



# FACILITATING GREAT TRAINING

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

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## Introduction and Overview

### Introduction and Overview

This guide has been compiled to help new or occasional facilitators to run effective learning events.

Increasingly, trainers and facilitators have to be more flexible and adapt to group needs and dynamics. The days of presenting to a group and taking questions at the end are gone, apart from in much specialised fields.

Facilitating training can also be quite scary for those who are new to training, or those who don't do it that often. If training is new to you, or not your main job it's easy to focus on 'learning' the material and presenting things clearly. Whilst this a great place to start, it will not make for a successful learning event if you can't adapt the workshop, respond to group needs and be flexible in your approach.

It covers:

- The principles of how people learn (and what this means for facilitators)
- Running interactive and engaging learning events
- Adapting learning events without losing the core content
- Handling difficult situations

You don't have to read it all at once, or in order: You can simply go to the section you are interested in whenever you need to refresh your knowledge, or to look for new ideas.

It assumes that the workshops being delivered are behavioural skills workshops, where people need to learn good practice, but find the right way for them to do things themselves. In workshops like this, a more facilitative approach is needed, where the course leader helps delegates to understand concepts, work things out for themselves and practice new ways of doing things.

For training that is more about learning processes, procedures or where there is a very clear right and wrong way to do something, a more directive approach is needed. That said, you can enhance a more traditional training course by incorporating some of the techniques in this guide.

## Underlying Principles

### Underlying Principles



In this section, we revisit some of the principles of learning, facilitation and training. This will help you to understand WHY we do things, and enable you to make informed choices about how to manage your own learning events.

### The Neuroscience of Learning

Recent interest in Neuroscience in Learning and Development has uncovered lots of useful findings: Many of which we already knew to be 'good practice', but now we have a clearer understanding of WHY.

Here are few interesting things that we now know about our brains, and what it means for learning.

*Our brain's main job is to keep us alive – this means choosing safe courses of action for us whenever possible. In most people, it has a natural tendency to avoid the unknown as it could be dangerous.*



*In training, the 'unknown and dangerous' is anything new. People will resist change, so as facilitators we need to make the environment as safe as possible.*



*Different aspects of our brain handle different aspects of our life. The brain stem handles all our 'basic' functions, the amygdala is the emotion centre, and our pre-frontal cortex can deal with complex cognitive things like problem solving and decision making.*



*Make sure the brain stem is happy by creating a comfortable environment for the body: lighting, temperature, regular bathroom breaks etc., and satisfy the amygdala by taking away fear (fear initiates a 'fight or flight' response)*

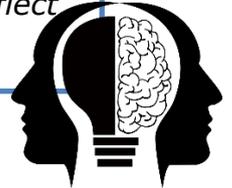


## Underlying Principles

*Our brain has three main centres – The brain stem, the amygdala (caveman/ reptilian brain) is where we feel emotion and triggers 'gut reaction' which is often in conflict with our more rational pre-frontal cortex.*



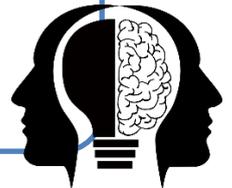
*People often respond emotionally to change or challenge (criticism). Once they've had time to think, they may react differently. Give people time to reflect and think.*



*Our brain likes routine – It likes to make clear neural pathways that can be followed without conscious effort. Practice and repetition create these pathways, and this will free up the 'thinking' part of the brain for more complex issues. Where possible, the brain simplifies things as much as possible.*



*Give clear instructions, use processes and keep repeating key messages.*



*Our brain likes what is known and familiar. It looks for patterns, tries to make things fit what is already known and may reject what doesn't. Therefore, we tend to distort information, generalise it or even 'delete' it if it doesn't fit our existing view of the world.*



*Make links to what is already known. Emphasise what's similar rather than what's different.*



*Our brain is plastic – that is, it continues to change and develop throughout our entire lives. It is possible to 're-wire' your brain, but as you get older it is harder because we have more deeply ingrained neural pathways that are more difficult to over-write.*



*Recognise that some people may struggle to change their ways even if they really do try. Provide as many ways as possible to try new things, emphasise progress, and keep going!*

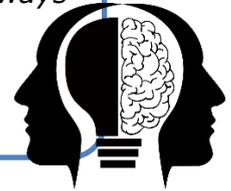


## Underlying Principles

*Neural pathways are built more quickly if an action or experience is repeated often and/or if information is presented to the brain in a variety of formats i.e. through more than one of our senses.*



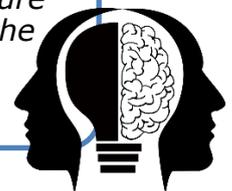
*Involve people in learning and engage as many senses as possible: if they see, hear and feel/do they are more likely to remember. Covering the same information in different ways and from different perspectives is also useful.*



*The brain only pays attention to (and therefore remembers) what it decides is useful or interesting (grabs its attention), or what we consciously tell it to. There is simply too much to process otherwise.*



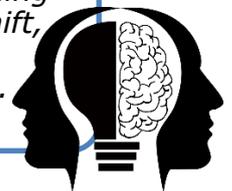
*Make sure the benefit of the training is clear (or the negative consequences of NOT doing something). Make it interesting and capture people's curiosity at the start.*



*Our brain (like any other organ in our body) works best when it is healthy, well nourished, hydrated and rested.*



*Pay attention to energy levels. Don't work through lunch or schedule training at the end of a day/shift, and ensure people have water to drink.*



*The brain works best in a state of calm alertness: Too stressed and it can't focus; too relaxed and it doesn't pay attention. Similarly, if there are too many mental or physical distractions, it can't concentrate. A typical attention span is between 5 and 20 minutes: The actual length depends on the person's interest in the subject, and the extent to which they are distracted.*



*Take time to relax people and settle them in. Manage their expectations about what will be covered, how, why and when. Remove distractions such as mobile phones and tablets/laptops. Build in regular breaks OR changes of activity.*

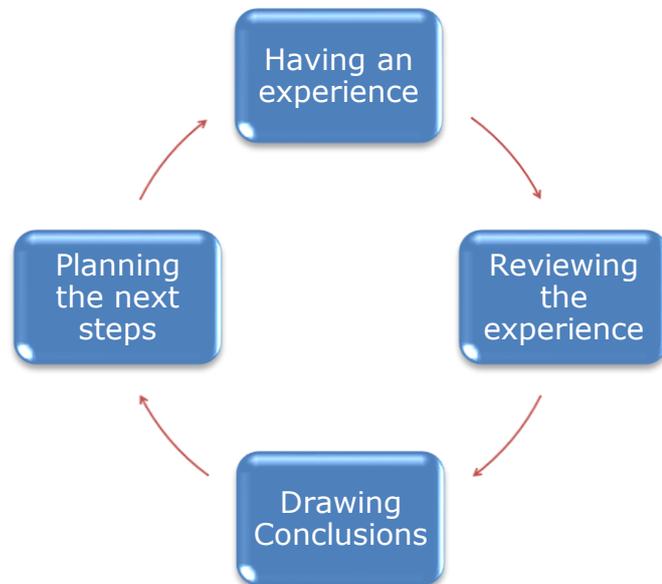


We will come back to these principles throughout this guide, and you will see them in action in the way that training is designed and facilitated.

## Underlying Principles

### How People Learn

David Kolb said that adults learn from experience, which is a process and, like all processes, it is possible to break it down into the constituent parts. Imagine a circle with four steps or stages at the four points of a compass.



#### Stage 1: Having an Experience

There are two different ways of having an experience. One is to let the experience come to you (reactive) and the other is to seek it out deliberately (proactive).

The opportunities to learn from experience are greatly increased if the normal everyday things which happen to you are enhanced by seeking out opportunities to learn: Telling the brain what to focus on, raises awareness and gives you an experience that you can then reflect upon.

#### Stage 2: Reviewing the Experience

If you are to learn from an experience it is vital to review what happened during it. You can do this simply by thinking about it, or by being more 'active' in your review. Asking for other people's opinions, talking about the experience and comparing it to other similar experiences can all be very useful.

#### Stage 3: Concluding from the Experience

Concluding involves scanning the raw observations from the review for conclusions, 'answers' or lessons learned. This involves making connections and creating hypotheses that can be tested in the final phase. It helps if the conclusions are specific rather than general, as this allows you to focus on a particular action.

#### Stage 4: Planning the Next Steps

Planning is about turning conclusions into action points. Being clear about what exactly you will do differently helps you to put learning into practice and also allows you to measure if it makes a difference. If it doesn't, you have just created a new experience which you can review, draw conclusions and plan against!

## Underlying Principles

### Learning as a Continuous Process

The four stages in the process of learning from experience are mutually dependent on one another. No stage is particularly useful on its own. Each stage plays an equally important part in the total process (though the time spent on each may vary considerably).



Honey and Mumford noticed that most people develop preferences which give them a liking for certain stages over others. The preferences lead to a distortion of the learning process so that greater emphasis is placed on some stages more than others.

Honey and Mumford termed these preferences 'Learning Styles'. Although the theory has been largely discredited, it is accepted that people do tend to have a **personal preference**. It is only when we take these styles as absolutes that we are in error.

People should move through the whole cycle in order to learn, and just because someone may have a preference for one style over another, it doesn't mean to say that they CAN'T learn in other ways... just it is not their preference. One final note: Some subjects lend themselves better to some learning styles than others...You can't learn to swim by watching others and reading about it, just as you can't learn complex legal procedures by 'having a go'.

Effective training will take into account different learning preferences to enable as many people as possible to benefit from the training and put it into practice, and keeps the training varied. The more varied, the more attention we will gain and retain, and the more likely it is that the training will stick!

