning. The ASTD Competency Model™ specifies nine learning design topics familiar to most trainers:

- adult learning theory
- learning styles
- e-learning, traditional learning
- technology and media options
- design of displays, access, resources
- business strategy and drivers
- research methods, data analysis
- assessment methods, formats
- job or task analysis.

Adult Learning Theory

Cognition is the mental process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment. Without question, the concepts of adult learning theory and techniques are the foundation for all training programs. Understanding these concepts helps you develop programs that reach the core needs of adult learners.

What are the core needs of adult learners? To answer that question, consider the work of Malcolm Knowles. Many consider Knowles to be the father of adult learning theory. Some of his ideas and their implications for trainers are summarized in the sidebar *Adult Learner Concepts*.

Learning Styles

Participants have preferred learning styles, and trainers have preferred training styles. Research conducted by David Kolb, Ned Herrmann, and others identify different ways to think about and to name these preferences. As a trainer, you need to recognize the differences and plan for them instead of having one favorite training approach, instructional method, or delivery option.

To address different learning styles and to better reach all learners, vary your training approach. One way to differentiate learners is their preference for taking in information through three modalities: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Here's how to address these learners:

■ Auditory

Provide spoken directions; create opportunities for discussion; and use buzz groups, teach backs, panels, and other verbal methods.

■ Visual

Provide written directions; create a colorful environment with neon sticky notes, posters, and markers; and enhance presentations with visuals, graphics, and props for visual learners.

■ Kinesthetic

Provide physically active learning opportunities; engage learners in experiential, hands-on learning activities such as making models, role playing, and relay races; and provide things for them to touch such as Play-Doh™, tactile toys, and crayons.

People learn in different ways. When designing or delivering training, strive to create a variety of approaches to enhance learning for all styles.

The ASTD Competency Model™

The ASTD Competency Model™ serves as an excellent resource for professional growth and development for anyone in the WLP field. Comprehensive enough to guide career development at all levels of the profession and covering a wider spectrum of roles than any previous ASTD model, it presents three layers of knowledge and skills: foundational competencies, areas of expertise, and WLP roles. Note below that the areas of expertise titled “Designing Learning” and “Delivering Training” are highlighted. These are the foundation for the 12 habits of successful trainers that will be discussed in this *Infoline*.



E-Learning, Traditional Training

A variety of delivery options exists, but e-learning is likely to increase in training delivery. E-learning includes a broad set of technology applications and processes and has other names such as computer-based training, Web-based training, distributed learning, virtual classrooms, and distance learning. Support systems such as performance support systems or electronic performance support systems help employees make the right decisions on the job. For a brief comparison of technology-supported and traditional training options, see the sidebar *Technology vs. Traditional*.

E-learning addresses today's business trends of global environments, accelerated pace of change, and the need for higher productivity with fewer human resources. Learn about e-learning by doing. Begin as a learner by joining a virtual classroom experience. Vendors often host free sessions to introduce you to their products. Observe how the facilitator encourages interaction and how the materials are presented.

One-on-one training is another delivery option. One-on-one trainers use some of the same learning strategies as classroom trainers, though they have the advantage of focusing on just one learner. The trainer in this case may be a supervisor, someone acting as a mentor from another part of the organization, or an external coach.

Blended learning mixes e-learning with other training formats. Blended learning allows you to pick and choose what will work best to meet the organization's and participant's needs.

Technology and Media Options

As a trainer, you should know what is possible with learning technology and support systems and make the most appropriate choice of media. You should also be sure to maintain an awareness of trends and differences in technology options.

Design of Displays, Access, Resources

In addition to the many decisions related to content, course design, and delivery, you must also be cognizant of the various ways to access and display

Foundational Competencies

The following table presents the foundational competency clusters and their implications for trainers.

