

The New Trainer's Toolkit

– Activity Summary –

1. **Effective Seating**

Giving thought to the best seating for the venue and the type of session will have an immediate positive effect. This unit gives you a number of different ways of laying out your training room, with the pros and cons of each, and the type of course for which each layout is suited.

2. **Introductory Activities**

Introductions are vital but often tedious. Here you will find four ready-made exercises for introducing participants to one another. Using these will ensure you never have to go through the boring 'creeping death' of asking each person to introduce themselves.

3. **Session Objectives**

Objectives and Learning Points are essential, although even some experienced trainers have difficulties with them. By using this easy-to-follow guide, you will be able to design concise objectives for your sessions and follow them up with Learning Points that will give your sessions a firm foundation.

4. **Organizing a Session**

Crucial to a smooth-running course is the organization of your material into a coherent form, enabling seamless delivery. Using the Day Sheet and the Trainer's Checklist will not only help your design process, but will ensure that your course looks and feels professional.

5. **Learning Reviews**

The review of a day's work is important for participants because it reinforces the learning of that day. This unit provides three review processes you can use as is.

6. **Your Guide to Working With a Second Trainer**

Real teamwork is required if you are to make full use of the advantages of working with a second trainer. In this unit you will find the signalling processes you will need when you're 'up front' as well as a list of important dos and don'ts.

7. **Producing Trainer's Briefs**

The single most important tool that you'll take into the training room is your Trainer's Brief, which guides you through the whole session. This unit takes you through the process of writing a brief, providing an example of a completed version as well as a template for writing your own.

8. **Choosing the Right Training Method**

How can you best put your point across? The choice of method used in a session, whether to lecture, play a game, or use a video or a case study, should never be random. This unit examines the advantages and disadvantages of many methods of training and recommends uses for each.

9. **Producing Useful Handouts**

Most people attending or looking for training courses expect handouts – some organizations seem to measure the effectiveness of a course by the amount of paper brought back. While it's usually necessary to have some handouts, this unit outlines the key aspects of producing handouts that will add to your effectiveness as a trainer and continue to be of real use to the participants.

10. **Session Design**

An understanding of the theory of session design will allow you to construct each session in such a way that learning is maximized. This unit relates the design of your sessions to The Learning Cycle and to the relationship between learning and the degree of participation required. In conjunction with Unit 8: Choosing the Right Training Method, it gives you a powerful advantage.

11. Handling a Difficult Group

Aggressive, unco-operative or defensive participants can cause problems for any trainer. This unit identifies the four most common difficult behaviours you'll come across in a group and shows you ways of dealing positively and successfully with them.

12. Session Warmers

The 'graveyard' session after lunch can be a difficult one. Here are detailed plans for two activities that you can use to liven things up. In addition to being very funny, they both have clear Learning Points.

13. Steering the Discussion

Discussions will often form a significant and powerful part of your sessions and you will spend a lot of time leading discussion groups. However, they can easily get out of control. Here is a process for controlling a group discussion in an effortless manner.

14. Dealing With the Unexpected

You have to expect the unexpected! This unit helps you to anticipate, where possible, and provides a handy list of tips for you to use when dealing with the unexpected. It also provides a useful set of rules for use on all occasions when the unexpected happens.

15. Reviewing Your Training Skills

In order to help others to develop, you must continually develop and improve yourself, as well as keep up to date with the latest training aids and research. This unit encourages you to do so and provides you with a personal review to help you to assess and improve your performance after every event you run.

16. Course Validation

Validating a course is an important activity. This unit explains the difference between validation and evaluation, and provides you with three validation forms of varying degrees of complexity that you can ask participants to complete at the end of a training event.

17. Dealing With Participants

Managing people on a course, with all their worries and insecurities, can be a challenging responsibility. In this unit, after an exploration of the different types of behaviour you are likely to encounter, you will find a description and an explanation of the Golden Rules for dealing with all participants.

18. Ground Rules, the Issues Chart, and the Agenda

You will need a reference point to which procedural disputes can be referred and a way of avoiding irrelevant or premature discussions. This unit shows more than one way of establishing agreed upon Ground Rules for the running of a training event and the way to establish an Issues Chart for troublesome items. There is also an explanation of the use of the Agenda as a vital opening piece for a course.

19. Letters of Invitation and Participant Lists

Producing letters of invitation and keeping lists are tasks vital to the efficient running of a course. The invitation letter is the beginning of the training; the message you send to participants about the course and about yourself is important. This unit will help you to ensure that the right message gets across even before the start of the course. It provides sample letters, templates for letters of invitation and a template for writing to participants' managers. There is also a course participant list for keeping track of attendance and objectives.

20. The Learning Diary

Your participants will benefit by regularly reviewing the progress of their learning and development. In this unit you will find the Learning Diary and a tool to enable you and your groups to use it at the end of each day on any training course.

21. Three Useful Training Sessions

There are times when you need to take the focus away from the course material for a short time. Here are three short sessions you can use in almost any event to lighten the atmosphere, while at the same time providing learning that is valuable in any organizational environment.

22. The Trainer's Toolbox

You need to be certain that you have with you everything you might need during a course. This unit provides a list of essential things you will need in the training room. Taking a toolbox with you every time you train will save you having to drop everything to go look for a pair of scissors, some Blu-Tack® or a spare bulb.

23. The Qualities and Competencies of a Trainer

An awareness of your strengths and weaknesses as a trainer is essential to your continuing development. This unit lists the qualities and competencies you'll need and the seven groups of dimensions that underpin them. It also provides you with a skills inventory, through which you can select your own areas for development.

24. Presenting Your Material

For your groups to get the best out of your material, you must present it professionally. This unit targets all those factors that will make or break your presentation – including your appearance, your attitude, your voice and language and those mannerisms that can come between you and a successful event.

25. Organizing Discussion Groups

Much of the work you do as a trainer will involve organizing and facilitating discussion groups. This unit shows you when and how to use groups of varying sizes to maximum effect; it discusses optimum numbers for different activities and provides a structure for group debriefing.

26. Confidence 'On the Stage'

If you are to do yourself justice in front of a group of relative strangers, you must feel fully confident in your own abilities. In this unit you will find a technique that you can bring swiftly into action to develop and retain your self-confidence, thereby enhancing your training success.

27. Preparing a Session: Focusing, Preparing, and the Visuals

Planning, preparation and practice form the basis of a seamless professional delivery. This unit presents the most important factors of your preparation, including the use of those 'hidden trainers', the visual aids.