## Underlying Principles

### Honey and Munford Learning Styles Overview

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Activists</b></p> <p><i>Learn by doing. Revel in innovative approaches but, having introduced them, tend to become bored and start looking for new fields</i></p> <p><i>They jump in first when something needs to be done or get wound up if progress is not being made, thinking 'Why don't they get on with it instead of talking about it'</i></p> <p><i>An activist trainer who gave a group something to do would want to get involved and would be thinking 'Why are they taking so long?' The dilemma would be 'What can I do until they have finished this task?'</i></p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reflectors</b></p> <p><i>Interested in learning new concepts and practices but prefer to sit back and think about the implications and possible actions before saying or doing anything</i></p> <p><i>They like to consider tasks and problems from all angles and are cautious before making a move</i></p> <p><i>Often they will be the quiet members of a group</i></p> <p><i>Reflectors can become annoyed with the Activists who are interrupting their reflective process but the reverse will not apply because the Activist is so busy doing they may not notice the Reflectors reflecting!</i></p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theorists</b></p> <p><i>In many respects Theorists are also Reflectors, but their reflections are much deeper, and they insist on knowing, comparing and understanding the basic data, the assumptions, and the theories and models on which the ideas are based</i></p> <p><i>They are logical, rational and objective thinkers who like everything to be taken into consideration before making a decision</i></p> <p><i>Learning is limited if sufficient time is not given for them to consider, discuss and argue the possibilities</i></p> <p><i>It is common for people with a strong Theorist preference to have an equally strong or moderately strong Reflector preference</i></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pragmatists</b></p> <p><i>Practical people who are interested in carrying out new ideas provided they have practical working value. With specific and direct applications in the workplace</i></p> <p><i>The subjective attitudes of Activists are not for them</i></p> <p><i>Hardworking and get fully involved if they can see the practical benefits</i></p>   |

## Underlying Principles

As a facilitator, it is important to cater for the needs of your learners, even if they do not reflect your own preferences. This means:

Having lots of opportunities to 'do' and get people actively involved in having experiences and discovering their own learning.

Allowing people time to think and discuss with colleagues. Allow them to examine situations from a range of angles and build in time for individual reflection.

Resisting the urge to tell people the answers – they will learn more by finding their own. However, where you do need to provide theoretical input, make sure the information is correct and complete.

Giving people the opportunity to try new things out and encouraging them to specify what they will DO as a result as result of the learning.

## Accelerated Learning

Accelerated Learning is a 'brain-friendly' way of training people quickly AND so that learning sticks. It is a principle that brings together key points from neuroscience and learning theory that encourages working WITH the brain and our natural tendencies, rather than against them.

Accelerated Learning unlocks much of our potential for learning that tends to be untapped by traditional teaching methods. It does this by actively involving the whole person, using physical activity, creativity, music, images, colour, and other methods designed to get people deeply involved in their own learning. It also recognises that people learn in different ways, at different rates and that we do not all have the same abilities and preferences.



## Underlying Principles

There are a number of core principles of accelerated learning that you ought to be familiar with:

1. **Learning Involves the Whole Mind and Body.** Learning is not all merely "head" learning and rational thought: Knowing is not the same as believing or doing. Make learning personal, emotional and sensory as well as logical. This way it is more likely to be remembered and acted upon.



2. **Desire Drives Learning** – when people feel that learning something will benefit them, they are much more inspired to get involved. Exploring 'what's in it for me' (WIIFM) helps to get learners in the right frame of mind.

3. **Provide a Context.** Helping people to understand the 'big picture' before going into detail helps them to position things in their mind. It can also help to deflect lots of questions about why the training is being run.



4. **Learning is Creation, Not Consumption.** Knowledge is not something a learner absorbs, but something a learner creates i.e. learning should be ACTIVE not passive. When people learn for themselves, they create their own neural networks, understand more and are more committed to applying that learning.

5. **Build on Existing Knowledge.** Recognise and use the knowledge and experience in the room. Give people credit for what they already know and can do, and use this as a starting point. There's little point in starting from scratch when you don't need to. It isn't motivating and lengthens the learning unnecessarily.



6. **Collaboration Aids Learning.** All good learning has a social base. We often learn more by interacting with peers than we learn by any other means. Competition between learners slows learning. Cooperation among learners speeds it up. A genuine learning community is always better for learning than a collection of isolated individuals.



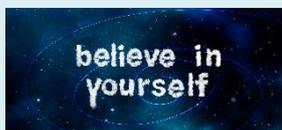
## Underlying Principles

### 7. **Learning Takes Place on Many Levels Simultaneously.**

Learning is not a matter of absorbing one little thing at a time in linear fashion, but absorbing many things at once. Good learning engages people on many levels simultaneously and engages multiple senses at once.



8. **Learning Comes from Application** (With Feedback). People learn best in context. Things learned in isolation are hard to remember and soon forgotten. We learn how to swim by swimming, how to manage by managing, how to sing by singing, and how to sell by selling. The real and the concrete are far better teachers than the hypothetical and the abstract.



### 9. **Positive Emotions Greatly Improve Learning.**

Feelings determine both the quality and quantity of one's learning. Negative feelings inhibit learning. Positive feelings accelerate it. Learning that is stressful, painful, and dreary can't compare with learning that is joyful, relaxed, and engaging. Focussing on the Positive i.e. what people should do, what they do well is far more effective than drawing attention to the negative (what they shouldn't do, what they are doing wrong).

10. **A picture paints a thousand words.** The human nervous system is more of an image processor than a word processor. Concrete images are much easier to grasp and retain than written or verbal information.



11. **Create Hooks to Hang the Learning On.** Using mnemonics, acronyms, stories, mind-maps and other tools to make the training easy to recall help the learners greatly

12. **Create a Learning Environment that encourages curiosity, openness and support.** The room should be set up with the delegates in mind as much as possible, it's not about you showcasing your skills, but about the delegates being able to learn.



## Underlying Principles

### Structuring Brain-Friendly Training

Good training is designed to incorporate Accelerated Learning best practice by following the MASTER format.



#### MINDSET

- Start with a context or 'big picture'
- Give learners the opportunity to identify the benefits they will get from completing the learning
- Make sure you gain and retain interest



#### ACQUIRE THE FACTS

- Provide new information, or present existing knowledge/skills in a new light
- Include models, theories and examples - make sure learners are educated



#### SEARCH FOR THE MEANING

- Provide opportunities for the information presented to be discussed and explored
- Build on ideas and concepts already introduced
- Give learners the opportunity to learn from their own and others' experience



#### TRIGGER THE MEMORY

- Include elements that summarise key learning points in a memorable way



#### EXHIBIT THE LEARNING

- Make sure that learners have the opportunity to practice new skills and test new knowledge
- They should be able to leave the event being able to do something that they couldn't before



#### REFLECT

- Build in time at the end for group and personal reflection
- Make sure learners are able to see how they will apply what they have learned when they return to work

## Underlying Principles

Within a workshop, you are likely to move up and down the MASTER model to some extent. For example, you may introduce a topic (Mindset) then provide some information (Acquire the facts) then explore it through case studies (Search for the meaning) before completing a group exercise (Trigger the memory), and THEN introduce another topic. As long as the event itself follows broadly in this order, it should feel natural to the learners.

If you need to adapt or tailor a learning event, it's important to check that you don't tamper with the overall structure: If for example you want to reduce time so remove the 'search for the meaning' and 'trigger the memory' aspect of a topic, learning is unlikely to happen as delegates will struggle to make the leap straight from 'acquire the facts' to 'exhibit the learning'. Instead, look for alternative ways of completing these stages OR look for an activity that will cover two or three of the stages simultaneously.

More on this later!

### Training or Facilitation?

Wikipedia defines a facilitator as "Someone who helps a group of people understand their common objectives and assists them to plan to achieve them without taking a particular position in the discussion".

So how does this differ from a trainer?



Traditionally a trainer is someone with expertise in a particular area who passes on their knowledge and skills to others in a formal way.

These days, when we have finished formal education, we are less likely to accept 'expert' views from a teacher. We all have knowledge, insights, opinions and experiences and all of these can be useful to

learning. Indeed, one of the main benefits that training workshops have over e-learning is that people can learn from each other and share good practice: The 'best' way ('text-book' way) may not be the best way for some people, or in some situations. Taking a facilitated approach rather than a traditional training approach allows them to uncover the best way for them.

As such, a training facilitator is **not always** a subject matter expert. Instead they have enough knowledge to be able to steer discussion and draw on the knowledge of the participants, and have the skills to explore any gaps and develop the understanding of the group. In short, training facilitators establish existing knowledge, build on it and keep discussion relevant so that delegates leave the room with better understanding than when they arrived.

## Underlying Principles

Facilitators still have objectives to meet and work to a plan, but they are much more responsive to the needs of the group.

They lead from the back rather than the front.

This means there tends to be a lot less 'presenting' and a lot more listening and questioning, which can feel a little scary as you have less 'preparation' to fall back on.

Remember though that training is for the learners: It's not about your 'performance' at the front of the room.

### The Key Skills of a Facilitator

To fulfil this role, a training facilitator needs a lot of skills at their disposal including:



## Underlying Principles

### Defining



This is about defining what the group needs to do or achieve. Whether it's setting an objective, defining an outcome or describing an activity, a facilitator should give the group initial direction OR help them to define their own objective/direction clearly. Too many meetings/discussions or activities ramble on aimlessly because the purpose hasn't been clearly defined.

### Listening

A good facilitator spends a lot of time listening to the group. What is being said, who is saying it and (in some cases) what isn't being said. The facilitator must remain slightly apart from the discussions so that they can manage the process of a discussion/activity rather than the content of it.



### Questioning



A few carefully selected questions that make the group think, add enormous value to a discussion. Sometimes, questions need to be very specific whilst at other times, a more open question may be useful. It depends very much on what you want to do.

|  |   |
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| If the group is getting off track  | A specific or closed question is useful to 'stop them in their tracks' e.g. "Is that something within your control?"  |
| If the group is getting 'stuck' on a particular issue  | A reflective or hypothetical question may be useful such as "How might that look to people in other departments?"   |
| If conversation is dominated by a few individuals  | A specific question to someone else may be useful such as "What approaches have you seen in the past Gavin?"  |
| If the group is struggling for ideas   | A provocative question may be useful such as "If you had all the time/money in the world, what would you do?"   |
| If no-one responds to your open questions  | A closed one will get a response e.g. "have you seen the guidelines on X?" and you can follow up with increasingly open ones. Alternatively, seek a response from an individual that you know will be able to answer. |
| If one or two individuals seem determined to hijack the discussion for their own personal agenda | Reflect back to the group – with empathy! "I'm sorry to hear this is a problem for you. Has anyone else experienced this?"  |

## Underlying Principles

### Observing



A good facilitator pays close attention to the interactions between people and their body language. They will be able to pick up on unspoken areas of conflict or confusion and use questions to help bring them into the open. They can also spot when people feel ignored and help to get them back into the group.

### Thinking

A facilitator needs to be focussed on the present i.e. what's happening right here and now, but they also need to think ahead. Sometimes a group may be drifting, so thinking of ways to gently steer them in the right direction without taking over can be very important. Making the decision about when to step in and when to let things run their course is also a sign of a good facilitator.



### Note taking



Depending on the circumstances, a facilitator will often need to make notes about what happens during an activity or discussion. It can be useful to use a flipchart to record key actions, conclusions and outstanding issues following a discussion. During activities, it can be useful to make detailed notes of what people said and did so that they can be used as a basis for debriefing afterwards.

