Instructor's Handbook

A Guide for Training Effectiveness

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Chapter 1—Introduction

Using the *Handbook*

Purpose

The purpose of this *Instructor's Handbook* is to provide an easy-reference resource to assist you in carrying out your professional responsibilities. By using this *Handbook* in conjunction with the course materials you're presently teaching or developing, you'll be able to:

- relate the course content to the professional needs of adult participants;
- create a learner-focused classroom environment;
- improve platform and presentation skills;
- direct your instructional activities toward reaching observable, measurable performance objectives;
- ask focused, probing questions;
- utilize varied and flexible teaching roles--*e.g.* lecturer, discussion leader, and facilitator;
- create compelling visual aids and media support;
- utilize alternative delivery approaches and "blended learning" solutions
- assess whether or not your students are demonstrating the intended learning outcomes.

How to use the *Instructor's Handbook*

Use the *Handbook* as a "quick study" reference to enable you and your participants to have a successful and productive learning experience. The guide is not content specific, but rather focuses on:

- utilizing accepted principles of adult learning
- discussing the characteristics and benefits of systematic instructional design and performance-based instruction
- describing the attributes and qualities of effective instructors
- developing activities and techniques by which these processes, principles and ideas can be practically implemented in your classes and become a part of your professional life.

Steps for Using *Instructor's Handbook*

Step	Action
1	Review the course materials you'll be using for your class.
2	Read the *Instructor's Handbook,* and annotate sections and ideas which have particular relevance to you and the course you're teaching.
3	Review the *Model for Systematic Training* on page 7 to develop a conceptual overview of the adult learning process, and your roles and responsibilities within this process.
4	For each module (or "lesson") in the course you'll be teaching, note the teaching role(s) you will be carrying out in order to execute the activity(ies).
5	Review the "Instructor Roles" section of the *Handbook* and note the questions and activities that best fit these roles.
6	Select and insert questions, activities, techniques, war stories, etc. in the course materials you'll be working with to "customize" these so that your personality, style, and experiences are reflected.
7	Review presentation and platform skills that are discussed, and find ways to rehearse these with colleagues or using videotaped feedback and review.
8	Become familiar with the new technologies that are discussed, and select and utilize alternative delivery approaches that complement and augment your training curriculum.
9	Identify appropriate evaluation methods for your instructional programs. Always ask, at the beginning of the instructional design process, "How shall I measure this training to determine whether or not it was effective and successful?"

Core Competencies and a Systems Approach

A theoretical model

Our next introductory step involves becoming familiar with the *Model for Systematic Training* that appears on page 7. It's often said that there's nothing so practical as a good theory. In this case, the "good theory" is the model we're now going to introduce. In this model, two sets of variables, and one "centerpiece" set of instructional decision-makers are presented:

- the top row of the model displays the core competencies and knowledge areas that effective instructors have to be able to demonstrate
- the bottom row displays the basic processes, which are repetitive and iterative, involved in systematic instructional design and instructional decision making
- at the center of it all, the instructor/trainer and other instructional decision maker(s)
- finally, as you see in the model, an instructor/trainer must have expertise in the subject area he or she is teaching.

Core competencies

Let's break down our model for "drill-down" discussion. The 5 core competencies displayed at the top of our model are:

Adult Learning Principles	Developing Performance Objectives	Learning & Teaching Roles	Presentation Platform Facilitation	Alternative Delivery
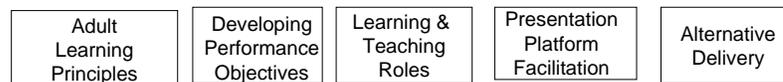
Why are these core competencies so important? In a word, they represent the critical knowledge, skills, and attitudes/attributes that effective instructors **absolutely must have** in their professional repertoire in order to design, deliver, and evaluate instruction. In this *Handbook*, we're going to learn the practical applications of these competencies, and the concepts and knowledge areas that underscore each.

Continued on next page

Core Competencies and a Systems Approach, Continued

The systematic processes

The lower portion of our model displays 5 process blocks. Many of you will recognize these as components of a "systems model," or, in our case, the 5 essential processes in an *Instructional Systems Design* model. For over 30 years, the efficacy of this design approach, and the superior training outcomes that result from instruction developed using this training methodology, are supported by both practice and research findings. In fact, instructional systems design is the accepted training industry standard.

Analysis	Design	Develop	Implement	Evaluate
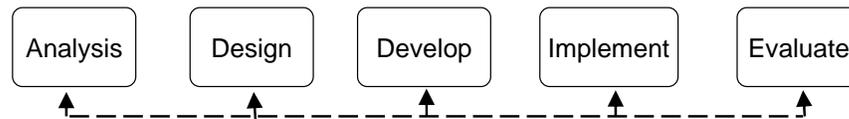
The instructor/ trainer as change agent

You, the reader, are the centerpiece of our model, because you represent the instructors, trainers, instructional designers, training managers, etc. who must put theory into practice. You're a "change agent," and in order to affect the type of desirable performance outcomes and behavioral changes your organization requires, you must put these ideas to work 24/7.

> *Trainers*
> *Facilitators*
> *Instructors*
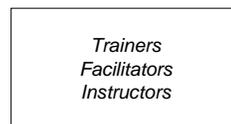
Stepping through the model

As you go about using this *Handbook*, you'll note that it's organized according to topics shown on the model. You might want to print out the page that follows as a separate job aid, and check each block or section as you complete the relevant material.

