Participant’s Manual: A Guide to Key Content and Resources

Training of Trainers

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Introduction

Given the quantity of information that is delivered during the MicroSave Training of Trainers course, this handbook is designed to highlight the key messages, tools and resources that you should find useful as you strive to design and deliver more effective training events in the future.

Q. What are the two most important points of reference for any training event?

1. Audience
2. Objectives

Q. What are the ten core adult learning principles?

The table below lists the ten principles along with a description of the adult learner characteristics that each principle refers to. It also suggests some actions that trainers can take to design and deliver training events that respond to these characteristics, thus creating a more effective learning environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Observations: How Adults Learn</th>
<th>Implications: How Trainers Can Respond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Experience | • We already know a lot and want that to be acknowledged  
• We are accustomed to doing things in a certain way  
• We want to draw from and build on our own experiences | • Respect and build on participants’ existing knowledge and experience  
• Create linkages between the course material and real situations that are familiar to participants  
• Ask participants how new information fits with what they already know  
• Use interactive training methods that give participants opportunities to learn from each other  
• Incorporate activities that allow participants to experiment with new ways of doing things |
| 2. Teamwork | • No one can force us to learn if we don’t want to  
• We like to be in control, but don’t like to do all the work ourselves  
• We expect others to add to what we already know | • Involve participants in articulating their learning needs before and during the training event  
• Partner with participants to achieve learning objectives  
• Clarify roles and responsibilities  
• Don’t do or decide what participants can do or decide for themselves  
• Provide opportunities for the audience to influence the direction and pace of the session  
• Design participatory activities so that everyone is included  
• Use reflection activities to examine how the group can work more efficiently or effectively  
• Pause frequently to test understanding and invite feedback |
| 3. Relevance | • We’re busy people; we have to have a reason to pay attention  
• We are naturally excited to learn things that help us understand our own lives  
• What interests us most is knowledge that we can apply now to real situations | • Design course materials, content and methods to respond to participants’ needs  
• Communicate how each new topic, session, and resource can help meet an identified need  
• Clarify expectations during the opening session  
• Pattern in-class exercises on real-life scenarios that are of interest to the audience  
• Use descriptions, examples and illustrations that are familiar to participants  
• Plan opportunities for applying new information to real situations as quickly as possible  
• Continually demonstrate how new information links with previous knowledge  
• Allow participants to set their own objectives and evaluate their own learning |
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<tr>
<td>4. Safety</td>
<td>• Negative emotions prevent our learning – if we feel <em>ridiculed</em>, <em>ignored</em> or <em>unsuccessful</em>, we will participate less&lt;br&gt;• Positive emotions encourage our learning – if we feel <em>respected</em>, <em>supported</em> and <em>successful</em>, we will participate more</td>
<td>• Create an environment in which participants feel welcome, comfortable, respected and productively challenged&lt;br&gt;• Introduce yourself and the course content in a way that builds confidence in the quality of the design and your competence as a trainer&lt;br&gt;• Communicate the feasibility and relevance of the learning objectives early on&lt;br&gt;• Give participants time to become acquainted and form interpersonal connections&lt;br&gt;• Use small groups at the start of the event to develop trust&lt;br&gt;• Begin with simple, clear and relatively easy tasks before advancing to more complex and difficult ones&lt;br&gt;• Match the complexity and pace of the training design to the capacity of the audience so that success is possible&lt;br&gt;• Build positive reinforcement into the training design&lt;br&gt;• Recognize the value of each contribution&lt;br&gt;• Manage group interaction so that learners do not feel ridiculed, threatened or ignored; keep criticism constructive&lt;br&gt;• Receive feedback with appreciation and care</td>
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<td>5. Enjoyment</td>
<td>• We learn when we want to learn&lt;br&gt;• We’re more willing to learn if learning is fun&lt;br&gt;• We have more fun when we like the people we’re working with&lt;br&gt;• We enjoy receiving praise, even for small efforts</td>
<td>• Look for ways to make things fun—be creative!&lt;br&gt;• Use energizers and closings to encourage a more animated, festive, relaxed atmosphere&lt;br&gt;• Allow people to choose who they work with&lt;br&gt;• Structure competitions to build collective team spirit&lt;br&gt;• Build break times into the schedule that are long enough for participants to socialize&lt;br&gt;• Consider “out-of-class” activities that facilitate informal interaction&lt;br&gt;• Have fun yourself; be enthusiastic</td>
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<td>6. Immediacy</td>
<td>• Our attention span and patience are limited&lt;br&gt;• What we learn first is usually what we learn best&lt;br&gt;• We want to be able to use what we learn immediately</td>
<td>• Place important messages at the beginning&lt;br&gt;• Make a strong, interesting first impression&lt;br&gt;• Keep sessions relatively short&lt;br&gt;• Facilitate opportunities to apply new information as quickly as possible</td>
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<td>7. Reinforcement</td>
<td>• We learn more if we use more than one of our senses&lt;br&gt;• We forget things quickly; repetition aids our retention&lt;br&gt;• We remember best what we hear last</td>
<td>• Engage multiple senses to deliver messages: as you explain something verbally, try to show it as well; invite participants to hold the paper, read a slide, draw a diagram, demonstrate a possible solution, etc.&lt;br&gt;• Regularly review important messages&lt;br&gt;• Recap every 20 minutes&lt;br&gt;• After each break, start with a review&lt;br&gt;• Ask questions that encourage recall&lt;br&gt;• Use a framework or structure to help you summarize, organize and regularly review core concepts&lt;br&gt;• Use closings to reiterate the most important messages</td>
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<td>8. Activity</td>
<td>• We learn the most by doing&lt;br&gt;• Self-confidence increases with practice</td>
<td>• Set achievement-based objectives&lt;br&gt;• Design the training to be as active as possible&lt;br&gt;• Organize activities so that everyone participates&lt;br&gt;• Allow time for participants to reflect on what they have done</td>
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</table>
Principle | Observations: How Adults Learn | Implications: How Trainers Can Respond
---|---|---
9. Accountability | • We want to be successful  
• In general, we like to keep our promises and want others to do so as well  
• We are motivated to learn when someone is holding us accountable for doing so | • Use clear objectives to focus and refocus attention  
• Stick to your agenda – unless the group as a whole decides to change it  
• Track progress within the training design  
• Pause frequently to “test” understanding through questioning and activities  
• Allow participants to evaluate their own learning; make sure they can see what they have achieved  
• Engage co-workers and supervisors in assessing learners’ needs; connect them to the training event’s action planning process |
10. Style | • Even though we have a lot in common with respect to how we learn, we also have our differences  
• We tend to prefer a particular style of learning | • Choose a collection of training activities that appeal to different styles; follow the ELC  
• Be aware of the potential for learning style to bias training style  
• Encourage the sharing of different perspectives and respect the differences |