### Challenging

Although a good facilitator should stay on the edge of any discussion, it is sometimes necessary for them to challenge what is being said. People make assumptions and generalisations all the time. They also express opinions as facts. When a facilitator notices these things happening it's important that they are challenged and clarified. If they aren't, the discussion (and any outcomes) could be based on misunderstandings.



### Summarising



If a discussion or activity is longer than around 15 minutes, the facilitator may find it worthwhile to summarise where the discussion is up to and what has been agreed from time to time. This will help to stop the conversation going around in circles and covering old ground. It's also important when discussions are time limited as it highlights how far (or not) discussions have got.

## Underlying Principles

### Encouraging



Part of a facilitator's role is to provide encouragement to participants. That may be to repeat something important that has been said and overlooked, to encourage someone to develop an idea, or to reassure the group that they are on the right track.

### Controlling

Controlling is really a culmination of all the other facilitation skills. Controlling is NOT about taking the lead: It is about making sure that the group works together to achieve its objective. This may mean:

- Focussing the group on specific things
- Encouraging wider thinking
- Energising the group
- Getting more participation
- Involving quieter members more
- Reducing the input of more dominant individuals
- Providing clarification for the group
- Seeking clarification of the group
- Asking questions to help the group to find their own answers
- Pinning the group down to specific decisions



## Underlying Principles

### Transferring Learning

Remember that the purpose of corporate learning is to enable people to do things differently: more efficiently, more confidently, with fewer mistakes or more innovatively. To achieve this, we need to consider the transfer of learning. Relying solely on a bite-size event to bring about a change in behaviour is unlikely to bring about results.

Consider the sad tale of Del the delegate...

*At the end of the course, Del is full of euphoria, his head is spinning like a top. He is dizzy with new ideas and full of enthusiasm to apply his new learning. Del returns to work on Monday morning. He finds that it is also spinning. It is rotating slowly but surely in the opposite direction to his own new spin.*



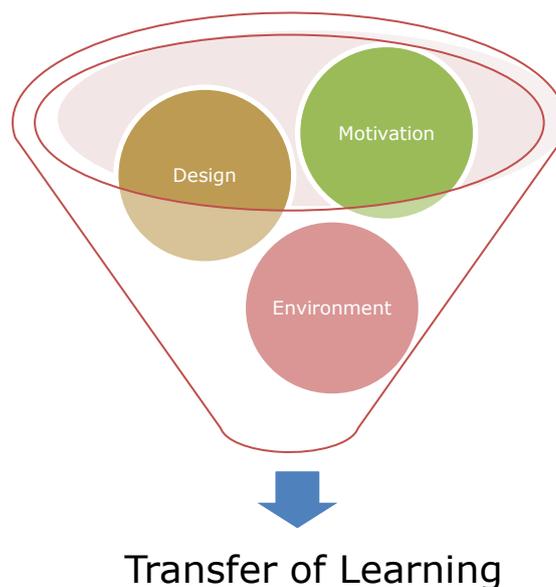
*His mates tell him that he has to be joking when he tells them of his new plans, and his boss reminds him that he will be hard-pushed to meet his performance targets if he goes ahead (and of course, his performance targets are linked to his pay, and he has already lost 2 days by attending the course!)*

*The friction set up between Del and his company undermines his enthusiasm and exhausts all of his energy. Del's behaviour reverts to what is (and always was) reinforced by his manager and the company. His spin stops and then adjusts itself to move in the same direction as everyone else's.*

*Del feels older and wiser. He won't get caught out like that again. He always knew that those trainers were out of touch with the real world.*

*(Taken from People Management circa 1998)*

### Factors Affecting Transfer of Learning



## Underlying Principles

### **Transfer Motivation**

Learners must want to participate in the development activity. They must understand why they are being trained and the benefits they will gain from the training.

A learner who feels they have been forced to attend training, does not understand why they are going, or does not understand how they will benefit, is unlikely to gain benefit from the programme.

### **Transfer Design**

The actual training activity (e.g. workshop, seminar, on-line module etc.) must be at the right level, relevant to the learner and contain skills, advice and practical techniques that can easily be transferred into the workplace. Careful thought must be given to the best method for meeting that training need, as different learners have different learning preferences.

### **Transfer Environment**

Critically, learners need to be supported when they return to the workplace after participating in training. This support is essential to enable learners to review the programme, practise newly-acquired skills and gain feedback on their progress.

Delegates need real work opportunities to put into practice what they've learned and transfer it to the workplace. The training will have been ineffective if a manager learns to have a 1-2-1 but then doesn't actually HAVE one for 6 months.

Research shows that the key factor that enables the transfer of learning to take place is the support of the learner's line manager.

To aid the transfer of learning it is important to prepare the ground properly, provide the right sort of intervention at the right time and in the right way, and then follow it up. By structuring learning in a logical way, it is easier for the delegates to learn.

To aid these things, Pre and Post-Course Work is actively encouraged.

## Underlying Principles

### Before the Event: Pre-Course Work

It is important to manage people's expectations about the training, and provide a context for the learning.

If people are prepared to learn, they are more likely to learn.

It is also important to consider whether delegates all need to have a certain 'base level' of knowledge or skill before attending the event/completing the learning. If people do not have this base level, then either:

- Time has to be spent bringing people up to date with things in order for them to participate, which takes away valuable time from the intended content, or
- Those delegates cannot gain value from attending, or fully participate in the event, meaning it may be a waste of time for them

Asking people to complete pre-course work means that the training facilitator can assume a base-level of knowledge and work on exploring this in more detail (sift for meaning, trigger the memory, exhibit the learning) which is where the real learning takes place.

More generally, completing pre-course work is valuable at so many levels.

- It makes sure that everyone completing the training has a common starting point, and certain assumptions can reasonably be made during the training
- It helps to get delegates into the right mindset for learning, and introduces some key topics
- It can save time during the training event, potentially reducing the length of an event, which has implications for costs and disruption to operations
- It can help to link the learning to the working environment and so aid the transfer of learning

Pre-course work can take almost any format, as long as it is relevant to the content and will help the learners to get more value from the event. Common things to include in pre-course work are:

- Reading (if people need to have read the latest policy documents for example)
- Questionnaires (to save time during the event, and allow more time on interpretation/discussion)
- Case studies (for similar reasons)
- Collation of information (to talk about real-life examples on the event)
- Identification of personal objectives (to focus the mind)

Whatever form it takes, the most important thing to bear in mind is that the task is something that will add value to the event, and can be completed alone, with no further guidance.

## Underlying Principles

At the very least, individuals should discuss their reasons for attending a learning event with their manager (or coach/mentor) so that relevant conversations can be held after the event, and support is available for putting learning into practice.

### Following up Learning

As a trainer or facilitator, it isn't really your role to formally follow-up learning. However, you must actively encourage all delegates to commit to some sort of specific action that they will take following the learning event. Help them to visualise the benefits of putting this action into practice to increase their commitment to it.

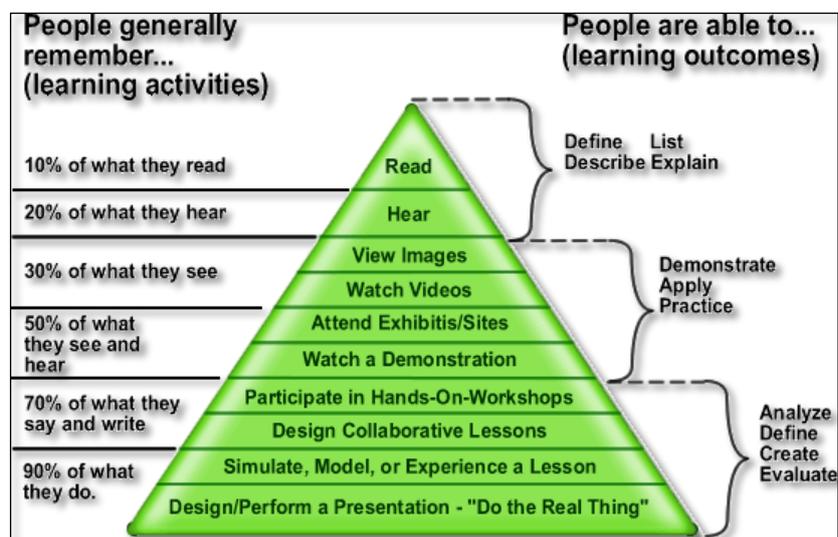
The action(s) must be SMART (specific, measurable, action-based, relevant/realistic and time-bound). It should also be something that is directly within their control.

The best person to follow up training with a delegate is their own manager, so if delegates don't already have plans to discuss their learning with their manager, encourage them to make an appointment to do so.

What gets measured gets done.

If no-one takes an interest in the application of training, action points will quickly be forgotten as more urgent, operational things take priority.

If learning isn't applied, the training has failed, no matter how good it was. The 'Cone of Learning' (Edgar Dale) illustrates that the more interactive a session, the better people remember it.



Although delegates should practice new skills in a workshop. Time constraints mean that this will be limited, so realistically, we can only hope to achieve 50-60% retention. Following up the learning with clear action points and application back at work is critical to bring about permanent change.

## Preparing for an Event

### Preparing for an Event

A good workshop doesn't happen without proper preparation. Even experienced facilitators will take time to prepare before every event they run.

You will need to prepare to facilitate your workshop **at least** three times: once well in advance, once a week or two before, and just before you run it.



### In advance of the Event

Here are some of the things that you will need to take into account in advance of the day.

#### Preparing Yourself

- Fully understand the content, and its relevance to the audience
- If working with another facilitator, have a call/meeting and ensure everyone knows who will be doing what in each section
- Go through your Facilitator's Guide, and highlight key points and/or make personal notes to aid you. Read through once well in advance so that you can clarify anything you don't understand, or identify where you need to do more reading. Read again a day or two before (two or three times), this time concentrating on how you will bring the content to life
- Get (or book) all the equipment and materials you need in advance (it is always good to have your own set of delegate materials)
- Check that equipment works and you know how to use it
- Find out if there are any fire alarms or other unusual events planned
- Know how to run each of the activities, and how you will adapt them if necessary (see later)
- Plan what you can change if problems with time (for example) occur, and what you can't. Be clear about what's essential, and what's important...bearing in mind the objectives, the MASTER structure, and the Cone of Learning

## Preparing for an Event

### Reading a Facilitator's Guide

A GOOD Facilitator's Guide provides a step-by-step guide to running an interactive training session. It is not intended as a script so you should not read it when delivering the session. It is important that you are able to **inject your own style and personality** into the session, as well as tailor the content to delegate circumstances and specific issues.