A Model for Systematic Training

Subject Matter Expertise

| Adult Learning Principles | Developing Performance Objectives | Learning & Teaching Roles | Presentation Platform Facilitation | Alternative Delivery |

Trainers
Facilitators
Instructors

| Analysis | Design | Develop | Implement | Evaluate |
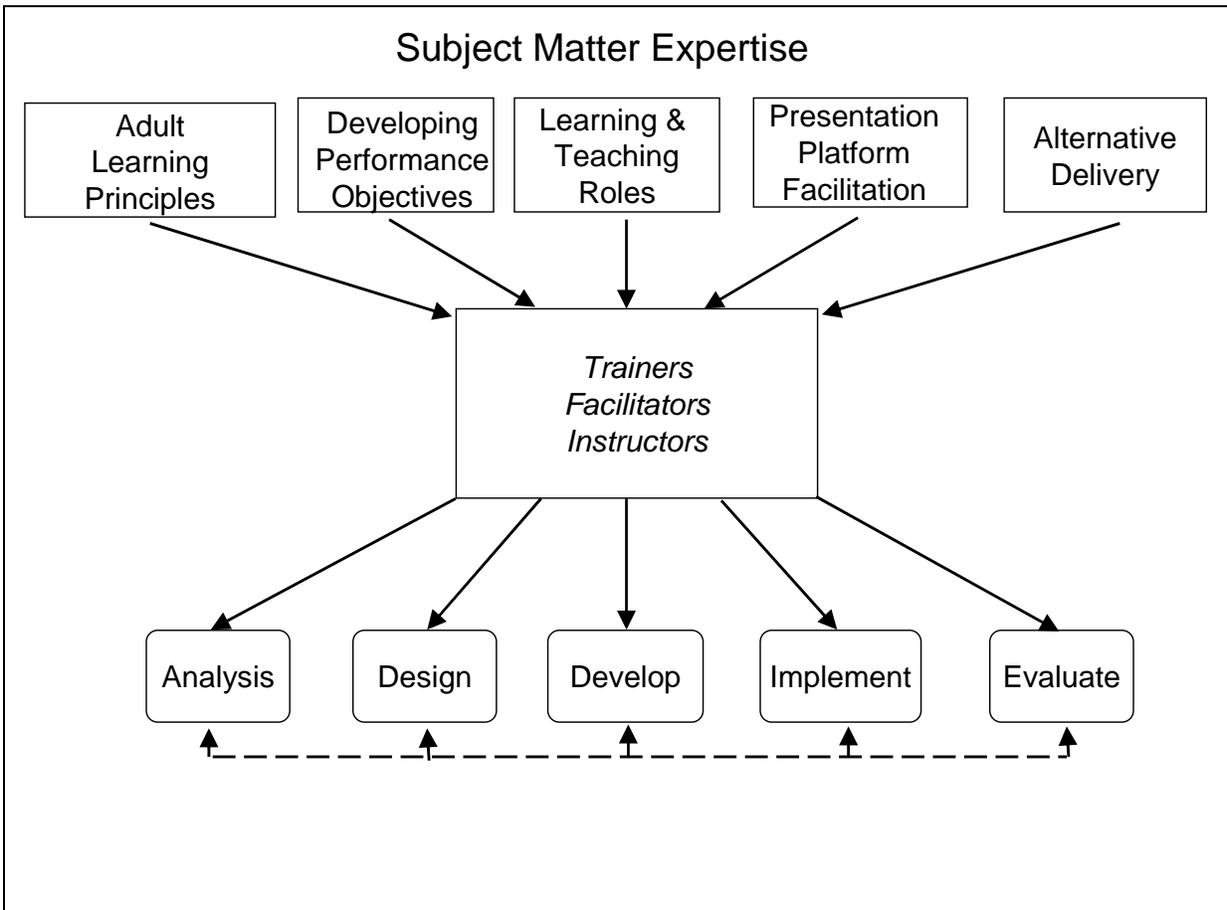
Chapter 2—An Environment for Adult Learning

Principles of adult learning

Objectives

The objectives of this chapter are to identify the specific characteristics and needs of adult learners, and to develop a professional mindset and an instructional style that is consistent with these.

Teaching adults

You're in the business of teaching adults. Because your target audience brings special needs to a learning situation, knowing what these needs are and effectively meeting them means the difference between success and failure. Although tens of thousands of books and articles have been written on adult learning, as well as much discussion about the implications and ramifications for trainers and instructional designers, when all is said and done there's a core body of critical content on this adult learning that's concise and clear-cut, and which can be summarized in several pages.

Why adults learn

Adult learners bring a unique set of psychological needs to a classroom situation. What type of learning environment best meets these needs and motivates adults to learn? Research suggests that certain important factors must be operating for adults to *actively* embrace and utilize new information:
- the information must have specific job benefits
- the content has practical "back-on-the-job" applications
- participants are assured of a successful learning experience
- participants are actively involved in the learning process
- the instructor creates "psychological safety" in the classroom
- the content relates to current career needs, career change, or career advancement.

Radio Station WIIFM

Said differently, adult learners are interested in listening to only one FM radio station—Station WIIFM—or Station WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? As an instructor, you must always provide practical answers to this question.