Q. What are the seven steps of planning in the context of a training event?

1. **Who**: Find out how many people will be participating in the training and get to know their needs, characteristics and expectations.
2. **Why**: Understand the situation that calls for this training and the context within which the training will take place.
3. **When**: Find out how urgent the training is and negotiate an appropriate time and length for the event.
4. **Where**: Determine an appropriate training site and make arrangements to create as productive a learning environment as possible in that physical space.
5. **What**: Decide what knowledge, skills and attitudes should be conveyed through the training.
6. **What for**: Write achievement-based objectives that take the “who, why, when, where and what” into account.
7. **How**: Develop or adapt learning tasks and materials that will enable trainees to achieve the objectives.

Q. Do I really need to assess participants’ needs every time I design or deliver a training?

Yes. You may not need to conduct a training needs assessment yourself, but you should ask to see the results of any assessment that was done, or speak to those who identified the need for your training in the first place. If no formal assessment was done, take some time to get to know your audience informally – perhaps through a questionnaire or phone calls to some of the prospective participants.

Use the needs assessment to:
- Clarify who needs to learn what, in what context and for what purpose
- Dig for root causes
- Pinpoint the most important issues
- Look for experience that already exists that you can build on in the training room
- Identify the kind of examples or scenarios that would be most relevant
- Find a baseline that can be used to measure progress and effectiveness
- Gather insight into prejudices, preferences, personalities and learning styles
- Establish a team approach to the training event

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The needs assessment process doesn’t have to be complex or complicated. Remember, it is basically a process of asking questions—taking the time to explore, from a variety of perspectives, what learners’ needs are and what kind of environment, examples, training style, etc. would make your design and delivery most relevant, enjoyable and productive.

**Q. What does an effective objective look like?**

It states what learners will be able to do at end of the training activity.
It focuses on RESULTS rather than procedures.
It defines the desired change in a way that can be measured.
It is written from the participants’ point of view.