Therefore, the Facilitator's Guide describes:

- What you should explain and when
- How to run discussions and activities
- How to debrief the activities to draw out relevant learning points
- Roughly how long you should assign to each part (this is simply a guide)
- Key points to highlight/look for in discussions
- Alternative activities (where appropriate)
- What supporting material/slides you should refer to

*(If you are looking for good examples of ready-written training materials, visit [www.power-hour.co.uk](http://www.power-hour.co.uk) which offers a wide range of bite-size sessions for download).*

Many people find it useful to use a highlighter pen to indicate sections of particular importance.

You will also want to add your own notes – maybe to remind you to mention specific examples.

Once you are familiar with the content, you may find it useful to condense the notes to a flowchart, mind map or 'headlines' on 1 or 2 sheets of paper. This is OK, but make sure that you always have the full Facilitator's Guide with you as a back-up.

Bearing in mind evidence from neuroscience regarding learning, it's recommended that you take the following approach:

## Preparing for an Event



Always aim to run the session as it is written the first time. It has been carefully designed to flow and follow accelerated learning principles. Once you have run the session once or twice, you may decide to slightly alter the running order, re-allocate timings or use alternative exercises. That's fine as long as...

- The original objectives are met
- The core content is still covered
- It flows and follows the MASTER structure

## Preparing for an Event

### Preparing your Delegates

Around 2 weeks before the event...

- Ask for a delegate list from the course organiser
- Check that delegates have been told:
  - Where they need to be, and at what time, and how long the session will last
  - What they need to do in advance or if they need to bring anything with them.
  - The purpose of the training session
- Check if anyone has any special requirements (e.g. if they have a disability, special dietary needs, or a learning difficulty)

### Preparing the Environment

- Book a suitable room in advance, and make sure you have access to it at least an hour before the start of the event (so you have time to set up before delegates start arriving), and an hour after it is scheduled to end (this allows for small over-runs and gives you time to clear the room)
- Check that all equipment you need will be available
- Make sure that arrangements have been made to print out any delegate materials and the arrangements for getting them to the venue
- If refreshments are to be provided, make the necessary arrangements

### Preparing for the Unexpected

You can't plan for everything, but some of the more common problems can be anticipated and you can have a plan B ready. This will mean you are less likely to panic or get flustered if things do go wrong on the day.

Some of the things you may wish to prepare for include:

#### **Technology fail**

If your laptop or projector doesn't work, or they simply won't connect, you need to work without slides. Slides should only ever be a prompt so it's not the end of the world.

- Transfer key models and diagrams onto the flipchart
- Refer delegates to handouts (where they exist)
- Fall back on your Facilitator's Guide

If you expect to show a video clip and the internet connection isn't working, explain what's covered and the key learning points. Encourage people to look it up for themselves after the event.

## Preparing for an Event

### **No Delegate Materials**

Make sure that you have one of each handout yourself. You can get a minimum number photocopied during the event if you need to. Remember it isn't usually NECESSARY for people to have one each. If you are using case studies for example, 1 between 3 or 4 will be OK. You can send out electronic copies of everything after the session. You can also use the flipchart and slides to talk through things at a high level.

### **Short on Time**

Generally, you will start and end a session on time, but just occasionally sessions are unavoidably shortened (e.g. if there are extensive travel problems). Be clear in your mind about what MUST be covered in full, and what could be cut down. Also identify exercises that could be done in a different way to shorten them (see later).

Don't panic if a section takes longer or less time than is indicated in the session plan. If something has been allocated 20 minutes but everything has been covered to your satisfaction in 15, that's fine. Alternatively, if the 20 minutes has run on to 30, don't worry, as long as people are learning: as long as discussion is relevant and people are getting value, getting a little behind time is far better than cutting a topic off early just to stick to a timetable.

Use the agenda to identify the aspects of the session that delegates want to spend the most time, and where they feel more confident. You can flex the timetable accordingly.

### **Too many/Too few delegates**

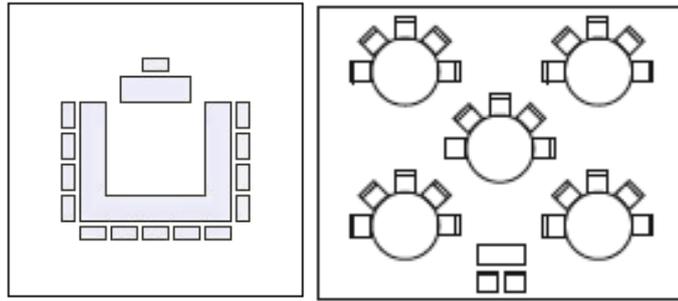
Think about how you can run activities and exercises in a different way (see later).

## **On the Day**

### **Setting up your Room**

- It's important to set up early (ideally the night before), so that by the time the first delegate arrives (and remember they might be early) everything is ready and you are relaxed. So, aim to arrive in the room AT LEAST one hour before the session is due to start
- Lay out the room in an appropriate manner. For most topics, a U-shape is ideal (with or without tables). For larger groups, café (cabaret) style can work well as long as no-one has their back to you. These styles allow you to gain everyone's attention and take control when necessary, but also make discussion and collaboration amongst delegates easy

## Preparing for an Event



- Put out any delegate materials (name cards, workbooks, pens etc.)
- Place materials that you will need throughout the session on a side table. Make sure supporting equipment is clearly accessible, and handouts are in the order that you will use them
- Dress the room with relevant posters. Find quotes relevant to the topic or pick out key messages and put them with an appropriate picture. Consider laying out a selection of fiddle toys too. Posters and toys are linked to accelerated learning and engaging all of the senses
- Some sessions may make use of flipcharts – they are so much more interactive than slides. If possible, have at least 2 in the room: one at the front and one at the back. You can switch between them to refocus attention, use both at the same time to increase pace, or simply make group working easier
- Set up your laptop, screen and (if necessary) speakers. Make sure everything works, that your screensaver won't come on after 10 minutes and that any clips or links to the internet are open and running in the background to reduce problems and save time
- Make sure that there is good light and the temperature is comfortable. Natural light is best and fresh air ideal – this appeals to the amygdala and will stop people becoming uncomfortable and so distracted
- On a similar note, you should aim to provide:
  - ◆ A breakfast snack/substitute at the beginning
  - ◆ Water at all times. Tea and Coffee available occasionally through the day, but you do not want people overdosing on caffeine
  - ◆ Fruit or other healthy snacks
- If using a syndicate room, check that it is accessible and ready for use
- Play music on arrival: A room full of music creates a bright and welcoming space (assuming you pick the song sensibly). Lively music while you prepare the room gets the energy of the trainers up. Bright, but not frantic, music creates an enticing atmosphere. You can also use more relaxed music during the session as people complete exercises. Go for instrumental pieces though, as lyrics can be distracting. You may also need to check whether or not you need a broadcasting licence at the venue

## Preparing for an Event

### Personal Preparation

Even the most experienced facilitators feel nervous before running a session, especially if they haven't run it before, or for a long time. It is perfectly normal. Nervousness is actually a good thing as it means that your adrenaline is pumping in readiness for the challenge ahead.

However we don't want nerves to take over, so here are a few tips to help you to control your nerves and present a positive impression to the group.

#### Before you start:

- Practice what you can. You can't practice facilitating a training session in the same way that you can practice a presentation, but you CAN practice opening the session and briefing the activities
- Be well organised – the less that is unknown, the more you are in control. This means knowing the key content and running order by heart. Mind-mapping the event or writing down 'at a glance' headlines can be very helpful
- Plan your travel. Allow yourself plenty of time for delays
- Plan your outfit – make sure it is something that projects the right image but is also something you feel comfortable in

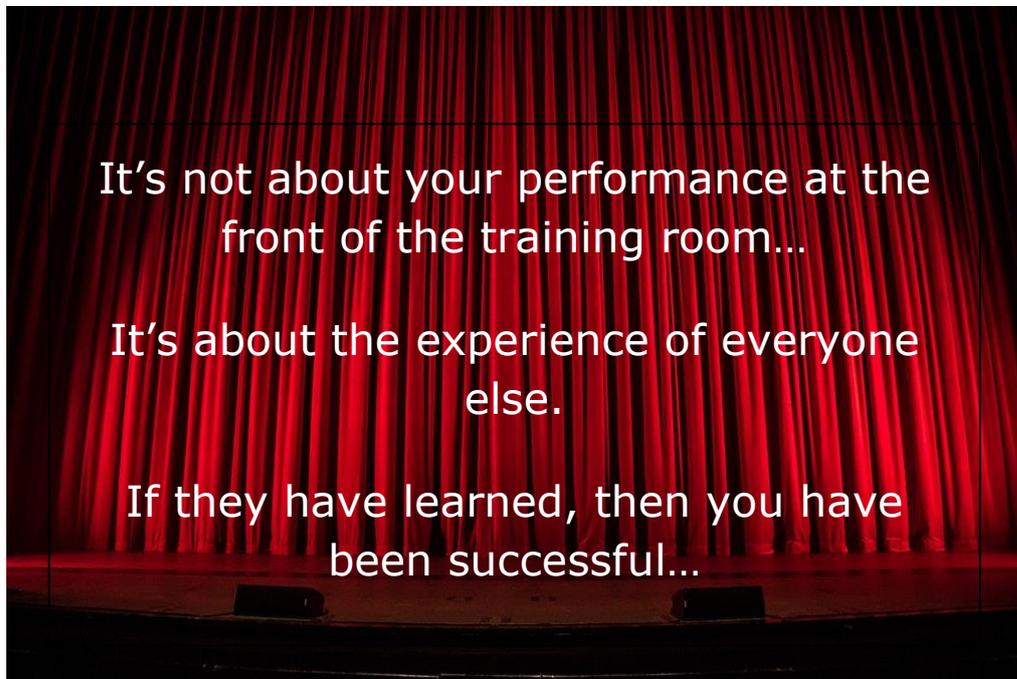
Immediately before delegates arrive – try one or more of the following:

- Close your eyes and breathe deeply – some people find it beneficial to lie down to do this
- Concentrate on releasing the tension from your body a bit at a time, starting from your feet
- Listen to music – something that will put you in the right frame of mind (e.g. a rock tune for pumping you up or a classical piece for calming you down)
- Do a few aerobic exercises – but not so much that you are out of breath and red in the face! A few stretches, jogging on the spot or a quick dance help to energise you
- Have drink of water – not alcohol or caffeine
- Visualise yourself opening the session successfully – top sportsmen do this, as it gets the brain into the habit of thinking positively rather than negatively
- Make sure that you are in the right frame of mind and fully present in order to welcome delegates in a professional manner and given them your full attention

## Running an Event

### Running an Event

The first, and most important thing to remember when facilitating a learning event is...