Foundational Competency Clusters	How They Apply to Trainers
Interpersonal competencies include the ability to build trust, communicate effectively, influence stakeholders, leverage diversity, and network and partner.	Training is inherently a people profession that relies heavily on interpersonal acumen.
Business/management competencies include the ability to analyze needs and propose solutions, apply business acumen, drive results, plan and implement assignments, and think strategically.	Trainers must continue to strengthen their role in the boardroom. With that comes an expectation that trainers will be business and management savvy.
Personal competencies include the ability to demonstrate adaptability and model personal development.	Trainers must be adaptable and prepared for anything while conducting training. Trainers must be role models of the profession and create learning opportunities to upgrade their own knowledge and skills. As a professional, you must stay on top of new developments in the profession and in the industries that you serve.

information. All trainers need to understand information displays and choose ancillary resources that meet course requirements and learner needs.

Business Strategy and Drivers

Trainers must ensure that learning connects to the overall business strategy and the goals and perspectives of key stakeholders, and that they understand the context of the learning being designed.

ADDIE Model

The ADDIE model is a commonly used approach to learning design. The steps and their descriptions are provided in the following table.

Steps	Description
Analyze. Analyze needs.	<i>... Take aim before you begin!</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct a general assessment. ● Analyze data to identify needs. ● Identify gap between job requirements and individual skills and knowledge.
Design. Design the learning.	<i>... Set your goals and then go for them!</i> State exactly what training is to accomplish by writing objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>a learning objective</i> states desired performance after training ● <i>a training objective</i> states what you, the trainer, hope to accomplish.
Develop. Develop the program.	<i>... Get ready to work, work, work!</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decide exactly what you will do to accomplish the objectives. ● Build methods to ensure learning transfer and evaluation. ● Develop materials such as handouts, technology tools, or job aids.
Implement. Implement the design.	<i>... Execute the plan!</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct the program. ● Adjust to ensure audience needs are met.
Evaluate. Evaluate performance.	<i>... It's not the journey, it's the destination!</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluation indicates whether or not objectives were accomplished. ● Feedback is used to improve the training or identify future needs.

Research Methods, Data Analysis

Another key competency for trainers is a broad understanding of research planning and knowledge of specific assessment techniques. In addition, you should be able to gather data to answer specific questions regarding the value or impact of learning and performance solutions; focus on the impact of individual programs and overall measures of system effectiveness; and leverage findings to increase effectiveness and recommend changes.

Assessment Methods, Formats

A good understanding of needs is a critical aspect of designing effective training. The most common types of assessments are needs assessments and training evaluations.

Needs assessments determine the gap between current and desired performance. The difference between the two is the learning that must occur, which serves as the basis for good training design. For more on conducting needs assessments, see “Be a Better Needs Analyst,” *Infoline* No. 258502.

Training evaluations prove your value as a business partner to your organization. Know the levels of the training evaluation framework and how and when to apply them. Donald Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation are Level 1: Reaction and Planned Action, Level 2: Learning, Level 3: Application, and Level 4: Business Results.

Job or Task Analysis

Job or task analysis breaks a job or task down into observable steps. The competency model reveals the knowledge and skills the employee needs to accomplish these steps. Familiarize yourself with a wide range of job and task analysis approaches and be able to choose the most appropriate analysis for each project. For more on job analysis, see “A Guide to Job Analysis,” *Infoline* No. 250506.

Learning the 12 Habits

Both new and experienced trainers can benefit from applying these 12 habits of successful training delivery. Now that you have the foundational knowledge of designing learning, you can apply these principles in your everyday work. The habits are:

1. Prepare for training delivery.
2. Align solutions with objectives, needs.
3. Effectively convey objectives.
4. Use various learning methodologies.
5. Facilitate learning.
6. Encourage participation, build motivation.
7. Establish credibility.
8. Manage the learning environment.
9. Deliver constructive feedback.
10. Create a positive learning climate.
11. Ensure learning outcomes.
12. Evaluate solutions.

1. Prepare for Training Delivery

Remember that poor preparation is the root cause of almost everything that may go wrong during a training session. Use the following preparation checklist to make your training session all that you hope for:

- ☐ Prepare your training environment by determining the best seating arrangement, removing distractions, ensuring accessibility, addressing lighting, and knowing how to control the climate.
- ☐ Know whom to call in an emergency.
- ☐ Prepare your equipment and visuals by setting up the day before the event, previewing and practicing with your visuals, learning how to use the equipment, and knowing some troubleshooting tricks.