A four-part learning objective will include:

1. **Action** – What the learner will do to demonstrate that he or she has learned; this should be an observable behaviour
2. **Condition** – The circumstances in which the action will take place; this includes any materials or assistance to be provided
3. **Standard** – The level of acceptable performance; criteria that can be used to evaluate the action or behaviour (e.g., the number of correct items, the time taken, etc.)
4. **Evaluation** – Identifies who will determine whether the standard has been met; usually the instructor, the learner, or in some cases, the learning group collectively

**Q: What is the Experiential Learning Cycle?**

The Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC) is exactly what the name implies—a process of learning from experience. It is a cycle that can be repeated as many times as necessary, with each experience building on the previous one, until a learning task is achieved.

The ELC is described by different theorists in slightly different ways. In general, there are four core elements that are present in each cycle and there may be “lead-ins” or “close outs” as a particular learning event is begun or concluded.

- **The “lead-in” or “opening”** stage leads learners into the core of the cycle. It should introduce and stimulate interest in a particular learning task or objective.
- **The experience** stage provides an opportunity for learners to become actively involved in doing something. It should create or re-create an experience that is related to the learning task.
- **In the processing** stage, someone typically guides learners to critically review their experiences, to share observations, and to reflect on what has happened, drawing attention to any patterns or contradictions that may emerge.
- **In the generalisation** stage, learners analyse their observations, draw conclusions and identify general principles that might be useful to them in the future.
- **The application** stage offers learners a chance to use whatever insight they might have gained thus far to address a relevant, practical situation or challenge. It should help prepare learners to apply their new knowledge, skill or attitude in a real life environment.
- **The closing** stage reinforces key messages and provides a sense of completion and accomplishment.

Each step has a unique purpose, so if all steps are taken, the likelihood of achieving a learning objective will increase. For a more detailed explanation of the ELC, see Handouts 6.2 and 6.3.
Q. How should I choose which methods to use to accomplish a particular objective?

Here are a few general guidelines to keep in mind:

- Remember the principles of adult learning!
- Use a variety of activities.
- Build on participants’ existing knowledge and experience.
- Facilitate opportunities to apply new information to real situations as quickly as possible.
- Keep it active.
- Use the 90/20/8 Rule – plan modules to last 90 minutes or less; recap and change the pace every 20 minutes; involve participants in the content every 8 minutes.
- Use objectives, the ELC, and the training needs assessment to guide you.

Q. Which training methods are best used with each type of objective and ELC stage?

There is no absolute answer to this question, but the chart below provides some rough guidelines about the appropriateness of each method for a particular type of objective or ELC stage. There are always multiple options, so use your creativity to incorporate a variety of training methods into your design and delivery.

**KEY:**
- Two stars (**) = Can be very effective; application is relatively easy
- One star (*) = Can be effective in the appropriate context
- No star = Will generally not be as effective as other methods

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<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Objective Type</th>
<th>ELC Stage</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Skill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Panel Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
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<td>Small Group Tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large Group Discussion</td>
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<td>Large Group Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
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<td>Learning Partners</td>
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<td>BUZZ Group Discussions</td>
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<td>Interviews</td>
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<td>Individual Exercises</td>
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<td>Debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Cards</td>
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<td>**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Games</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puzzles or Riddles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drawings or Mapping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Display or Exhibition</td>
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<td>Q&amp;A Sessions</td>
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<td>Field Trips</td>
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<td>Video or Film</td>
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<td>Guest Speakers</td>
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What are the seven main components of an opening session agenda?
1. Welcome
2. Introductions
3. Expectations
4. Needs Assessment
5. Objectives
6. Ground Rules
7. Logistics

Q. What are the three minimum requirements for an effective closing?
1. Indicate what is ending
2. Do something to help people remember the main message(s) from that activity or session
3. Do something to motivate continued engagement with the content