**As a facilitator, it's not your job to give everyone knowledge and experience. It's your job to create opportunities for learning so that they can find their own knowledge and insights.**

### Making an Impact

First impressions are important. If you do not get everyone's attention at the start of a session, you will struggle to gain it later on.

So making the right first impression is more about doing the right things than saying the right things. Never underestimate the importance of:

- Being in the room long before your delegates - this means that you are set up and relaxed when they arrive
- Being ready: This means not checking emails, on the phone or playing a game! Make sure that you are fully focussed and ready to go before the first delegate arrives
- Greeting each person individually as they arrive, offer them a handshake or greeting that is acceptable in your culture
- Making eye contact
- Engaging them in conversation to help them to relax
- Listening to what they say, and make intelligent comments, or ask questions to learn more
- Offering them a drink

## Running an Event

### When you are about to start the session:

- Make sure that your first slide is on show (if you are using slides)
- Take up a central position at the front of the room, and stand up
- Raise your voice slightly, and thank everyone for their attendance (this should be sufficient to indicate that the training has started)
- Smile and make eye contact with everyone briefly
- Use open gestures
- Have an enthusiastic tone as you introduce the session topic (if you aren't enthusiastic, how do you expect your delegates to be?)
- If you are confident, use a joke or witticism to help everyone to relax, e.g. "if you were expecting ballroom dancing lessons, I'm afraid they are taking place down the hall"

### Important things to do in the first 5 minutes

People will not relax at a training event until they feel comfortable with what is happening, and where things are. (Remember that the brain needs to know that you are going to be safe). If they aren't relaxed, they will find it more difficult to learn.

The first thing is to introduce yourself: who you are and why you are running the session.

At the start of every training session make sure that you inform delegates of the **domestic arrangements** such as:

- Times of breaks – Especially important to you if you are a smoker. If you don't know when there will be a break, you will spend half of your time thinking about having a cigarette
- Location of the toilets and any refreshments – People have to be physically comfortable if they are going to be able to participate well
- Start and finish times – People need to be reassured that they will be able to make their next meeting or get their normal train home for example
- The etiquette you want in the training room around mobile phones, tablets etc.



You are also encouraged to run an **ice-breaker** or at least have everyone introduce themselves. This serves two purposes:

1. It is hard to engage in group discussions or activities if you don't know who the other people are, so formal introductions are courteous.
2. It breaks the ice in terms of people making a verbal contribution to the group. If their first contribution is an easy one, they are more likely to get involved in more complex discussions later on.

## Running an Event

### Ground Rules

Where clear standards of behaviour are known, you shouldn't need to agree ground rules – merely reminding delegates about what's expected at the start of the session should be enough.

However, if you have a mix of people (from different locations, cultures or functions) you may need to agree ground rules with the group. These are behaviours that we expect people to display during the session.

Typically, ground rules include:

- Time-keeping especially around breaks
- Mobile phone/tablet/laptop etiquette
- Behaviour in discussions and activities (e.g. only one person speaking at a time)

You can include whatever ground rules you want to help to manage the session. The key is that they are agreed as a group and everyone is happy to accept them.

### Personal Objectives

When you have formally introduced the purpose and objectives of the workshop, it's good practice to ask delegates what THEY want to achieve from the session. Write all (relevant) comments on the flipchart. This has a number of benefits:



You

- Allows you to identify which parts of the workshop are more/less important so that you can adapt it if necessary.
- Gives you an opportunity to manage expectations about what will and won't be covered (and suggest alternative routes for things that won't).



Delegates

- Helps to get them into the right Mindset and primes their brain to pay attention.
- Helps them to get the most out of the session, as they can influence the content (a little).

Once objectives have been agreed, place them in full view of the group, and highlight when you are covering each objective (or when it has been covered). This also helps to create a meaningful review at the end of the session.

## Running an Event

### Your Voice and Body Language

Even in the most interactive of training sessions, delegates will spend some time listening to you, so it is important to use your voice well. The voice is a very powerful tool and how you use your voice is a major factor in effective training and facilitation.

Use **VESPA** to remember the key factors!



#### VOLUME

- A loud booming voice is often perceived as shouting, it infers aggression, impatience or anger.
- Too soft can suggest a lack of confidence, uncertainty or shyness.
- An actor can change the volume of their voice to express emotion or to fit the role they are playing. When training, you should generally aim at medium to loud to imply confidence and assertiveness.

#### ENERGY

- If your voice lacks energy you will tend to sound unenthusiastic, disinterested or de-motivated.
- High energy in your voice suggests passion and strong belief, enthusiasm and motivation.

#### SPEED

- If we speak too quickly we make it difficult for others to understand us. We might also imply impatience, nervousness or disinterest.
- Speaking slowly can be effective if you are making an important point, but speaking slowly all the time can imply indecision, uncertainty and lacking in interest or enthusiasm. It is also quite boring and is quite painful to listen to.

#### PITCH

- Pitch can be high, low or somewhere in the middle.
- If the pitch of your voice goes up at the end of a sentence or when emphasising key points, you can express questioning, disbelief, sarcasm or uncertainty.
- If your voice goes down at the same point, you can express command, confidence, clarity and understanding.
- If your voice is monotone, it can sound quite boring.

#### ARTICULATION

- Always ensure you speak clearly, so that you can be understood.

## Running an Event

### Using your Body Language

When facilitating a training session, you can afford to adopt more relaxed body language than if you are delivering a formal presentation. However, you still need to project authority, while encouraging the group to participate. Here are some tips for you to consider:

- Smile and give a positive introduction
- Make eye contact with all members of the group
- Have a confident stance
- Stand when presenting information to give an air of authority
- Don't stay rooted to the spot, move slowly around the room
- Never speak to your notes, flipchart or slides, though it is absolutely fine to refer to them periodically
- Use visual aids and props appropriately to reinforce what you are saying
- Connect with your delegates – use examples they can relate to
- Watch your delegates – look for signs of tiredness, confusion or restlessness and react to it
- Move closer to people to encourage participation, while respecting their personal space
- Don't fidget
- Use gestures positively



## Running an Event

### Using Visual Aids

A key aspect of training is using visual aids. Typically, facilitators will use a PowerPoint presentation and the flipchart.

#### PowerPoint



PowerPoint should only ever be an AID to your session. It should never drive it. PowerPoint driven training tends to be one-way, dull and ineffective. People learn when they are actively involved, and listening to someone talk through dozens of slides is not participative. So resist the urge to use more slides than are strictly necessary!

That said, slides CAN be useful if they signpost a topic, discussion or activity (acting as a prompt for the trainer), or provide a visual image of a complex model or process.

When using slides:

- Stand well clear of the screen when you talk through the slide
- Vary your position in the room as you talk through a slide. It stops you becoming rooted to the spot and helps to maintain the delegates' attention
- Press the letter 'B' on the laptop to 'black' the screen or 'W' to white it, when you are discussing an issue at length, or when the slide is no longer relevant. Press it again when you return to the point highlighted on the slide
- Run through the slide show in advance to check that any animation/slide transition is not distracting
- Know which slides are animated, or build up, and which ones will be revealed straight away
- Know when you will put the next slide up – suggestions are provided in the Facilitator's Guide
- Never EVER talk to the screen – always speak to the group

## Running an Event

### Flipcharts

Flipcharts are an excellent supporting tool in facilitating a training session, and the behavioural skills workshops use them a lot! They allow you to capture the thoughts and ideas of the group, making it more relevant to that particular session. They can be placed in other parts of the room for later reference, and they are portable.

You may find it useful to prepare some flipcharts in advance – key ones will be highlighted, but you may choose to do more.



- Don't talk to the flipchart when you are writing on it. Place yourself to the left or right of the flipchart stand and try to maintain eye contact with the group
- Practise writing on a flipchart – don't forget that your flipcharts need to be readable but they don't have to be super-neat!
- Watch out for 'sloping' when you write – it robs you of useful space
- Use colours that can be seen from the back of the room – some yellows and reds can be difficult to see at a distance
- Don't clutter the flipchart too much – the delegates must be able to see its contents clearly
- Encourage delegates to write on flipcharts – it helps them to take ownership of the learning
- Make sure that you have sufficient flipchart paper, the stand is set to the right height and you have a good supply of pens

## Running an Event

### Managing Discussions

Allowing people time to discuss relevant issues and learn from each other is very important when facilitating a training session. There is a danger though that discussions move off track, and delegates end up discussing something that is beyond the scope of the workshop.

As a facilitator, you have the difficult task of ensuring that discussions are kept relevant, with an appropriate amount of input from everyone, without getting too involved yourself. The best tools to use to manage a discussion to a successful conclusion are:

- Listening properly
- Using the right questions at the right time
- Controlling interactions to ensure balanced and fair contributions, and remain objective



### Tips for effective listening

- Discipline yourself to concentrate on giving full attention
- Ensure minimum distractions and interference
- Show a positive interest
- Ask intelligent questions
- Make notes
- Be objective and avoid preconceived ideas
- Don't interrupt too soon
- Maintain eye contact
- Ask for key points to be repeated to confirm understanding
- Be aware that people do not always say what they mean
- Listen to understand, NOT to respond

## Running an Event

### Using Questions

A facilitator has to use questions effectively throughout a training session to involve the delegates, maintain interest, and check understanding.

| Type of question  | Example   | Purpose  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Leading</b><br>Question suggests the answer                        | Do we agree that this is an important topic?  | To get agreement. To move the discussion forward.  |
| <b>Closed Factual</b>   | How often do you have a team meeting?   | To elicit facts necessary for discussion or make a point or clarify a question.  |
| <b>Direct</b><br>Seeks answers from an individual.                    | Why do you believe that Steve.....?   | To get information from an individual who has particular interest or experience in the topic. To bring in a quiet member of the group. |
| <b>Open</b><br>Can result in any answer                               | What do we mean by assertive?   | To generate ideas and discussion.  |
| <b>Closed</b><br>Likely to get a 'yes' or 'no' answer.                | Can we improve the performance of our staff?  | To establish a particular fact or opinion. To bring a discussion to an end.  |
| <b>Redirected</b><br>Passed back from discussion leader to the group. | Steve has asked what is meant by effective communication. What does it mean to you? | To prevent over-reliance on discussion leader; to keep discussion open, and to buy you thinking time (if necessary!).                  |



## Running an Event

### Controlling Interaction

When encouraging discussions, it is important to give the group as much freedom as possible. However, sometimes groups can go off track and, as the facilitator, it is your job to make sure that discussions are going in the right direction. In these situations, you will have to intervene briefly, before allowing the activity or discussion to resume.