Adult Learner Concepts

The following table presents Malcolm Knowles's assumptions about adult learners and their implications for trainers.

Assumptions About Adult Learners	Implications for Trainers
<p>■ Orientation to Learning Adults need to know why they must learn something before investing their time. They seek knowledge they can use immediately and are often problem focused.</p>	Trainers must ensure that learners know the purpose for training as early as possible. Trainers must determine needs and interests and develop content in response to these needs.
<p>■ Self-Concept Adults enter any learning situation with an image of themselves as being self-directed.</p>	Trainers must help adults identify their needs and direct their own learning experiences.
<p>■ Experience Adults come to a learning opportunity with a wealth of experience and a great deal to contribute.</p>	Trainers must identify ways to build upon and make use of adults' hard-earned experience.
<p>■ Readiness to Learn Adults have a strong readiness to learn those things that help them cope with daily life effectively.</p>	Trainers must present materials that directly relate to situations that adults face and are relevant.
<p>■ Motivation to Learn Adults are more responsive to internal motivators such as increased self-esteem than external motivators such as high salaries.</p>	Trainers must ensure that the learners' internal motivation is not blocked by creating a safe learning climate.

Adapted from Elaine Biech's Training for Dummies.

Technology vs. Traditional

When determining whether to use technology-supported or traditional training delivery options, weigh the following advantages and disadvantages.

Asynchronous or Web-Based Training

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● greater participant flexibility ● greater opportunity for reflection prior to feedback ● practical application time between sessions ● interaction among learners is increased through email, chats, and so forth ● the opportunity to communicate full thoughts ● reduced costs, higher ROI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● requires more work from instructors and learners ● less personal ● requires excellent design and production ● professionals might feel threatened ● disrupts status quo ● technical requirements may be hard to meet

Classroom Learning

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● face-to-face interaction ● more appropriate for some subjects ● more comfortable because participants are used to a traditional environment ● better to communicate emotions, recognize student reactions, provide inspiration, solicit the “right questions” during discussions, and synthesize new solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● less flexible for participants ● less opportunity for reflection and feedback ● more limited practical application time ● interaction among learners is not always maximized ● fewer opportunities to communicate thoughts ● can be expensive

- ☐ Prepare your participants by sending an agenda and/or a roster and providing discussion tips to supervisors so they can help prepare the learners.
- ☐ Prepare yourself by practicing the presentation thoroughly; identifying logistical details; familiarizing yourself with the room; anticipating questions; identifying questions to ask; and creating notes on timing, activities, and cues for yourself.
- ☐ Prepare physically and mentally by getting a good night's sleep, learning relaxation techniques, avoiding foods that may have a negative impact on your performance, and having a rousing pep talk ready to give yourself.

2. Align Solutions With Objectives, Needs

Training isn't always clear cut. Just because someone has stated that training is required does not make it so. Other solutions exist to meet learners' needs. The following activities will help you ensure that your solutions align with needs:

- Use a needs assessment to determine if a training requirement exists, and if so what the specific content and scope should be.
- Determine the root causes of poor performance and then consider alternative learning solutions to resolve them.
- Talk to participants prior to a training session to identify their needs and to align them with session objectives.
- Incorporate an opening activity that helps you gain information about the group by asking about their expectations, needs, and concerns.

3. Effectively Convey Objectives

Objectives specify the performance (knowledge or skill) that is desired after the training has been completed. Therefore, ensure the learners know the objectives and what is expected of them. Use the following three-step process:

1. Before the training event, share the objectives with the participants so that they can come prepared with questions.
2. Present the objectives at the opening of the training session. Clarify questions to ensure understanding. Ask if this is what learners expected or if any objectives are missing.
3. Review the objectives during the session and at the end to ensure that they were met.

4. Use Various Learning Methodologies

Variation keeps training interesting. Avoid falling into the rut of doing the same things over and over. Push yourself to try something new. It keeps you and your participants inspired and interested.