Q. How can each component of the closing motivate learning?
The following chart provides examples to illustrate how each component of the closing can be used to celebrate, provide focus or rationale, enhance self-esteem, plan and create awareness of opportunities. It is by no means exhaustive, and is meant simply to get you started on a path to more creative and strategic thinking about closings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation Strategy</th>
<th>Content Review</th>
<th>Q&amp;A</th>
<th>Main Messages</th>
<th>Transition to What’s Next</th>
<th>Action planning</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Celebration</td>
<td>Choose fun methods such as games or puzzles</td>
<td>Try an activity like “Stump Your Opponent”</td>
<td>Use contests, group work, maybe prizes</td>
<td>Use an active or colourful visual to physically tick off progress</td>
<td>Invite learners to plan in groups, or work off-site in a café or garden</td>
<td>Choose easy and enjoyable methods, e.g. bulls eye</td>
<td>Use fun methods such as role plays, demonstrations or site visits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Limit the review to what’s most important</td>
<td>Concentrate on the 1-3 issues of most concern</td>
<td>Keep the number of messages to 5 or less</td>
<td>Be clear about what is required to move to the next step</td>
<td>Invite everyone to make specific commitments</td>
<td>Ask only one or two questions</td>
<td>Limit the length and number of questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Include “why” or importance questions in the review</td>
<td>Ask learners why something is important</td>
<td>Include at least one message that focuses on importance</td>
<td>Articulate how this activity will make a next step easier</td>
<td>Focus on a current, real life problem that needs attention now</td>
<td>Explain how the feedback will be used</td>
<td>Ask what knowledge, skill or attitude they will apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>Keep score, give prizes or certificates</td>
<td>Try an activity like “Asking Questions Getting Answers”</td>
<td>Use a quiz or self-test to assess comprehension of messages</td>
<td>Draw attention to progress through a framework</td>
<td>Highlight actions that can be taken now that could not be taken before training</td>
<td>Offer something positive before the negative</td>
<td>Pre and post tests can draw attention to what has been learned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plans</td>
<td>Include relevant application questions in the review</td>
<td>Invite questions about application challenges</td>
<td>Link planning exercises to main concepts</td>
<td>Set specific timeframes in action plans</td>
<td>Plan how to overcome application obstacles</td>
<td>Create opportunities to define a response to feedback</td>
<td>Ask what follow up assistance could help learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>Ask what content they would like to know more about</td>
<td>Ask how they might build on this in the future</td>
<td>Show how difficult decisions can be guided by the messages</td>
<td>Illustrate a range of applications</td>
<td>Include action items to learn more about specific issues or techniques</td>
<td>Invite learners to give each other feedback</td>
<td>Ask how course design and delivery can be improved</td>
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</table>
Q. What key things should I remember when developing resource materials?

✓ Before you begin, reflect on the characteristics of your intended audience (e.g., education, culture, daily work environment).
✓ Check whether the institution for which you are developing the materials has standards or guidelines that you need to follow.
✓ Design appropriate, open ended questions to help move discussions around the ELC in pursuit of a learning objective.
✓ Use real life examples.
✓ Focus exercises on participants’ own organisations.
✓ Aim for clarity – the materials must enhance communication, not confuse.
✓ Put instructions for all exercises in writing.
✓ Always recognise the sources from which your materials draw.
✓ Make sure all financial ratios and terms adhere to SEEP/CGAP guidelines to maintain uniformity and standards.
✓ Be creative!

Q. What are my responsibilities as a trainer?

Very simply: to make sure your audience meets the learning objectives. To be a bit more specific, this means:

1. Ensuring that relevant new material (or new ways of looking at old material) are introduced
2. Facilitating activities that enable participants to understand how to apply the new material or perspective in their own circumstances
3. Motivating participants to want to apply it

Q. How can I make sure that I am prepared to deliver an effective training?

Try using a Trainer Preparation Checklist such as the one provided below:
- Have you conducted a training needs assessment or will you somehow involve the people you will be training in articulating their learning needs before your event begins?
- Have you asked whether anyone else conducted a training needs assessment during the planning of this event and, if so, whether you can access it?
- Do you know what participants need or want to be able to do with the skills or knowledge they expect to gain through the training? Do you know what their managers or institutions want them to be able to do as a result of this training? Have you discussed follow up activities?
- Do you know something about the background of each participant?
- Have you reviewed your training plan against the training design checklist and made the necessary adjustments?
Have you adapted your training plan to meet the needs of this particular audience? Have you adapted the training materials to include relevant examples, case studies, language and graphics? Have you adjusted the action plan and application activities to be appropriate for their on-the-job requirements and environment?

Have you adapted your sessions taking into consideration the time of day when they will be delivered?

Have you adapted individual activities as necessary to be facilitated effectively in the training venue you will be using?

Have you reviewed your notes on how to encourage and constructively respond to participant feedback? Do you know what your feedback system or strategy will be—how you will encourage and respond to feedback regularly?

Have you reached an agreement with co-trainers about the division of roles and responsibilities?

Have you properly briefed any guest speakers and agreed upon a list of talking points or questions you would like them to address?

Have you reviewed the Event Preparation Checklist and made the arrangements necessary for a comfortable, productive venue and appropriate supplies?

Have you thought carefully about your opening session and how you will create a welcoming, comfortable, motivating environment? Have you selected appropriate icebreaker and introductions activities? Do you have a plan for facilitating an effective ground rules discussion?

Have you planned an evaluation for your session or workshop?