Here are some tips you can try to make sure that your activities and discussions meet their objectives.

- Take responsibility for any misdirection (even if it is not yours). Interrupt the discussion and say, "I'm sorry, I didn't make myself clear, what I need you to focus on is..."
- If a discussion has got stuck intervene by acknowledging that the points raised so far are important, but explain that the topic is wider. Suggest that they put their key points on the flipchart, and then move onto another area of discussion. Give them a clue if necessary
- Set up a shelf for issues that are unrelated to the activity or discussion, but are clearly important to the delegates. Writing these things down acknowledges their importance, and you can offer to discuss these issues later in the session or afterwards if people wish to. You can then concentrate on the matter in hand
- Ask for clarification, especially if there seems to be a conflict of opinions. Questions such as, "Are you saying that...?" or "Can you give me an example?" will often help to clear up misunderstandings and potential areas of conflict
- Observe the group closely, and ask for input from anyone who appears to have lost interest, or who seems eager to say something, but doesn't have the opportunity. Never let one or two people dominate
- Ask for a summary at regular intervals, and ask "what then?" to keep the group moving forward, and stop them going over things they have already discussed



## Running an Event

### Running and Debriefing Activities

Activities are highly important in learning events. They get the delegates involved with training and engage them in the learning, making it an active rather than passive experience. It's where delegates get to Sift for Meaning, Trigger the Memory and Exhibit the Learning (in the MASTER model). When activities are written into the training materials, they shouldn't be missed out for all the reasons that have already been discussed.



Before running an activity, you need to make sure that everyone understands what is expected of them. To set out an activity well you should:

- Start by saying, '**In a moment**, I'm going to split you into 3 groups (for example)' otherwise people may start moving straight away and miss the rest of the briefing
- State the objective of the activity
- Be clear about what delegates are meant to produce (if anything), e.g. a list of 10 things on a flipchart
- Give a time limit (you can always revise it if necessary) – say "you will have up to 15 minutes to..." or you can say "I will give you at least 10 minutes to..." – and you can add on more time if necessary
- Suggest where people should work and if additional rooms can be used
- Check understanding and repeat if necessary
- Get the activity started

### During the Activity

- Move around the groups soon after they start to see what they are doing and check that they have interpreted your instructions correctly, then take a step back for a while
- Don't disappear – make sure people know where you are at all times in case they want to ask a question
- Provide advice or suggestions to get people started if necessary, but don't do the activity yourself
- Remind people of the time limit or end result as appropriate

Although you should always aim to run an activity as it is written, you can alter the parameters of the activity if you like. Situations where you may need to do this include if you have less or more time than you expected, if the group is larger or smaller than expected, if the group is very lively/very quiet, or experienced/inexperienced. As a facilitator, you must use your judgement and tailor activities to best meet the needs of the group AND the objectives of the session. Examples of how to adjust the activity are given on the next page.

## Running an Event

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|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Time</b>        | <p>You may wish to save time due to another section over-running slightly, or because you feel that the group doesn't need to explore a topic in detail (e.g. if they are experienced, or the topic is less relevant to them). You may also want to extend the time of some activities as people have indicated it is really important to them, or because another section took less time than anticipated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ If want to spend longer on an activity, ask delegates to present their ideas back, and then lead a discussion around their ideas</li><li>➤ Or, you can ask each group to review another group's work and discuss similarities/differences</li><li>➤ If you need to save time, do an exercise as a brainstorm in full group rather than syndicates</li><li>➤ You could also limit what is to be produced e.g. 6 things, rather than allowing free rein</li><li>➤ Instead of asking every group to look at every question/scenario, distribute them evenly (e.g. 4 groups look at two problems each, rather than everyone considering all 8)</li></ul> |
| <b>Involvement</b> | <p>If some delegates haven't contributed much to the session, alter the nature of an exercise to ensure that everyone has to contribute either by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Asking for a response from everyone, or asking delegates to work in pairs</li><li>➤ Using Post-it notes to make sure that everyone's ideas are gathered, even if they don't want to speak up</li><li>➤ Including an activity where a number of roles are required can be used, e.g. in a role play, you need two 'actors' and someone to observe and give feedback</li></ul> <p>If you need to reduce involvement, ask the delegates to work in groups and elect a spokesperson to speak on behalf of them all.</p>   |
| <b>Energy</b>      | <p>Sometimes you need increase the energy and pace of the workshop – particularly after lunch or later in the afternoon when the light starts to fade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Make an activity competitive, e.g. 'the first group to come up with 10 ideas...'</li><li>➤ Use syndicate rooms or break-out areas to get people out of their seats</li><li>➤ Run a short (2 minute) energiser (see later)</li><li>➤ Use lively background music and watch the effect it has</li><li>➤ Ask everyone to swap places and sit next to 2 new people</li></ul>  |

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## Running an Event

### Debriefing an activity

Instructions for how to debrief activities in the should be explained in your Facilitator's Guide. However, here are some general guidelines:

#### For flipchart/post-it note activities and case studies:

- Allow delegates to explain their answers/suggestions themselves
- Listen with an open mind to what they have to say
- Question things that are unclear (in a positive way)
- Ask the other delegates if there is anything else they would add
- Build on the ideas put forward by the delegates, highlighting the answers that you think are particularly relevant
- Add anything significant that you feel should have been identified. (Don't list everything that could have been identified – this can be demotivating and people will wonder why they did the activity if you are going to tell them the correct answer anyway)



#### For role plays/presentations:

- Ask the delegates involved how they think it went – what went well, and what they would have done differently
- Ask the rest of the group what they liked and didn't like (and why). What else could the group have done?
- Summarise discussions by sharing what you liked, what you think could have been done differently, and what you would have liked to see more of (using the 'praise sandwich')

Most importantly, remember to thank people for their effort and contribution.



## Running an Event

### Closing an Event

A good session isn't simply closed, it's **SLAMMED** shut!

**S**ummary

**L**earning

**A**ction Points

**M**otivate and Thank

It is very tempting (and very easy) to finish a workshop in a rush. However, our brain has a tendency to remember things that were covered at the start, finish and most often. So, it's important to properly **summarise** what has been covered during the day and the key learning points.

Accelerated learning tells us that this summary is best done by the delegates. That said, it can be very helpful for the facilitator to revisit the objectives/agenda and personal objectives, to remind people of exactly what has been covered before a review activity.

The review activity should focus on what people have **learned** during the session. Review activities will be suggested in the Facilitator's Guide, but you can replace them with alternatives if you feel a different approach will work better for whatever reason. A link to Review Activities are included in the last section of this Guide.

Learning is only the first step, delegates need to put their learning into **action**, so each session should result in at least one practical action point. Don't expect people to commit to 10 things – they won't. It is better that people select 1-3 things that they will put into practice. This is more realistic.

If actions are simple and within their direct control, ask delegates to complete a detailed action plan that is SMART that they can implement back in the workplace.

However, whilst this is ideal, the reality is that most will want a little time to reflect, or to discuss their learning with their manager or a colleague before committing to action.

Regardless of which approach is used, ask every person to publicly commit to at least one action. This increases the chance of it happening.

Finally, you need to end the workshop positively, highlighting everything that they've achieved and **motivating** them to put their actions into practice. Finally, thank delegates for their involvement in the session, issue any paperwork (e.g. evaluation forms), turn the music up and let them leave.

# Running an Event

## In Summary...



## Challenging Situations

### Challenging Situations

The beauty of facilitating training sessions is that no two are exactly the same. Because you create each event with a unique group of people, all events will be slightly different, even if you follow the Facilitator's Guide almost exactly the same way every time.

So, some difference and deviation is normal.

- Some groups will want to concentrate on topic A, whilst others want to spend more time on topic B
- Some groups will have more relevant experience to share than others
- Some delegates will have more questions than others
- Sometimes you will finish a section early, other times it will run over time
- Some groups will put a lot of effort into the activities and really go into depth, others will do just enough
- Sometimes a group will be quiet, and sometimes you will struggle to get them to shut up!
- Some people will have problems they want to air, whilst some people may be full of positive experiences

All of these situations are normal and you should be able to handle the group dynamics these situations bring by following your Facilitator's Guide and using your general facilitation skills flexibly.

Some situations are less typical though, and they can be difficult to handle with confidence unless you have lots of experience to draw on.

Typically, these challenges will be around:

- The session itself
- Delegate behaviour

We will explore SOME of the issues on the next few pages.

## Challenging Situations

### Difficulties with the Session

For reasons beyond anyone's control, I have to cut my session short. What should I do?

Refer to your objectives: This is what MUST be covered. Reduce anything that doesn't relate to them.

Run through the agenda with delegates and identify which aspects are more/less important to them. Just quickly recap areas that they are happy with. Identify which activities can be run more quickly/differently, or if one activity could be used to bring out more learning points (and so remove the need for another one).

If you plan to do input-discussion-activity, miss out the discussion and have a slightly longer activity debrief that incorporates key discussion points.

I haven't got the right (or enough) materials.

Always have one set of materials with you. Find someone who can photocopy the materials that are crucial to the session. You can always forward the supplementary materials to delegates after the event. Ask delegates to share materials – they rarely need one each during a session.

The room isn't laid out properly or the room is too small.

If the layout is wrong, you should be able to alter it if you get there early enough.

If the room is inappropriate (e.g. full of computers) see if there is an alternative. If not, push as much to the sides as possible and bring out the chairs into a u-shape in the middle. Tables are ideal, but they aren't essential.

Similarly, if the room is too small find out if there is a bigger one you can use (and put a note on the door redirecting delegates) or find someone to help you to remove the tables.

## Challenging Situations

My technology has failed!

Remember that technology doesn't drive the learning – people do!

Unless you are intending to show a video or demonstrate something technical, you don't NEED technology.

Be honest with your delegates and explain that as your laptop/projector isn't working you will refer to your Facilitator's Guide more often to make sure you stay on track.

Refer people to handouts where possible rather than slides, and use the flipchart. If you have time, write up key models and diagrams in advance.

Take comfort from the fact that you will miss the technology more than your delegates, and the lack of it will encourage greater interaction.

One of the activities has gone wrong – delegates didn't get the result they were supposed to.

If possible, spot this early on and redirect the group. If it's too late, congratulate them on completing the activity (or at least having a go) and for the quality of discussion they had during it.

Then go back and dissect the exercise: Say things like "at the point when you did X, what might have happened if you'd done Y instead?", "At this stage, there was some discussion about what to do, and you decided to do X. What made you decide against Tom's suggestion of Y?"