Continued on next page

Principles of adult learning, Continued

Why adults resist learning

The single most important reason adults resist learning new information is *fear of failure*! Adults appear to put their egos on the line with each new learning experience; and, irrational though it may be, if he or she senses possible failure, or fears that he or she cannot succeed at a new task, the learning experience probably will not be successful.

Creating "psychological safety"

As an instructor, your challenge is to create a classroom environment in which it's "safe" to make mistakes, participant questions are encouraged, and where "less than perfect" is an important part of the learning process. You must communicate to participants that mistakes are *necessary feedback;* and without "trial and error," no real learning takes place.

How to neutralize "fear of failure"

Fear of failure prevents adults from learning or even wanting to learn. You can reduce participant anxiety by:
- relating the new material to what is already known
- referencing the individual's of the group's past success experiences
- creating "psychological safety" in the classroom, so that participants can try out ideas and make mistakes without feeling threatened
- underscoring the benefits--both to the participants and to their firms--of learning the new material
- presenting real-life issues and problems to which the new material provides solutions.

Creating a Participant Centered Learning Environment

Creating a participant centered learning environment	Think of yourself as being in the "success business." Every time you get in front of a class, your primary objective is to ensure that each participant succeeds in mastering the material you're teaching. In addition to working with relevant content and well-designed instructional materials, you can accomplish the "success" objective by continually and enthusiastically emphasizing to participants that *this material is critical for your job success, and I'm here to help you succeed.* Success for most adult learners often takes place in a learner-focused teaching environment.
What's unique about this environment	A participant-centered learning environment is a classroom in which the *learner*--not the instructor, the content, or the course materials—is the *central player* in the educational experience. This type of program is characterized by active learner participation and a wide variety of learning opportunities, with the participant's successful learning experience as the intended outcome.
Learner-focused training	Learner-focused training concentrates on four key areas: • promoting acquisition of a solid knowledge base (facts, concepts, principles, etc.) • applying this foundational knowledge in practice situations • fostering a positive attribute toward learning and professional development • relating the new information to "back-on-the-job" applications.
Other characteristics	Learner-focused training programs are also characterized by: • a lean curriculum that focuses on *critical content* • a good balance between content, applications, and attitudinal areas • a variety of learning approaches and activities • frequent opportunities for group participation • utilization of participants' expertise • integration of new material with previously learned information and skills • practice and applications exercises that relate to real-life "on the job" issues • Provision for "back-on-the-job" reentry planning, or "How can I use this information Monday morning?"

Creating a Participant Centered Learning Environment,
continued

The results of learner-focused training

Learner-focused training programs produce *results*. *Results* mean that the intended *learning outcomes* have been accomplished. The instructor's *teaching initiatives* and *activities* have been responsible for bringing this behavioral change about, and the participants and trainees are stronger and better prepared for having come your way.

The "bottom line"

Here's the "bottom line" and the primary motivator for all professional development training: the participant's value and knowledge base—and the firm's substantive business results—will be greatly enhanced by successful acquisition and mastery of the course material.

Chapter 3—The Instructor as Change Agent

Learning, Teaching, and Change

Primary responsibility of an instructor

In a learner-focused training program, the instructor's primary responsibility is to ensure that *learning* takes place through his or her *teaching* activities. Two important questions emerge:
• What is learning?
• How shall we know that learning is taking place?

Learning **defined**

The accepted definition of *learning* is "an intentional process that brings about a change in behavior, usually due to practice." Therefore, the only way an instructor knows that learning has actually taking place is by determining that *measurable and observable changes in participant behavior* have occurred.

Definition of *teaching*

Teaching, on the other hand, can be defined as "planned and prescribed activities that bring about learning." Using this definition, we see that traditional classroom instruction is not the only means by which "learning" can be brought about. Other ways learning can take place are through:
• self-instructional materials (E-learning, CD-Rom based training, programmed texts, traditional resource material, including books, etc.
• job or life experience
• distance learning (web-based, satellite TV, video-conferencing
• audio-based instruction
• job performance aids
• on-the-job training (apprenticeships, mentoring, etc.)
• self-directed inquiry.

Your work product

Simply stated, as an instructor and content authority, your work product is *planned participant behavioral change.* You are responsible for bringing about change in an instructional setting. Think of yourself as a "change agent" whose effectiveness is measured by the results (intentional behavioral change) you are able to produce.

Instructor Effectiveness Variables

Effective instructor defined

Here's a simple nine word definition: *an effective instructor is an instructor who gets results*. He or she is able to bring about the desired behavioral change(s) on the part of the participants. Said differently, *instructor effectiveness can only be measured by learner performance*. If the learner is demonstrating the desired or specified behavioral outcomes as a result of your teaching activities, consider yourself effective!

Character istics of effective instructors

Researchers have for years been trying to identify the *special characteristics* that are associated with effective instructors. The surprising conclusion: there are only five recurring behaviors associated with instructors who, in most situations and with the majority of participants, get positive learning outcomes. These characteristics are:

1. effective instructors use behaviorally-stated instructional objectives, and define successful learning in terms of participant outcomes
2. effective instructors are enthusiastic about the subject they're teaching, and communicate this enthusiasm to learners by word and deed
3. effective instructors move about the classroom and use energetic body language
4. effective instructors utilize a variety of teaching roles, and draw on a flexible and creative range of teaching behaviors and activities
5. effective instructors are up to date on technology, and utilize a variety of alternative delivery approaches, when and where applicable, to create powerful "blended" learning solutions.

