HOW TO…

DESIGN TRAINING FOR OTHER TRAINERS TO RUN

When you roll-out an internal development programme, you need to ensure consistency: across sites, facilitators and over time. You cannot hope to achieve this if your training design isn't robust.

However, getting the balance right between providing enough detail to ensure consistency and being too prescriptive (and making the facilitators feel too restricted) is very important.

Lots of facilitators don't like running material that they haven't written. So the first thing you need to do is put yourself in their shoes and consider WHY they might not be so keen, and then take steps to remove all of the barriers.

They worry about losing control, about not being clear about key messages, not being able to inject their own personality, running exercises that they aren't comfortable with and losing the thread. When you understand this, you can make sure that all of these potential issues are addressed.

So here are my top tips for designing training for someone else to deliver.

1. **Involve them if possible -** Some of my most successful programmes are those where I have worked closely with the deliverer to specify the course outline. Not only are two heads better than one, but it helps us to understand each other and build trust. When the training is designed, it's good to meet again to explain what has been included and why. Listen to their suggestions and together, agree where their ideas may be used.

2. **Include detail -** No-one wants to run a course with a 50 page 'script', but neither can we expect the other person to mind read. You need to explain what you want the trainer to discuss or highlight, without telling them exactly what to say. I was once handed training materials that included 'Tell the Admiral Crichton story'. I had no idea what this was, so couldn't do that. If I have a good example or anecdote that I think should be shared, I write it out in full on a separate piece of paper that the trainer can refer to if they need/want to.

3. **Provide an overview -** Create a mind-map, flowchart or one-page overview of the flow of the course, its objectives and its key sections. This helps to put the learning into context and enables the trainer to see where the training is going and how everything fits together.

4. **Include examples -** Most training courses include discussions and case studies. Give an indication of the sort of thing you are expecting to come out of the discussion/exercise so that the trainer can guide contributions this way, and keep things on track.

5. **Include options -** At many points during a workshop, the objectives for a particular section can be achieved in a number of ways. Explain what the required outcome of the section is, and then provide 2 or 3 suggestions for how this can be achieved e.g. 'Run a reverse brainstorm by asking…' or 'Split delegates into 2 groups. Ask one to consider….' or 'Ask delegates to interview each other about X, and then report their conclusions to the group'. Make it clear WHAT must be covered; HOW it should be covered may be more flexible.

6. **Make sure that resources and references are clearly labelled -** If you need the trainer to use particular support material, make sure that it is clearly identified – not only in the session plan, but also in a separate 'Equipment and Supporting Materials' list. Label your handouts appropriately and refer to specific pages if using a workbook. Remember to specify which visual aids should be used and when.

Remember that the person delivering the training is the public face of the training. Rightly or wrongly, the quality of the training is often judged by their 'performance' so through careful design, we need to give them the best possible chance to do a great job.