- Include a new instructional method every time you train (see the sidebars *Instructional Methods* at right and *Considering Methods* for more on different methods).
- Bring in a guest speaker to give you a break and your learners a new perspective.
- Observe another trainer who conducts a similar or the same training session. Try some of the new techniques you observe.
- Review the activity books listed in the resource section and incorporate some ideas.

5. Facilitate Learning

Straight lecture is required when rules or laws must be imparted word for word or when safety is an issue. But for the most part, facilitating experiential activities and discussion enhances learning. Practice facilitating learning by:

- creating discussion between you and the learner as well as among all the learners
- creating experiential learning activities for learners to discover the content themselves
- sharing personal experiences to build rapport
- providing opportunities for participants to evaluate their own learning.

Instructional Methods

As a trainer you will want to use a variety of instructional methods. Try some of these:

- **Vary the presentation** by using panel discussions or debates, or taking a tour. You could use storytelling or guided note-taking. You can design a pop quiz in the middle, creating a conversation between you and your learners. Make presentations more interesting by using visuals and adding humor.
- **Demonstrations** are effective activities. Try instructor role plays, interviews, props, DVDs, or field trips to show learners a process, model a technique, or even demonstrate the wrong way to do something.
- **Drama** can be incorporated into the delivery of training through skits, survival problem solving, costumes, or scripting conversation.
- **Games** add a touch of competition and can energize a group. Games may include crossword puzzles, relay races, card games, computer games, or board-game adaptations.
- **Discussions** are often seen as an extension of lectures, but the two-way communication aspect creates learner involvement. You may wish to use a two-person buzz group or a large group brainstorming. Round-robins, nominal group techniques, and fishbowls are other discussion variations.
- **Cases** refer to learning methods in which the learners are presented with scenarios that require analysis and suggestions for improvement. In addition to the typical case studies, these include in-baskets, critical incidents, or problem-solving clinics.
- **Art** involves more creative methods such as drawing, design, and other non-word events.
- **Playlikes** are similar to dramatizations, but less serious and more open ended. You may consider role plays, role reversals, video feedback, simulations, or improvisation.
- **Participant-directed activities** require that the learners lead the training delivery. This category may include skill centers, teaching teams, teach backs, self-analysis, journaling, and research.

Considering Methods

When creating an effective learning opportunity, the WLP professional must consider the array of instructional methods available today. Time, distance, budget, and coordination of schedules are only some of the issues to be considered while designing the most appropriate format for a learning intervention. Instructional strategies must be chosen that will meet participants' needs and will create an atmosphere conducive to learning.

There are dozens of activities you can incorporate into your next training session. But why? Why go to all this trouble to use activities? Adult learning principles will lead you to the following four conclusions. Activities

- **promote learning.** Activities promote learning by doing. Learners will retain the knowledge better if you can engage as many of their senses as possible.
- **are motivational.** Learners like to be involved in their learning. It is especially motivating for them to make decisions and feel valued for what they add to the learning experience.
- **add energy.** Using activities and games gives learners a break, allowing them to stretch their brains as well as their bodies.
- **reinforce information.** We all need to hear something several times before it sinks in, but it would be pretty boring if the trainer stated the same thing in the same way. Activities allow learners to experience the same information in many ways.

6. Encourage Participation, Build Motivation

Create active and ample participation to enhance learning. When you show you are interested in others and their ideas, you create a motivating learning environment.

- Use small break-out groups to overcome any reluctance to share ideas or concerns.
- Use participants' names as often as possible.
- Use body language that encourages participation: positive nods, smiles, and eye contact.
- Balance participation by encouraging the quiet, yet not shutting down the vocal participants.

- Reinforce correct responses, yet do not negate the incorrect ones. Allow participants to bring up issues, yet stay on track.
- Build participation by methodically increasing expectations. Initially ask for a simple show of hands, request volunteers, use round-robins, call on specific people, encourage people to work in small groups, and eventually ask individuals to act as spokespersons for the groups.
- Apply techniques to get learners to open up.

