Review Exercises

(for virtual and face-to-face sessions)
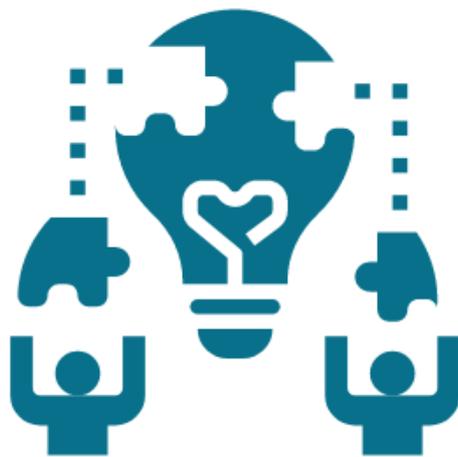
Training
Designer's
Club

Introduction

Time is short in virtual training sessions, and we need to make every minute count. Even in face-to-face courses, we often ended up squeezed for time. That might tempt us to do away with review and reflection. But forcing people to focus on learning points and plan how they will be applied at the end of a session means new ideas and behaviours are more likely to be implemented.

The training that you spent ages designing and put your heart and soul into delivering, is more likely to make a difference.

The style of review activity depends very much on the topic. Sometimes deep personal reflection is appropriate. Sometimes working together to agree key take-aways is more useful.

Here is a collection of exercises that can be used in a wide range of virtual training sessions. They have been sourced over many years from experience, websites and through our community.

Please feel free to use them to enhance your own events

1. Elimination

Overview	Interactive way for a group to distil the key learning points.
Timing	15-20 minutes.
Instructions	Use a flipchart (or Jamboard or Padlet) and give people 3-5 minutes to write down all the learning points they can remember. (you may wish to do this in small groups if the group is large). No judgement – go for quantity over quality.
	Remove duplicates.
	Then ask delegates to eliminate HALF the ideas (you will find it easier to ask them to take turns to remove one) based on which ones were more important/useful. For large groups, allow them a few minutes to work in smaller groups and do a RAG status on ideas that remain after the initial removal of duplicates.
	Then each group can elect a spokesperson to act on their behalf and remove ideas (especially if the course is virtual).
	You can always eliminate AGAIN OR then ask groups to select the top 3.
Alternatives	Instead of eliminating, you can classify the learning points as GOOD, BETTER, BEST.

2. Paired Voting

Overview	Quick-paced way to find out which aspects of the session were most useful.
Timing	Approx 15 minutes (depends on the number of learning points you have).
Instructions	EITHER have all the key points from the session prepared in advance on cards OR ask delegates to brainstorm them using post-it notes or Jamboard.
	Then simply show two at a time and ask delegates to vote for whether they think Point A or Point B was more useful. You can do this via a show of hands in person, a thumbs up icon virtually, or for very large groups via a voting app or poll. Put the 'winning' points in a pile and you can repeat the exercise again until you get to the number of key learning points you want to finish with.
Additional	Once you get to the desired number of key learning points (say 3) split delegates into 3 groups (one for each pint) and ask them to prepare a 2-minute presentation about why they point is so helpful/how it can be used.
Alternative	You can also do this with Action Points, particularly if you want the team to agree the next steps as a whole.

3. Draw it

Overview	Take a break from the screen and unleash delegate's creativity with paper and pens.
Timing	5 minutes (plus debrief time).
Instructions	Ask delegates to use paper and pens to draw their key learning point from the session – it doesn't have to be good! Allow 5 minutes.
	If the group is small, everyone can show their pictures to the whole group and explain them briefly.
	In larger groups, this can be done in small groups of 4-6. You can then ask each group to select a spokesperson to feedback the overall theme in 10-words or less.
Alternatives	If ALL delegates are virtual, you can ask them to find a picture to share that summarises their key learning point.

4. Catch me Out

Overview	A short activity that can be quickly used to check understanding.
Timing	10-20 minutes.
Equipment Required	Koosh balls (or bean bags or similar) if face-to-face.
Instructions	Get everyone on their feet and throw a ball to the first person - ask them a question, allow the group to help out - they can only sit down when they have answered a question to your satisfaction and then they throw the ball to the next person, and so on - this can be pacey and fast-moving.
	A variation would be to ask the first question yourself, but when the first delegate has answered their question, they select the next 'contestant' and ask the question. This has the double benefit of testing each delegate twice.
Virtual alternative	Simply nominate a delegate to start, and ask them to select the next delegate at random. Once people have answered they should either add an icon to their video or switch their camera off to show they've contributed.