Translating this to the adult training environment

Ideally, any student—irrespective of the educational setting—should have all the benefits of good and caring teaching that we've been talking about. As you and I know, however, many times this isn't the case. School and university settings are often places where the division between the weak and the powerful is very clearly drawn—a truly pediatric model of education, some might say. The idea of a participant-centered learning environment would draw loud guffaws and many derisive remarks from tenured faculty and school administrators. Not so in corporate training. Once you're an employee of a company, that organization will use every available resource to provide you with the knowledge and skills you need to succeed on your job. This represents a significant shift in thinking.

The Job Drives the Training

Putting first things first--*the firm identifies the people and the skills it needs*

Strategic organizational needs--and the knowledge and skill set needed by its people--is the first consideration of an organization's training function. When embarking on a training initiative, these questions should be asked—and answered:
- *What are the organization's long term strategic goals?*
- *What kinds of people does the organization need to reach these goals?*
- *What knowledge, competencies, skills, expertise, attributes, and attitudes do our people need to have?*

Once answered, a blueprint for professional development and training direction emerges.

The next step: *the job and its require ments drives the training*

The training function's unique role is to develop educational programs and provide instructional activities that ensure all staff levels in the organization have the necessary knowledge and competencies to carry out their jobs. The next important question becomes:

What are the knowledge, skill set, competencies, and attributes that a successful professional in a given job category needs to do his or her specific job?

The answer(s) to this question serves as a "job knowledge profile" for human resource specialists and training professionals.

The critical question--the K-S-A of training

A variation of the previous question serves as a guide for instructional designers and course developers:

What do you want the participants to know, be able to do, and believe at the conclusion of instruction? (In the parlance of educators, this is referred to as the K (knowledge)-S (skills)-A (attributes) of curriculum planning.)

The answers to this question become the blueprint for subsequent course design and development. There should be a "match" between learning outcomes and the knowledge and skill set the successful participant needs to execute his or her job. The goal is to produce competent practitioners on the job as a result of targeted instructional initiatives and activities.

The Job Drives the Training, Continued

Instructional design template

When you start the major task of designing an entire course, it makes sense to have a template or job aid that can guide you through this process. That way, you're not reinventing the wheel; rather, you're thoughtfully setting your ideas down in a systematic and organized way. A good design document template should contain these categories:

- Company goals and objectives
- Rationale for this intervention
- Audience description
- Prework/advance preparation requirements
- Overall course goal
- Instructional objectives
- Specific topics/skills addressed
- Instructional format
- Delivery plan
- Length of course
- Job aids
- Follow-up.

See the *Appendix* of this handbook for a fuller description of this design template. With this guide in hand, we're now going to move on to developing lessons and writing instructional objectives.

What we learned

In this chapter, we reviewed critical definitions and described characteristics of effective instructors. Further, we discussed the idea of the job driving the training, and the critical K-S-A question that instructional designers must ask as a necessary first step in designing training initiatives. Finally, a course design document template was introduced.

Chapter 4—Writing Performance-Oriented Instructional Objectives

Creating a roadmap

Arriving at the proper destination requires planning

When you embark on an automobile trip, it makes good sense to have a clear picture of where you want to go, and an accurate roadmap of your travel route. Otherwise, how will you know when you get there? Additional questions to consider might be:
- Are you "on course" as you pass through certain landmarks?
- Have you selected the most effective route?
- Are any mid-course corrections necessary?

Benefits of an "instructional roadmap"

By analogy, well-prepared instructional objectives provide a clear roadmap by which instructional designers can plan lessons and learning events, and participants can conceptualize both their terminal destination and the interim steps necessary to reach this goal. A clear picture of the desired learning outcomes is communicated to learners, as well as the specific training objectives that must be met along the way. Instructional objectives should be stated in terms of the *behaviors the successful participant must be able to demonstrate at the conclusion of instruction.*

Clarity of vision and purpose

Putting first thing first, effective instructors communicate to learners "up front" a clear vision of the purpose of the instruction, the desired behavioral outcomes, and the benefits that will accrue to participants of acquiring the new information and skills. They communicate this message with vitality, enthusiasm, and animation. Said differently, they "begin with the end in mind." There are no mysteries here—everyone knows early on what the expectations are, because these expectations are stated as performance-oriented training objectives.

Formatting learning objectives

Course developers should write instructional objectives in a form that will make them effective tools for presenting, managing, and evaluating training effectiveness. Typically, training objectives begin in this manner: *"At the conclusion of this program, the successful participant will to able to......."* The remainder of the statement describes the desired *learning outcome*.