7. Establish Credibility

Professional trainers begin to establish credibility during the introduction. Just as you want to know about participants, they will want to learn something about you.

- Share something about yourself during the introductions.
- Credibility does not mean that you are a know-it-all. If you don't know the answer, say so and offer to obtain the information.
- Credibility is more than what you know. It is also how dependable and helpful you are. Follow up on all requests promptly.
- Do not criticize others in or out of the session.

8. Manage the Learning Environment

A professional trainer is adept at managing the learning environment to promote learning for all participants. Do this in the following ways:

- Use excellent communication skills, listen well, accept input, project assertiveness, ask questions, encourage questions, and practice silence when appropriate.
- Use a sense of humor, patience, openness, trust, and sincerity.
- Provide consistent eye contact, demonstrate affirmative nonverbals, and stay engaged.

- Balance participation, maintain the flow of interaction, develop ground rules, and create an inclusive environment.
- Address problems in the classroom or in an e-learning situation as soon as they crop up.
- Be prepared to manage disruptive behaviors when they occur.

9. Deliver Constructive Feedback

Capable trainers provide feedback to participants. Feedback is easy to give participants when they are doing well. Feedback is more difficult to give when participants are not doing well.

- Catch your learners “being good.” Reinforce participants as they achieve success. In addition, provide feedback for contributing to participation, such as volunteering.
- Provide honest feedback about progress.
- Create a climate in which participants feel free to give each other feedback on their behaviors by building trust, rewarding appropriate behavior, and ignoring inappropriate behavior.
- Give corrective feedback in private, using specific examples and offering opportunities to demonstrate correct behaviors or knowledge.
- Handle incorrect answers delicately to protect the participative atmosphere, but ensure that the correction is made. You can say something like, “Let’s see what others have to say,” or, “That’s one way to think about it, let me add something I may not have been clear about.”

10. Create a Positive Learning Climate

A positive learning climate is critical to learners’ abilities to easily absorb knowledge and learn new skills. Be sensitive to the unique needs of each learner and ensure that the climate is supportive and conducive to learning.

- Take the time to learn and use participants’ names. Start by obtaining the roster prior to the training session, get a big picture vision of the mix of participants, and note any names that

may be difficult to pronounce. Use name tents as reminders, use their names when speaking to learners, and practice memorizing their names during small group activities.

- Get to know your participants early in the session. Start with introductions and continue to build throughout the session.
- Let participants in on who you are, both personally and professionally, to create a positive learning climate. Spend time at breaks getting to know them and allowing them to learn something about you.
- Encourage participants to ask questions. Stop at natural points in the training and ask what questions learners may have. Observe body language that may suggest individuals have questions, and invite their questions. Allow time for participants to ask questions privately for those who may be too shy to ask in front of the rest of the group.
- Balance participation.

11. Ensure Learning Outcomes

The mark of an expert trainer is one who recognizes how important it is that learning occur and that the learning is transferred from the training session to the workplace. A trainer recognizes potential barriers to ensuring learning outcomes and addresses them early in the process.

- Form a team made up of the learners, supervisors, and you to ensure that learning and skills transfer from training to the workplace.
- Pre-training strategies include coaching the management team, informing management about their role in ensuring learning outcomes, and providing pre-training projects.
- Gain commitment to action near the end of the session by asking what learners will implement back at the workplace, or what they will change as a result of what they’ve learned.
- Ensure transfer of learning by having participants pair up with a “buddy.” Buddies will support each other after the session has ended.

Legal and Ethical Issues

The training profession does not currently have a single code of ethics. However, you should be aware of a number of legal and ethical issues.

■ Copyright Law

You saw a cartoon on Sunday that would be perfect for the group you are training. You want to play a CD by one of your favorite jazz artists at the beginning of a presentation that you will conduct. What can you do? You have three choices when material does not belong to you:

1. Use it and hope that you do not get caught. (Not a wise choice.)
2. Don't use it. Create your own.
3. Contact the creator for permission to use the material.

Obtaining permission to use material is often easier than you might think. Start with the Copyright Clearance Center located in Danvers, Massachusetts. Learn more about the organization, the largest licensor of text reproduction rights in the world, at its Website at www.copyright.com.