5. The Clapping Game

Overview	A short activity that can work well as a quick review.
Timing	10 minutes.
Instructions	Get delegates into a rhythm clapping twice and clicking fingers twice. Once the rhythm is going, ask each delegate in turn to share a quick learning point over the 'clicks'. The trick is to come up with something relevant at the right time.
	When running virtually, you may need to use alternate clicks (i.e. every other one) so that you can name the next delegate in the gaps.
Additional	This is a good intro to a review, in that it will remind everyone what has been covered, but it ought to be followed up with more in-depth reflection.

6. Acronym

Overview	Creative way to get people to think about the key learning points from the session.
Timing	10 minutes plus optional debrief.
Instructions	Put delegates into small groups and give each a piece of flipchart paper OR direct them to an online whiteboard like Jamboard.
	Give each group ONE WORD that related to the course content and ask them to create a summary of learning points (each sentence starting with the next letter of the word you've given them) e.g. LEADERSHIP
	This can be shared visually with verbal chat optional.
Alternative	You could give everyone the SAME word and set up a competition where everyone can vote for their favourite (not their own!).

7. Alphabet Review

Overview	Structured and creative way to involve the whole group in reviewing learning points.
Timing	Approx 15 minutes.
Instructions	Write up the Alphabet down the left-side of a flipchart (or 2 pages). OR create a slide that delegates can annotate if virtual (or virtual whiteboard). You may want to miss out letters such as Q, Y and Z.
	Ask delegates to write a learning point for each letter of the alphabet.
	You will need to think about how to stop people all writing at the same time (especially virtually), but with a little careful management it can work well.
	Either stop when everyone has contributed OR when you complete the alphabet!
Alternative	Give specific people (or groups) specific letters to work with.

8. Auction

Overview	Easy way to make sure that delegates reflect on ALL the things you've covered.
Timing	15 minutes
Instructions	Ask delegates to work in teams and write down EVERYTHING they can remember about what has been covered. Each team must draw up a visible list. Allow 10 minutes. (It's best to encourage them to do this from memory rather than looking back through workbooks or slides). Ask each team to elect a spokesperson.
	Ask each team to state how many distinct points they have.
	The team with the lowest number must read out their points, and other teams should mark the ones that they already have.
	The team with the NEXT highest then reads out any additional points (other teams cross them off) and so on until all points have been read out.
	Teams can then score the number of UNIQUE learning points they have to find a winner.
Additional	If time allows, you can ask them to think again with the benefit of the discussion AND allow them to look back at course materials. Allow 5-10 minutes.
	Ask how many more learning points they remembered? – It won't be many, but this highlights the importance of review and reflection at spaced intervals.

9. I attended a training session

Overview	Version of the children's game "I went to Market" that is played in sequence.
Timing	Depends on number of delegates: 10-15 minutes (wouldn't recommend for groups larger than 12).
Instructions	Explain that delegates will add to a list in turn – each person needs to repeat what's gone before them and add another item. The first person will say "I attended a training session and I learned….". the next person will say "I attended a training session and I learned X **and** …." And so on.
	Obviously, it gets harder as you go round. In face-to-face environments, just work around the room (or use a koosh-ball to add a bit of variety). If delivering virtually, you will probably need to nominate the next person.
Alternatives	Delegates could work in pairs (formally or not) with the person 1, 3, 5 etc naming the learning point and person 2, 4, 6 etc explaining what that means. For example: "I attended a training session and learned about the prioritisation grid **which means that** I can focus my energy on things that will deliver the biggest value"

10. Headline

Overview	A twist on the pairs interview format.
Timing	15 minutes (approx.).
Instructions	Ask delegates to work in pairs to interview each other about what they found most useful about the course and how they might apply the learning (5 minutes each way).
	Then allow 5 minutes for individual work. During this time delegates must come up with a shocking or quirky headline and sub-heading (or quote) to summarise their partners learning points. For example: "Dan Dumps it! – Local Team Leader says he's going to stop doing tasks that don't add value"
Alternatives	Use the interview format and ask each person to find a quote or soundbite from the interview. These can then be added to a flipchart or virtual whiteboard. You can even ask delegates to guess who said what.
	This will also be useful in gathering testimonials!