Creating a roadmap, Continued

Criteria for instructional objectives	A well-written instructional objective should be: • participant-oriented; • descriptive of an *outcome* on the part of the participant; • clear and understandable; • observable, measurable (if possible), and subject to assessment. • The learning outcome should be stated as an *action verb* followed by the desired *direct object.*
Example of well-stated learning objective	Here's an example: At the conclusion of this program, successful participants will be able to develop a formal client proposal that includes three value-added services.
Use "action" verbs	As you can see from the example, an action verb--*develop*--was used to specify the *behavior* that participants should be engaging in. The desired outcome--*a formal client proposal*--is also clearly identified.
Why be this specific?	The more specific the instructional objective, the easier it is to identify and implement the instructional activities that set the stage for this outcome to occur. Further, it's also much easier to *evaluate* whether or not the participants have accomplished the objective and demonstrated the intended learning outcome.
Examples of action verbs	Examples of action verbs that are descriptive of participant outcomes are: identify, select, describe, propose, analyze, discuss, list, compute, compare, build, develop, evaluate, write, locate, etc.
Verbs to avoid	Verbs that are vague, imprecise, and difficult to observe or measure should not be used. Examples of verbs to avoid are: *to know, to understand, to comprehend, to grasp, to appreciate, to learn, to truly appreciate,* etc.

Creating a roadmap, Continued

More good examples

Here are additional examples of well-stated instructional objectives:
- the participants will be able to identify the parts of a personal computer;
- the participants will be able to construct an *Excel* spreadsheet;
- the participants will be able to prepare a 10-minute oral presentation on "The Decline of Customer Service in Retailing."

Restating vague objectives

Occasionally, instructional materials may contain learning objectives that are vaguely stated—verbs such as "to know," "to understand," "to truly appreciate," etc. may have been used by previous instructors or course developers. You can easily rewrite these objectives by replacing the vague verb with an action verb. Use the table below for easy reference.

Cognitive level	Commonly misused verbs	Outcome-oriented action verbs
Knowledge	to know, learn	to identify, define, name, list, state, repeat
Comprehension	to understand, appreciate	to restate, discuss, describe, explain, review, translate, locate
Application	to show, apply a thorough knowledge of	to operate, use, solve, illustrate, employ, install, update, compare and contrast
Analysis	to know, understand, appreciate	to analyze, differentiate, compare and contrast, distinguish between, categorize
Synthesis	to establish creativity, think creatively	to create, compose, produce, write, design, construct
Evaluation	to show good judgment	to evaluate, judge, assess, appraise, rate

Creating a roadmap, Continued

Example of technical behaviorally stated training objectives

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:
1. Define the following commonly used financial terms: mortgage; condominium, co-op/co-op loan; second mortgage; equity source account; refinancing; bridge loan; and real estate loan.
2. Perform calculations by:
a. using an amortization table;
b. determining monthly payments of principal and interest for fixed and ARM loans.

Example of training objectives for a non-technical program

At the conclusion of this program, the participant will be able to:
• define the term "motivation"
• discuss the impact of leadership style on motivation
• demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills
• explain his or her role in client service and overall firm image
• develop a personal action plan for more effective communication.

The common denominator

Whether the subject of the training program is technical or non-technical material, stating the intended participant outcomes in *behavioral, action-oriented* language has several clear benefits:
• a precise roadmap of learning outcomes is created for the participant--he or she knows what's expected, and what successful learning performance looks like;
• the instructor can design a program, create classroom activities, and develop assessment procedures that utilize and target relevant participant skills and knowledge;
• both the instructor and the participant can assess whether or not the stated behaviors have been demonstrated.

High level thinking skills

Another important goal for instructors is to provide a learning environment in which participants can develop and utilize *high level thinking skills.* Two important questions arise:
• What is high level thinking?
• What mental activities take place when high level thinking occurs?
The answers to these questions can be found by revisiting Bloom's Taxonomy and exploring the concept of *cognitive levels* and *cognitive functioning*.

Hierarchy of Cognitive Levels

Importance of a solid foundation

A good analogy for conceptualizing cognitive levels is to imagine a tall and imposing skyscraper. Irrespective of the creative design and engineering expertise that went into constructing this skyscraper, it must first rest on a strong foundation. High level thinking and problem solving, like the construction of skyscraper, occurs when a strong and solid foundation has first been set in place.

A hierarchy of cognitive levels

Educational psychologists, led by Professor Benjamin Bloom, have identified six levels of cognitive functioning, proceeding from the lowest to the highest level. These are:
1. knowledge
2. comprehension
3. applications
4. analysis
5. synthesis
6. evaluation.

Each level builds upon and includes the ones that preceded it. The cognitive functions that are typically associated with *high level thinking* are *analysis, synthesis*, and *evaluation*.

Example

Consider the following two questions:
1. On what date did the battle of Gettysburg begin?
2. What would life in the United States be like today if the South had won the Civil War?

Responding to each of these questions requires very different levels of thinking and cognitive activity.

Answer to Question #1 involves *cognitive recall* **only**

In order to answer the first question, you simply have to *remember* what you've read about the battle of Gettysburg—it's the *Jeopardy* game of mentally recalling facts and figures. In face, if you and I weren't able to play this game, not one of us would be sitting here today because we wouldn't have gotten through school or graduated from college. High level thinking is not involved in answering the question, however. It involves simple cognitive recall only.

Hierarchy of Cognitive Levels, Continued

Answer to Question #2 involves high level thinking

A good response to the second question requires much higher level thinking, and goes well beyond simply having to recall a fact or two about the Civil War. You're going to have to know a great deal about a lot of things, starting with the historical period from 1840—1865. This would include the economics, history, technology, contrasting values, racial make-up, racial attitudes, etc. of both the north and the south, as well as knowledge of the geopolitical situation that provides that provides the backdrop against which this historical period is seen. From this expansive knowledge base, you'd then have to create an *original answer* that makes sense in light of the factual and historical context.