Alternatively, discuss hypothetical or past situations e.g. "Most groups do ... Why do you think that is? What is the problem/benefit with this approach? Why did you choose a different way?"

Sometimes groups will see the right answer/approach immediately, and in this case, ask them to explain how they worked out the correct approach so quickly, and move on. You have saved some time for later!

## Challenging Situations

People haven't done the Pre-Course Work.

That isn't your fault. However, if no-one was informed of the pre-course work, you have to make a decision. If the work was *essential*, you will have to find time to recap the key points or complete in during the session. If it was *helpful* to do, you may need to alter activities to take this into account.

People arrive late or ask to leave early.

Unless you are waiting for the majority of delegates, start your session on time. Acknowledge and welcome late arrivals, but don't recap for them. Discuss why people have to leave early, and stress that they will be missing out on important learning. If people insist on leaving, you tell them when it is convenient for them to leave to minimise disruption to everyone else.

Raise this with line managers and/or HR.

The group is much larger/smaller than expected OR the wrong delegates turn up.

Use your delegate list to find out who should be there, and discuss with people not on the list why they attended (maybe they have done a direct swap with a colleague). Check that these people know why they are attending and have done any pre-course work.

If too many, explain that if they aren't booked on, they need to attend their allocated session or book onto a session in the future.

If too few, find out where the others are. Take a few moments to think about how you can adapt your session. Accept that you may get finished earlier.

Apologise to those delegates who DID turn up. Take a more relaxed/discussion-based approach. If numbers are very low, take advice around whether to continue with the session or not. Follow up with your manager/HR to find out what went wrong.

## Challenging Situations

### Difficulties with Delegates

Sometimes when you facilitate a training session, you will be unfortunate to have one or two difficult participants in the group. By 'difficult' we tend to mean people whose behaviour is challenging in some way. This may mean argumentative, negative, unresponsive or overly-chatty behaviour.

However, some challenge is very positive and (if handled well) can actually bring benefits to the training by forcing discussion and analysis. Other challenges are simply disruptive and must be handled properly so that those people who want to, still get value from the session. Here are ten top tips for keeping challenging sessions on track.

#### 1. Use Ground Rules

- If you have agreed ground rules and put in a prominent place you can refer to them whenever you feel something is going off-track or getting out of hand. By using ground rules you can act more impartially than if you had your own internal standards that have never been stated.

#### 2. Acknowledge the issue

- If there is anger, frustration, or conflict in the group it's a good idea to acknowledge it but don't get involved yourself. Using phrases such as "You seem to have an issue with that John" or "Why do you think this is a waste of time Helen?" or "I can see you're not happy about this Bish" shows that you are being sensitive to the mood of the group but not necessarily that you agree with it. Sometimes people attend training courses with specific issues on their mind. Just like the customer with a complaint, they won't settle down until they have got things off their chest. A good facilitator will allow them to do this, but will not allow the session to become dominated by the issue.

## Challenging Situations

### 3. Use a 'Shelf' or 'Car Park'

- Once an issue has been raised, and it is clear it is not directly relevant to your training, a good tip is to put it on a 'shelf' or in a 'car park'. This is simply a piece of flipchart paper where you jot down all of the issues. State that you will come back to these issues at the end of the session, so if anyone wishes to stay behind and discuss them you are more than happy to do so. Of course, few people ever do, but you must be willing to do so if you have made the offer.

### 4. Identify What Is Driving the Behaviour

- Rather than reacting to the symptoms, take a moment to try and identify what is driving the difficult behaviour, and respond to that. Maybe a negative participant is negative because they agree with everything you say, but have had their suggestions repeatedly ignored by their manager. Maybe an argumentative participant feels threatened because you appear to know more about the subject than they do. Addressing the underlying causes is much more effective than trying to put a lid on the disruptive behaviour.

### 5. Use The Group

- When one or two participants in particular seem to have issues, listen carefully to what they have to say and then reflect the key points back to the group. Saying things like "is this how you all feel?" or "has anyone else had this experience?" will help to put the issue into perspective. If no one else has this problem you have to apologise to the individual who is raising the issue, and explain that you can't cover that today. If other people agree and want to pursue these issues, then using questions to help people to find their own solutions (or at least the next steps) is useful. However, once you have agreed a positive next move, thank everybody for their input and move on with your session.

## Challenging Situations

### 6. Assign Specific Roles

- Instead of having open discussions where the same people dominate all of the time, assign particular roles to people. People who aren't contributing for whatever reason can be given the role of noting points on a flipchart for example. You can ask every individual to contribute one point (which will limit the contributions of the more dominant characters). You could ask the group 'know it all' to act as an observer of an activity and give feedback on what happened. The important thing is to make sure that people feel included, even if it is slightly more or less than they would choose to themselves.

### 7. Ask Nicely

- If your facilitation tactics, questions and hints have failed to bring about a change in behaviour, simply ask the difficult participant nicely to change. Often people don't realise how dominant or disruptive they are being, and a simple request is all that is needed. Saying something like:
  - "James, you've contributed a lot this morning so I'd really like to hear from other people during this discussion"
  - "Rashna, I appreciate how important this is to you but we are already 20 minutes behind time and we really must move on. Can I ask you to leave it there please?"
  - "Wendy, we haven't heard much from you so far. I'd like you to head up a group for me and feedback their thoughts."

### 8. Take A Break

- If emotions are running high and conversation is going round in a circle, it's a good idea to take a break. Just 5 minutes out of seats and doing something different can help to change the atmosphere in the room. Make it clear that when we return from the break you expect this topic to be closed and for everyone to be prepared to move on to the next part of the course. You may also find it useful to ask people to sit in a different seat so they aren't tempted to carry on discussions.

## Challenging Situations

### 9. Be Assertive

- If your hints and polite requests have fallen on deaf ears, sometimes you have to simply take control of the group and be assertive. The two most important things to being assertive in this situation are to:
- Tackle the ball and not the player. That means highlighting the disruptive behaviour, rather than criticising an individual. Saying things like "That language is unacceptable" or "Some people appear to be getting quite upset about this, please stop now." Clearly state how you want the group to behave without singling individuals out.
- Use I statements. You can tell the group what you think and feel, the effect it is having on you and how you want things to change. Because you are expressing your personal feelings, they cannot be argued with in the same way as they could if you tried to generalise. For example you can say "I feel this is getting quite personal. It's making me uncomfortable and I don't see the point in trying to lay blame. Can we please focus on positive actions?" This is quite different to saying "You are all behaving childishly and it's getting quite offensive. We're all just wasting our time"

### 10. Force A Choice

- Sadly, there will be times when a person is simply unwilling to change their behaviour. As a facilitator your duty is to the majority of the group not to specific individuals. If you are faced with a particularly difficult person, your last course of action is to speak to them privately about their behaviour, and the effect it is having on the group. You must then give them a very clear choice: either continue in your session but adhere to the behaviours that you specify, or they can leave. At this point most people will choose to modify their behaviour, and some even apologise having not realised how difficult they had become. Occasionally people do leave. Don't feel bad if this happens – it is their choice, and it is not a sign that you have failed as a facilitator. Almost certainly there are deeper issues affecting the individual, and it is likely that anyone would have had the same problems. Don't take it personally.

## Challenging Situations

### Handling Different Types of Difficult Delegate Behaviour

There are no difficult people, just difficult behaviours, and these behaviours are often caused by fear: Fear of the unknown, Fear of being shown up, Fear of getting behind at work, and so on.

Try not to take any negativity personally. It's rarely YOU that is causing the problem. Instead, try to understand and help the individual overcome whatever issues they are grappling with. That said, your first priority should also be the group as a whole, so you can't allow one individual to spoil it for everyone else.

Here are some things that you can try to handle difficult types of behaviour from delegates.

#### Delegates who are negative

- Acknowledge their issues, but don't encourage a deeper discussion
- Use the rest of the group to discuss the good things
- Offer to pass the negative comments on to a senior person if one is available
- Emphasise that this workshop will only deal with things that they can influence

#### Delegates who sit there quietly and don't participate

- Identify if they are opting-out, or simply reflecting/thinking
- Give easy contributions and include individual or pairs work to make sure they contribute
- Ask for specific but simple contributions

#### Delegates who argue between themselves

- Have a flipchart devoted to parking ideas that cannot be resolved or dealt with immediately – but they will need to be dealt with at some point
- Stop them from arguing – use the agenda and other delegates to move on



## Challenging Situations

### Over-enthusiastic delegates who dominate

- You have to stop them dominating the course without switching them off
- Thank them for their contributions then move the conversation away from them
- Get the other delegates involved, e.g. "Let's hear what you think"
- Use them to back you up

### Delegates who take things off track

- Acknowledge them but don't allow long discussion
- Use it to link to something that is relevant
- Use the 'car park' to keep control - "We can talk about that later"
- Use time delays as a control measure - "We can talk about that now, but it'll mean finishing the course later. Are you happy to do that?"

### The delegate who knows everything

- Use their experience, but challenge any generalisations or exaggerations
- Ask them, "Anything else you'd like to add?"
- Ask them to give examples of good work they have done - use them to give testimonials to back up the key messages
- Ask them if they agree with what you are saying

### Delegates who don't want to be there

- Explain why they are there
- Discuss the benefits they will get
- Stress that as they ARE here, they may as well make the best of it
- Offer them the opportunity to leave, but notify their manager

### Delegates who talk over others

- Be assertive: control one conversation at a time
- Say, "We'll hear from xx first, then come back to you"
- Look at people having private conversations, "Would you like to share that with us?"
- Acknowledge what is happening and nip it in the bud

Remember that by properly preparing for an event, and by encouraging your delegates to prepare, you can minimise most of these problems before you start.

## Transferable Techniques

### Transferable Techniques

Sometimes you need to adapt an activity – typically due to delegate numbers or time available. However, you may simply want to mix things up and do something a little more creative.