11. Video

Overview	Get delegates to make a 2-minute video summarising the key take-away for them.
Timing	30 minutes plus viewing time (so perhaps best saved for a programme review)
Instructions	Ask delegates to work in small groups to create and film a short video explaining or demonstrating a key learning point from the course.
	This will work best if delegates can physically work together, but it is possible if all are remote.
	Encourage them to use their phone, and upload to a shared place (or find another way of sharing).
	You can even have a mini Oscars ceremony if you like!
Alternatives	Create a song, poem, Tik Tok video or short story with a moral.

12. Picture This

Overview	Quick way to get a snapshot of what people have taken from the course.
Timing	1 minute per delegate.
Instructions	Virtual: Prepare a slide with around 20 pictures on it – all different (see www.pixabay.com for a good royalty-free selection). Ask each delegate to use the stamp annotation tool to mark a picture that feels relevant to them in relation to what they've learned. Briefly discuss the choices people have made.
	In person: Use picture cards and ask person to select one (or more) that summarises their key learning/actions from the course.

13. Invite yourself

Overview	Quick way to encourage people to reflect on what they've learned.
Timing	10-15 minutes.
Instructions	Ask delegates to imagine they've gone back in time 2 weeks, and have to invite themselves to attend this course today. What benefits would they tell themselves they'd get from attending? What problems will they be able to solve as result of going on this course?
	Allow 5 minutes for individual work and then 5-10 minutes to share either in small groups or by asking a few delegates to voluntarily share with the full group.
Alternative	Ask them to 3 sentences that would convince a friend or colleague to attend the course.
	You can also share in written format using flipchart, post-it notes or Jamboard.

14. Rank it

Overview	Way to review content prior to action planning.
Timing	10-15 minutes.
Instructions	Spend 5 minutes brainstorming all the things that have been covered/learned during the event. Write these on post-it notes (or Jamboard or Padlet).
	Then give each delegate 5 (or 3 or 10) points to allocate to the points they think were most useful. They can allocate points as they see fit. Allow 5 minutes.
	Then see which have been voted the most useful.
Alternative	You can of course add the learning points into a voting app and allow delegates to vote that way.

15. In the Clouds

Overview	Visual way to collate key learning points.
Timing	5-10 minutes.
Instructions	Use an app such as PollEverywhere or Mentimeter to capture key learning points and create a wordcloud. This can then be saved and sent out after the event.
Alternative	If face-to-face ask delegates to use colourful pens to create a mindmap.

16. 1-2-4-ALL

Overview	A liberating structure that can be used face-to-face or virtually.
Timing	Around 20 minutes.
Instructions	Ask delegates to work alone for 2 or 3 minutes to draw up a list of 5 key learning points.
	Then put them into pairs to discuss their learning points and agree a combined list of 5. Allow 5 minutes.
	Then repeat, putting 2 pairs together to make a group of 4.
	Then (if the group is large) make 2 groups and repeat.
	Finally ask the group to come together as one and agree the top 5 learning points.
	You can then capture these on a flipchart or whiteboard.

I hope that you found this useful.

Sheridan Webb – Founder: The Training Designer's Club.

"Design isn't just what it looks and feels like. Design is how it works" – Steve Jobs

About Me

As an independent Training Designer, I've spent the last 25 years focusing on the research and design of bespoke training programmes, and bite-size workshops.

In 2019 I decided to share my expertise by creating the Training Designer's Club. The free Facebook group is a casual discussion forum open to anyone involved in training design. Our VIP members get more resources, support and value by having access to a resources library, regular virtual meetings (Designer Drop-Ins) to discuss their own design challenges and on-going development via webinars, lunch and learn sessions, coaches catch-ups and on-line courses

Find out more: www.trainingdesignersclub.co.uk

Here are links to other websites worth taking a look at. They are aimed at education, but many of the ideas can be adapted easily.

https://ditchthattextbook.com/elearning-activities/

https://www.teachhub.com/classroom-activities/2019/10/fun-review-activities-and-classroom-games-to-do-now/