Would everyone's answer be the same?

Every person's answer would be slightly differently. The best answers would indicate not only a solid grounding in the "facts," but also show originality and integrative thinking, which involves *analysis, synthesis,* and *evaluation.* An answer that suggested elephants might be dragging logs on the New Jersey Turnpike is somewhat creative but not "on point"; an answer that predicted that cotton might be growing in New Jersey under 24-hour a day heat lamps shows a better understanding of underlying economic and climactic factors.

The challenge

Your challenge, as an instructor, is to provide a learning environment in which participants develop a solid content foundation (knowledge, comprehension, and applications), while providing a variety of opportunities for high level thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) to take place.

Chapter 5—Instructor Roles

Overview

Purpose

This section describes the three major roles instructors play, the activities and skills associated with each role, and the effects of these roles on learner outcomes, motivation, participation, and performance.

A 5 tool player

Let's begin with a baseball metaphor. The most valuable baseball players are often described as "5 tool players." They hit for average, hit for power, are excellent at fielding, have a strong throwing arm, and are fast and skilled at running the bases. Using this metaphor, instructors who are strong presenters, skilled questioners, creative activity planners, effective facilitators, and successful classroom managers can be thought of as "5 tool instructors." The absence of even one of the tools puts that instructor—and his or her students—at a distinct disadvantage.

Relationship of role flexibility and participant results

As you may recall from the section on "Instructor Effectiveness," the ability of an instructor to execute flexible teaching roles is one of the five variables associated with instructors who get results. Said differently, if you want your participants to accomplish all levels of instructional objectives and develop higher level cognitive processes and problem-solving skills, you must develop role flexibility as an instructor.

Matching roles and learner outcomes

The behavior participants engage in during a classroom session depends on the instructional objectives that have been set. Further, the instructional objectives can only be accomplished by an instructor role and related participant activities that support these objectives. There has to be a "match" between teaching roles, classroom activities, and desired participant outcomes.

Overview, Continued

Three major roles
There are three basic roles that effective instructors play:
1. content authority/presenter/lecturer
2. discussion leader
3. facilitator.

Mix and match
In most instructional situations, you'll probably be carrying out more than one role. For example, you might "lecture" for fifteen minutes to develop a conceptual overview, and then become a "discussion leader" or "facilitator" for the *applications* part of the activity.

The Content Authority/Lecturer Role

The content authority/ lecturer role	This role is played by the instructor when he or she is "presenting" information and/or developing a factual foundation. In other words, it's a *lecture*.

Main character istics

The main characteristics of the lecturer role are:
- the instructor is the "content authority" and is presenting information from his or her area of professional expertise
- the instructor is doing most of the talking and very little listening
- audio-visual support (PowerPoint slides, flipcharts, videotapes, CD-ROMs, DVDs, etc.) are used to illustrate, expand on, and clarify content
- the presentation is *deductive* in nature--i.e., a general overview or conceptual framework of the content is developed, and participants are expected to *apply* this content to *specific situations*
- instructor questions are raised to get feedback from participants as to whether or not they're "getting" the material
- the participants' predominant activity is *listening*--they respond occasionally to instructor-directed questions
- the participants' predominant mental activity is *cognitive recall*—they expected to *remember* the information that has been presented
- the activity is directed and controlled by the instructor--in a class session that is content-authority-led, the instructor is talking about 75--95% of the time.

When to use this role

This role is appropriate for the following activities:
- presenting new information
- providing a conceptual overview
- describing a new process or procedure
- information updates
- product introduction
- introducing a topic or activity
- for large group instruction (50+ participants), where little peer-to-peer interaction is possible.

The Content Authority/Lecturer Role, Continued

Participant involvement and motivation

Since the dominant participant activity is *listening,* direct learner involvement in this type of setting is *passive*. The "rule of thumb" is this: the more passive the learner, the less motivated the learner. Keep your lectures to a *minimum,* and when you give one, make sure it's engaging, energetic, and fast-paced. New technologies, such as ARS (audience response systems) can energize and "spice up" lecture-based instruction, and go a long way to generate audience involvement and active participation.

Instructional objectives

This role is appropriate for instructional objectives at the *knowledge, comprehension,* and *application levels.*

Instructor questions

When you carry out this role, the questions you raise will contain verbs at the *knowledge, comprehension,* and *application levels.*

The Discussion Leader Role

The discussion leader role

The discussion leader's role is less directive, and involves more input and participation from the group. The instructor is "leading" the session by asking a series of probing questions that relate to the content. Participant responses and ideas provide feedback for the instructor and are an important part of the instructional session.

Main character istics

The main characteristics of this role are:
- the instructor can ask a variety of question types
- higher level questions can be raised, stimulating creative thinking and higher level problem solving
- the role works well with content that is presented in either a *deductive* or *inductive* manner
- there is more peer-to-peer dialogue
- the instructor asks questions that require participants to listen to and evaluate each other's responses
- more active listening from participants
- the instructor is not the sole content authority
- the instructor asks participants for their opinions, values, and beliefs on issues rather than mere recall of facts about specific content
- the instructor may be talking 50 to 70% of the time, and actively listening and responding to participants the remainder of the time
- participants are more actively involved in the learning event.