Have you reviewed your notes from the last time you delivered this course?

Have you communicated with participants about the agenda of the event, any background reading they need to do, or materials they need to bring with them?

Do you have a variety of energisers ready for use?

Are you clear about the ultimate objective of the training? Can you articulate the 5-10 most important messages that you want to communicate during the event?

Can you recite from memory the objectives of each training session you are about to deliver?

Are you confident and comfortable with the opening and closing activities of each session?

Have you brainstormed real life examples that might be relevant to this topic and/or audience that you can share during the course of the event?

Have you done background reading on the training topic? At minimum, have you done a quick search to identify recent newspaper, magazine or internet articles that can be referred to during the event?

Have you pre-titled your flip charts?

Have you identified props that can support your training delivery?

Have you decided how you will organize participants into small groups?

Have you marked up your copy of the materials to highlight important points or things to watch out for, such as timing?

Do you know what material must be covered, and what could be left out if necessary?

Have you practiced articulating important instructions and messages?

Q. What makes a presentation effective?

1. The preparation of a clear and relevant message
2. The attractive, accurate delivery of that message
Keep your presentations short, simple and clear. Put the most important information at the beginning and summarize key points at the end. Establish links with other training content, the course goals and participants’ goals. Pay attention to your body language and tone of voice—remember, less than 10% of your message is conveyed by the words that you use. Use visuals to enhance your presentation; don’t expect that they can be your presentation.

**Q. Can you give me 5 ideas for easily adding content to the MicroSave slide presentations?**
1. Give an example of success or failure that resulted from applying or ignoring the information on the slide.
2. Suggest alternative approaches to implementing what is on the slide.
3. Point out critical issues to watch out for during implementation.
4. Provide specific implementation tips or techniques that might save participants time or money.
5. Ask questions that invite participants to share any of the above.

**Q. How can I get my messages across effectively in the face of so many communication barriers?**
- Think about communication as a process of sending information AND making sure it was received as you intended.
- Use multiple channels.
- Regularly seek out feedback through observation, listening, paraphrasing, summarising, follow up questions, and/or specific feedback activities.
- Encourage learners to give you feedback by giving feedback yourself and doing something constructive with the feedback you receive.

**Q. What simple guidelines can I follow to give more effective feedback?**
- Give feedback as soon as possible.
- Be specific.
- Limit your comments to only 2 or 3 aspects of performance.
- Give praise before offering negative comments.
- Comment on the performance, not the person.
- Be helpful, not destructive.
- Don’t immediately suggest solutions yourself; ask “How might you do this differently the next time?”
- Refer to something over which the receiver has some control.

**Q. How can I motivate my audience?**
- Make your training fun: use energisers, games, puzzles, celebrations, colour; convey an upbeat, positive attitude and interest in the subject.
- Create an atmosphere in which everyone is comfortable; follow the guidelines for giving effective feedback.
- Demonstrate that learning will be useful.
- Be enthusiastic – if you’re not, why should they be?
- Change something – your training method, tone of voice, pace of presentation, the way people are grouped.
- MOVE! Work the room.
- Stimulate curiosity through relevant questions.
- Incorporate an element of surprise or suspense.
- Help everyone feel successful; publicly track and draw attention to progress towards objectives; give positive feedback.
Q. What tools can I use to manage time and interaction more effectively in my future training delivery?

- **Questions**: use them to invite participation, to help participants build on each other’s contributions, to guide discussions and learning to achieve objectives
- **Summaries**: help participants keep track of what has been said, clarify the main points, emphasise the items worth building upon, and encourage reflection
- **Processing Methods**: choose techniques that encourage everyone to be involved and stay “tuned in”; communicate in advance a time limit for the presentation of results
- **Body Language**: use gestures to send messages without having to talk or disrupt a content activity
- **Ground Rules**: establish agreed-upon boundaries of interaction which make participation safer and easier; control can become a team effort
- **Parking Lot**: store interesting ideas here until you have an opportunity to address them
- **Breaks**: give everyone a chance to recharge and deal with potential distractions, give yourself some flexibility in your schedule
- **Four Functions of Management** (Planning, Organising, Leading, Controlling): the framework can help you find solutions to specific delivery challenges and identify general opportunities for improving your management skills

Q. Where can I find more information on effective training design and delivery?

Listed below are a few of the resources that you might consider adding to your reference library:

- “Training for the Trainer”, *St. Francis Xavier University*, 1996
- Crone, Catherine D. and Carman St. John Hunter, “From the Field: Tested Participatory Activities for Trainers”, *World Education*, USA, 1980


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