



HOW TO...

PLAN A GREAT TRAINING COURSE/PROGRAMME OR LEARNING EVENT

There's a lot more to creating a great training programme or learning event than selecting content and presenting it well. Planning the event (before detailed design commences) takes time and is vital to gain clarity in your own mind, and to get buy-in/sign-off from your key stakeholders.

Planning a learning event means keeping your focus on the big picture, and not getting distracted by too much detail. It means thinking about your content, blend (methods) and outcomes. At this stage, we assume that proper consultation has been completed and that a learning intervention is the best solution.

The outcome of planning a training programme or learning event is a detailed course outline, but there are many things to do before that! Here are the main things for you to consider.

1. **Start with why, what and who:** Why is the training needed? What is the purpose and who is it for? Don't think about how until later in the process.
2. **Draft your objectives right at the start** – you can always revisit them later
3. **Write objectives using Bloom's Taxonomy** – make sure that they can be measured/observed during the learning event
4. **Identify measurable outcomes.** These will build a bridge between the training and the job, and help people to apply their learning. Make sure that they are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Action-based, Realistic and Time-bound).
5. **Be creative.** Brain dump ALL of the ideas you have for content – use post-it notes, a mindmap, a list or even a spreadsheet – just capture all of your ideas.
6. **Connect your ideas.** Identify themes and topics before prioritising the content – what MUST be covered, what is useful to do, and what is nice to do if we can?
7. **Do an Audit.** Take a good look at what already exists and what you can use to short-cut the design process. Use and signpost existing resources where they are useful.
8. **Use a mix of methods and spread the learning** – utilise pre and post-event learning as much as learning to gain and retain interest.
9. **Aim to cover your crucial content in all 3 areas** – not in the same way or to the same level, but include 3 points of contact for the key elements.
10. **Create pre-course work.** This will help people to be fully prepared for the learning event. Think about what works well as a stand alone exercise and will add value.





11. **Send out pre-course work 2-3 weeks in advance of the event.** If you don't have an LMS, use a platform like [GiraffePad](#) to manage the process.
12. **Include all crucial and complex content in the learning event.** These are the things that will need to be explored in detail with the guidance of a facilitator.
13. **Structure your live event in a logical way.** Typically, you will take a process-led, problem-led or person-led approach.
14. **Be realistic in your timings.** For a full-day 9.30-4.30 is ideal. Keep half-day sessions to 3 hours, and remember to include a break.
15. **Decide what style of method will be used for each part** (if you can).:For example, trainer input, group discussion, small group work, case study, role play? Add approximate timings for each part.
16. **Top and tail your event.** Make sure that you allow time for domestics, health and safety and discussing objectives at the start, and review/reflection and action planning at the end.
17. **Use post-course work.** Post-course work will help people to stretch their learning (if they want to) and apply what they have learned to the workplace by suggesting specific activities for them to complete. Link to the Measurable Outcomes as much as possible.
18. **Capture your plans on ONE PAGE** if possible, outlining:
 - Aim
 - Objectives
 - Duration
 - Pre-Course Work
 - Course Content (in order)
 - An indication of how the content will be covered
 - Post-course activities

This acts as your blueprint for detailed design and is what to use to get buy-in for your learning event.