■ Rehabilitation Act, Section 508

In 1998, the U.S. Congress amended the Act to require federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. The law applies to all federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, which includes training materials. To further your understanding of Section 508 and how to support its implementation, go to www.section508.gov.

■ Professional Trainer Ethics

Consider what it means to be an ethical trainer. It is not necessarily one big thing that you do, but it is made up of the many little things you do everyday. It means

- delivering the highest quality training
- giving credit to others to whose work you refer
- holding confidential information close
- respecting all learners.

Define your ethics. Create a personal code of ethics that defines what you will honor as a trainer.

- Have participants write memos to themselves committing to some actions and changes. They place the memo inside envelopes, self-address, and seal them. You can mail them back in a month as a reminder of their commitments.
- Post-training strategies may include follow-up letters, emails, or phone calls from the trainer; support groups; past participant mentors; management support or coaching; or job aids.

12. Evaluate Solutions

Evaluation is the point where trainers prove their value as a business partner to their organizations. All training sessions based on an instructional design model will include an evaluation element. You may evaluate at any one or all four of Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation.

To determine what evaluation level to use, decide how the evaluation information will be used, what changes may be made as a result of the evaluations, what the stakeholders want to measure, and what resources will be required for the evaluation. Use the evaluation information to make improvements in various aspects of the training session. Share evaluation results with the individuals who requested the training and with your management.

The Professional Trainer

So, what do you need to do to maintain a professional edge? You can attend conferences or take classes. Join an association such as ASTD or identify and work with a mentor. Train with a partner and ask for feedback. Stay on top of what's happening in the field by reading professional journals such as *Training Magazine* and *T+D*. Stay on top of what's happening in the business world by reading magazines such as *Fortune*, *Business Week*, and the *Harvard Business Review*.

One component of professionalism in training is ethics. See the sidebar *Legal and Ethical Issues* at left for a brief discussion of trainer ethics. Another key is to become a lifelong learner. You owe it to your employer and your participants to be the best that you can be, to stay on top of both content as well as tools of the profession, and to find ways to constantly improve.

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Job Aid

12 Habits for Success: A Checklist

The following checklist summarizes the habits described in greater detail in this *Infoline*. Use the checklist to establish new habits and improve your success as a trainer.

1. Prepare for training delivery by

- ☐ ensuring the environment is ideal for learning
- ☐ learning to use your equipment
- ☐ practicing your presentation.

2. Align solutions with objectives and needs by

- ☐ using a needs assessment
- ☐ determining root causes and considering alternatives.

3. Effectively convey objectives by

- ☐ sharing objectives with participants before, at the start of, during, and after the session.

4. Use various learning methodologies by

- ☐ including a new instructional method
- ☐ observing another trainer for new ideas.

5. Facilitate learning by

- ☐ creating discussions in the training room
- ☐ creating experiential learning activities.

6. Encourage participation and build motivation by

- ☐ using small break-out groups
- ☐ reinforcing correct responses
- ☐ increasing expectations of participant interactivity.

7. Establish credibility by

- ☐ sharing something about yourself
- ☐ not acting as though you know it all
- ☐ following up on all requests promptly.

8. Manage the learning environment by

- ☐ using excellent communication skills
- ☐ balancing participation, maintaining interaction
- ☐ addressing problems immediately.

9. Deliver constructive feedback by

- ☐ reinforcing participants as they succeed
- ☐ providing honest feedback about progress
- ☐ giving corrective feedback delicately.

10. Create a positive learning climate by

- ☐ learning and using participants' names
- ☐ allowing participants to learn about you
- ☐ encouraging participants to ask questions.

11. Ensure learning outcomes by

- ☐ coaching the management team
- ☐ gaining participant commitments to action near the end of the session
- ☐ following up.

12. Evaluate solutions by

- ☐ determining how evaluation information will be used
- ☐ selecting an appropriate level of evaluation (Kirkpatrick's four levels)
- ☐ sharing evaluation information with appropriate stakeholders.

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