These techniques all support Accelerated Learning Principles and can be used in a number of ways in facilitated training sessions.

| Technique: Brainstorming  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Overview</b>   | A simple method that gets a lot of ideas into the open quickly. Everyone shares initial ideas which are written on a flipchart or whiteboard so they are visible to all. Very useful at the start of a discussion, when ideas are lacking or when a discussion has got stuck.   |
| <b>How to Use it</b>  | <b>Hints, Tips and Variations</b>   |
| <p>Frame your question, concern or problem in such a way that people can identify multiple answers. For example "What's the difference between us on a productive day, and an unproductive day?"</p> <p>Ask people to shout out their thoughts and write them all down either randomly, in a list or in a mind map.</p> <p>It's important that ideas aren't analysed or judged at this stage. You are looking for quantity not quality. Keep the atmosphere informal and avoid the temptation to go into solution mode.</p> <p>Encourage people to develop other people's ideas, or to use other ideas to create new ones. Use questions to build on ideas such as 'what else?' 'how could?' and 'what if?' to stretch thinking.</p> <p>Other techniques can then be used to refine, analyse or reduce the ideas and create a starting point for a more structured and purposeful discussion.</p> | <p><i>Use a koosh ball (or something similar) to ensure people speak one at a time.</i></p> <p><i>Ask for a contribution from each person in turn to ensure everyone gets to participate.</i></p> <p><i>Ask for a volunteer to populate a second flipchart so that more ideas can be captured without slowing the pace of discussion.</i></p> <p><i>Use coloured pens or even drawings to capture ideas to make it more visually appealing.</i></p> |

## Transferable Techniques

| Technique: Post-it Note Thoughts  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Overview</b>   | A great method that gets a lot of ideas into the open quickly. It also ensures that everyone gets the opportunity to contribute.  |
| <b>How to Use it</b>  | <b>Hints, Tips and Variations</b>   |
| <p>Frame your question, concern or problem in such a way that people can identify multiple answers. For example "Why might customers leave us?"</p> <p>Then ask people to write down all the responses they can think of on Post-it notes.</p> <p>It's important that they write just one answer on each Post-it note.</p> <p>When sufficient ideas have been generated, you can then collect them up and stick them where they are visible.</p> <p>Grouping the same (or similar) ideas together, putting them into categories or even ordering responses can be useful to bring together ideas and kick-starting the next line of discussion.</p> | <p><i>Add a timescale to stop people from over-analysing the question.</i></p> <p><i>Ask people to work in pairs/groups to encourage collaboration.</i></p> <p><i>Make it competitive: Split into groups and see which group can get the most ideas.</i></p> <p><i>Analyse different angles i.e. split into 2 or 3 groups and ask each group to approach the issue/question/problem from a different perspective.</i></p> |

## Transferable Techniques

### Technique: Picture This

#### Overview

A simple method that encourages open discussion and can create some surprising insights using a set of picture cards as a basis for discussion. It engages people visually, gets them active and (if working in groups) encourages discussion and collaboration.

#### How to Use it

Distribute a set of picture cards to individuals, pairs or small groups, and ask them to select (a set number of) cards that describe what they think or feel about a particular topic.

For example, you may ask them to select 6 cards to describe their views about performance appraisals.

They then explain the cards they've selected and why, which leads on to a more targeted discussion or into an explanation.

#### Hints, Tips and Variations

*The cards need to be quite open-ended.*

*People will select the same card for different reasons and that's fine. The REASON for the selection is what matters.*

*You can combine with other approaches such as reversal or reframing e.g. select 6 cards that describe your views on performance appraisal and 6 cards to represent how your team feel about it.*

*You can also ask people to work in small groups to select X cards, then talk to another group and narrow it down to Y cards etc. to identify the most important areas to focus on.*

## Transferable Techniques

### Technique: Mind Mapping

#### Overview

A Mind Map is a powerful graphic technique that can help to quickly create an overview of a large subject/area, identify options, spot relationships and dependencies and summarise information in a highly visual way.

#### How to Use it

Write your central topic in the centre of a landscape page.

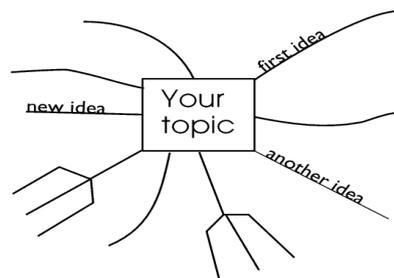
As each major idea or theme emerges from your brain draw a line radiating from the rectangle. Write the name of the major idea above each line.

Don't spend too much time writing neatly or drawing nice straight lines - go for SPEED not NEATNESS.

As each idea materialises, quickly check whether the idea is an extension of an existing idea.

- If it is, then just continue the line.
- If the idea is a variation of an existing idea then draw a branch off of the central line and label it.

If the idea is something totally and utterly new, then draw a brand new line from the rectangle in the centre of the page. Within a short space of time your Mind Map will begin to take shape.



Once you have finished generating ideas and constructing the Mind Map you can start analysing the information shown on the Mind Map.

#### Hints, Tips and Variations

*Use colours and pictures to make the mind map visually appealing.*

*Feel free to add connecting lines and move things around.*

*You can create mind maps digitally – but the power of a mind map is that it can be seen by everyone.*

*If the topic is complex, participants can work in subgroups to explore and expand the main arms of the mind map.*

## Transferable Techniques

### Technique: Reverse Brainstorming

#### Overview

A simple technique that allows the brain to relax away from the conventions and structures that may limit thinking. It can sometimes be difficult to see the wood for the trees when trying to improve something, or do something differently, and this technique can help to remove barriers.

#### How to Use it

Reversal simply requires you to think of the opposite of the gap you are trying to fill, or the problem that you are trying to solve.

For example, instead of looking for ways to reduce waste, consider "what could we do to increase waste?"

The resulting ideas will be many and far-reaching, and may include ideas such as:

- Print off all our emails.
- Throw tools away and buy new ones as soon as they break.
- Have a full set of equipment each.

These ideas are then reversed, and the merits/details of each can then be discussed in more detail later on.

Here, our reversed suggestions would be:

- Don't print emails.
- Make sure tools are regularly serviced and repaired.
- Share equipment and resources.

#### Hints, Tips and Variations

*It's a good idea to only use one side of the flipchart paper when writing down the reversed answers. That way you can easily write up the correct responses alongside.*

*Great for breaking people out of set thinking.*

## Transferable Techniques

| Technique: Anything goes  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Overview</b>   | An energetic way to start a discussion and get people relaxed about contributing to a discussion.   |
| <b>How to Use it</b>  | <b>Hints, Tips and Variations</b>   |
| <p>A creative brainstorming exercise that encourages people to think of wild, wacky and highly creative ideas in relation to the issue.</p> <p>Don't let discussion and ideas be restricted by policies, processes, convention, budget or even practicality. If it's theoretically possible, it's worthwhile!</p> <p>Use phrases like:</p> <p>"Wouldn't it be great if...?"</p> <p>"The perfect solution would be..."</p> <p>"It would make my life so easy if..."</p> <p>"The one thing I'd love to see is..."</p> <p>"In a parallel universe they would..."</p> | <p><i>Encourage each person to build on, or go one better than the last so ideas become more and more outrageous. Once this is done and you start to look at viable options, people have changed their perspective about what's ridiculous and what isn't, so may have a more open mind to more innovative ideas.</i></p> |

## Transferable Techniques

### Technique: Provocation (Think Differently)

#### Overview

Provocation is a lateral thinking technique that breaks down assumptions and opens the mind to possibilities that may not have been considered before. Originated by Edward de Bono, provocation begins by making deliberately stupid statements (Provocations), in which something you take for granted about the situation is not true.

#### How to Use it

Prepare a few statements that are outrageous to prevent people thinking in a conventional way. Once you have made a provocative statement, you then suspend judgment and use that statement to generate ideas. Provocations provide original starting points for creative thinking.

Ask questions to provoke creative thinking such as:

- What are the good bits?
- What are the interesting bits?
- What would you have to do if it were true?
- What would happen if it were true?
- Pull out the features of the ideas generated by the provocation and the provocation itself.
  - Think how it would be if it were "more".
  - Think how it would be if it were "less".
- Take the situation that you are considering, either as a whole or just some part of it, and...
  - Exaggerate it!
  - Making it smaller or bigger.
  - Making it less or more important.
  - Making it compulsory.

#### Hints, Tips and Variations

*Use other techniques such as brainstorming, mind mapping or Post-it notes to support this approach.*

*You may also want to do a round robin to ensure that everyone contributes to the ideas at least once.*

## Transferable Techniques

| Technique: Reframing  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Overview</b>   | A simple technique that encourages people to look at a problem, or opportunity from a number of different perspectives. It can be very useful when people appear to get stuck on just one point of view. By considering different perspectives people may get different insights, which then allow them to consider different options.  |
| <b>How to Use it</b>  | <b>Hints, Tips and Variations</b>   |
| <p>Take a topic and challenge people to look at it from specific perspectives. You can take a general topic such as "service" or "efficiency" and ask people what it might look like from different perspectives.</p> <p>You will need to suggest the perspectives for them to consider.</p> <p>For example, "What do you think efficiency means to..."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our customers?</li> <li>• Our suppliers?</li> <li>• Our branch staff?</li> <li>• Our shareholders?</li> </ul> <p>This technique allows you to explore specific issues from a number of angles and so gather more information to be used in problem solving, decision making or personal development.</p> | <p><i>You can reframe from:</i></p> <p><i>Different business perspectives (e.g. Tesco, Apple, A charity, the NHS, A start-up).</i></p> <p><i>Different people (famous or people you all know).</i></p> <p><i>Different cultures (e.g. North American, Western European, Arabic, and South-East Asia).</i></p> <p><i>Personal perspectives if you are reliving an actual situation: How did you feel, how did the other person react/feel, how would it look to an outsider?</i></p> |

## Summary

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1. Always remember that a workshop is all about the delegates – not about you. Remember that above all else, your role is to help delegates to learn: not to impress them, make friends or become famous.
2. Prepare, and prepare again, and then be prepared to go with the flow. Its highly unlikely that a workshop will run exactly as you plan, but the more you know the content and structure of the workshop, the easier it will be for you to adapt and tailor the session to suit the delegates.
3. Stay focussed on the objectives, and don't worry too much if you step away from the main route from time to time, as long as you end up where you need to be.
4. Remember that your delegates don't know what's in your Facilitator Notes/Session Leader's Guide, so don't panic if you miss something out or get your times in a muddle – you can always fix it later.
5. Keep your session brain-friendly to stimulate interest and make it easy for your delegates to understand and retain key content. Follow MASTER and you won't go far wrong.
6. Use a good mix of training methods to keep everyone engaged and maximise learning opportunities.
7. Most learning will come from activities and debriefing them as this takes people around the Learning Cycle. Avoid telling if the group can learn by doing.
8. Using pre-course work and following up training aid the transfer of learning, so make good use of both: People aren't attending your workshop to have a good time or get out of work – they're attending to learn how to do something new or better.
9. Respond to the needs of the group but always stay in control. A gentle touch is often all that's needed.
10. Remember that there aren't difficult people, just difficult behaviour, and that behaviour exists for a reason. Tackle the ball, not the player.



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