When to use this role

This role is appropriate for these activities:
- eliciting participant feedback
- stimulating participant debate
- initiating group discussion on a given topic
- checking for retention and comprehension of content that has been presented
- soliciting participant opinion or evaluation
- debriefing sessions.

The Discussion Leader Role, Continued

Participant involvement and motivation	Since the participants are actively involved in the "give-and-take" of classroom debate and discussion, participants are generally more motivated and enthusiastic in instructor-led discussions than in learning situations that are solely lecture-based.
Instructional objectives	This role is used for instructional objectives at the application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation levels.
Instructor questions	You will be raising questions that include verbs at the *applications, analysis synthesis,* and *evaluation levels.*
A discussion is not group therapy	Remember—a class discussion is a planned activity that is intended to achieve specific instructional objectives--objectives that could not be accomplished by any other means. An instructor-led discussion is not group therapy. Unless you keep focused on the specific purpose and objectives you wish the participants to achieve, the discussion can turn into an uncontrolled "free-for-all." Unfortunately, when this happens, a great deal of group participation may occur, but with few substantive learning outcomes.
Staying on track	A good discussion leader faces a real challenge--he or she must maintain control of the activity while providing maximum opportunity for participant input and involvement. Here are some ways to meet this challenge: • make a conscious decision that you're going to *listen*--not talk • use non-verbal methods of communicating, such as hand and arm gestures, nodding, facial expressions, etc. rather than words • raise probing questions, and seek participant reaction to one another's ideas rather than acting as arbiter • keep the *instructional objectives* you wish to accomplish first and foremost in your mind • create a mental "time cushion"--10 to 15 minutes for more free form discussion; then a "refocus" on the *purpose* of the discussion and the outcomes the group should be seeking to achieve.

The Discussion Leader Role, Continued

The creative diversion

There are times in the life of any instructor when the best laid plans go awry. This can occur during an animated discussion in which an unanticipated issue surfaces that was not in your plan. Nonetheless, *in your professional opinion,* it's an issue of relevance and importance to the group. If this happens, be flexible and allow the participants to continue. Attempting to "over control" or cut off a valid discussion would only engender participant hostility and devalue your adult participants. Remember--your plan is not written in concrete.

Remarks to make to manage *appropriate* diversions from plan

Use remarks of this kind to manage diversions that you think are appropriate to pursue:
• I can see how strongly you all feel about this...let's continue this discussion.
• Let's take a few minutes for a creative diversion—Mary brought up an issue which deserves some additional attention.
• Okay--I hear where you stand on this one. Let's discuss it a few minutes more. During our lunch break, I'll find some additional resources on this subject.

What to avoid

There are certain topics that participants may bring up in a discussion—politically sensitive or highly controversial issues—that are *singularly inappropriate* for inclusion in a training session. Avoid letting your class be used as a forum for discussing any of the following:
• specific managers or executives
• the competence of the company's upper management
• negative comments or criticism of co-workers
• intelligent design
• gay marriage.
You get the idea—anyone can talk about anything on their personal time, but not in a training situation.

The Discussion Leader Role, Continued

"Cut-off" remarks

Although you don't want to come across as repressive or overly authoritarian, you are obligated to maintain appropriate control and not let things get out of hand. As we mentioned, there are certain topics you don't want discussed in a training session. Useful remarks to make when you want to absolutely cut off discussion on such a topic are:

- I'm not going to touch that one with a 10 foot pole. Now let's continue discussing.....
- This is totally inappropriate to discuss in this setting. I simply cannot allow it. Now let's get back on track.
- This is too sensitive an issue to bring up in class--I'm not comfortable discussing this, and it would serve no useful purpose.

The Facilitator's Role

The facilitator's role— managing *content*	This is the least instructor-directed role. It also generates the highest levels of learner participation, involvement, and input. The instructor sets the stage for the activity in which learning will occur; then he or she participates *indirectly* once the activity is underway. The ball is in the participants' court to come up with solutions and results.
Main character istics	The main characteristics are: • high participant involvement, energy, and "ownership" of content • encourages participants who make not be comfortable speaking out in a large group setting to talk and participate more actively • higher-level thinking takes place • the content, or "answers," emerge from the participants themselves • the instructor "sets up" the activity by giving instructions, handing out materials, etc. but does not provide answers • a great deal of participant-to-participant communication takes place • the instructor does little talking and a great deal of listening, observing, and moving about the classroom • although the activity is about accomplishing a *task,* a *team process* and spirit develops among participants by which the task is completed; • the instructor is talking less than 30% of the time.
When to use this role	This role is appropriate to use in these activities: • case study analysis; • simulation games; • role plays; • experiential learning situations; • small group problem solving activities; • discussion and problem solving activities among pairs, triads, etc.
Instructional objectives	This role is appropriate for instructional objectives at the *applications*, *analysis*, *synthesis*, and *evaluation* levels.
Types of questions	When playing this role, raise questions at the *applications, analysis, synthesis,* and *evaluation* levels.

The key to successful facilitation

A successful facilitator plans, prepares, and anticipates. Events must be accurately timed; all materials must be organized for easy access and distribution, the logistics and seating arrangements carefully planned, and participant instructions clear and unambiguous. Here are some important guidelines:

- carefully review activities and instructions beforehand to ensure that materials are available, equipment is working, flexible seating is available, etc.;
- make sure you've attended to the small details--the best ideas can fail because a seemingly unimportant step has been forgotten;
- plan your debrief and integrative questions at the time you review the instructional objectives and materials.

Multiple roles

As we said at the beginning of this chapter, although we've been discussing each of these roles separately, in reality, most instructional sessions involve multiple activities, and the instructor varies his or her role according to the task at hand and the objectives to be accomplished. For example in a typical 60-minute session, your activities might be broken up into several phases:

Step	Action	Instructor Role	Time
1	Opening of class—ground rules	Class Manager	2 min.
2	Presentation of content	Presenter	15 min.
3	Q & A	Discussion leader	10 min.
4	Role play activity	Facilitator	20 min.
5	Debrief activity (facilitator)	Facilitator	8 min.
6	Summary and conclusion	Presenter	5 min.

What we learned

In this chapter, we learned about the 3 major roles that instructors carry out, and how there's must be a "good fit" between instructional objectives, activities to be carried out, ratio of instructor talk to participant talk, materials to be used, instructional objectives and instructor questions, and instructor roles. We also learned that in longer classes and most real-time training situations, instructors play multiple roles in the course of their activities.

Summary of Instructor Roles and Planning Factors

	Instructor Roles		
Planning Factors	**Intellectual authority**	**Discussion leader**	**Facilitator**
Instructional objectives	knowledge, comprehension, application	application, analysis, evaluation	application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation
Materials	standard classroom, representational, audio-visual	standard classroom	concrete, representational, audio-visual
Instructional activities	Lecture, presentation with audio-visual support, demonstration, Q & A Audience Response Systems (ARS)	large or small group Q & A, instructor-led discussion	Gaming, simulation, case studies, role plays, experiential learning situations, small group problem-solving, activities involving pairs, triads, etc.
Ratio of instructor talk: student talk	3:1 or higher	2:1 or higher	1:2--the participants are doing most of the talking
Instructor activities	Lecturing, presenting information, asking questions, approving/ disapproving a participant response	Lecturing, conducting Q & A session, debriefing activities	Giving directions for set-up, moving around the classroom and observing participants, conducting Q & A debrief
Instructor questions	knowledge, comprehension, application	application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation	application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation

Chapter 6—The Facilitator as Class Manager

Effective classroom management

Instructor as class manager

There's another important set of instructor responsibilities that don't relate specifically to the *content* being taught, but rather involve managing (or facilitating) the *behavioral* and *procedural* aspects of the class and related activities. This includes:
• setting the ground rules—detailing how participants are expected to act
• addressing negative or disruptive participant behavior
• dealing with emergency situations
• planning and facilitating meetings.
This is often referred to as "facilitation," so for our purposes, let's consider it a variation of the facilitator role.

Example: routine classroom management

Here's an obvious example: an instructor announcement at the beginning of class that *"All cell phones and paging devices are to be turned off."* Announcements such as this, and other "gate-keeping" administrative guidelines, go with the classroom manager's role.

Example: emergency situation

A far more serious exercise of effective classroom management is required when an emergency situation occurs: the fire alarm sounds; the power fails; a weather emergency is announced on the public address system, etc. In this case, the trainer must assume *total leadership and responsibility for the safety and welfare of the class*, and must calmly and firmly respond to the situation as appropriate. Most organizations, in these post-9/11 times, run frequent practice drills, and have crisis management procedures in place to respond to a variety of situations. All members of the training function should be well-versed in these procedures, and prepared to deal effectively with unanticipated situations that might pose a danger to participants.

Example: running a meeting

A third, more commonplace responsibility of trainers and instructors is planning and facilitating a meeting. This might seem tangential to your training responsibilities, but it isn't. Very often you'll be called on to present your ideas to other members of the department, detail a new training plan, or persuade others to support your training initiative.

Planning and facilitating a meeting

Facilitating a meeting

There are 3 variables associated with running an effective and productive meeting:
- the task (work products and intended outcomes) of the meeting are clear, well-articulated, and communicated to all
- the process (facilitation/leadership) of the meeting is effective, on track, and on time
- the socio-emotional dimension (effectively dealing with "people" issues) are sensitively and well managed.

Is this really important?

It's often estimated that American business wastes billions of dollars a year in unproductive business meetings. Billions of dollars! Let this sink in for a minute. Make a quick estimate at your own organization. Ask yourself these questions:
- How many business meetings take place each week?
- On average, how many people attend each meeting?
- What's the average hourly wage of the people in attendance?
- What percentage of these meetings is productive?
- What percentage of these meeting are total busts and time-wasters?

A quick calculation of wages X number of attendees X length of meeting shows that the cost of a meeting at an "average" company may run anywhere from $5,000 to $20,000. Whether that money is well spent or totally wasted is up to the meeting's planner/facilitator.

Major reasons why meetings fail

Organizations and business consultants have done numerous studies on why meetings are unproductive. Here are the top 10 reasons:
1. Purpose of the meeting is unclear
2. There is no agenda; or it is vague, unclear, and not results-oriented
3. The meeting starts late, doesn't end on time, and has no clock integrity
4. There are unnecessary attendees at the meeting
5. The *wrong* people are there, and the *right* people aren't there
6. Attendees are unprepared, haven't done their homework, or don't bring necessary materials
7. The leader loses control
8. Several people dominate the meeting; others remain silent and make no contribution
9. No clear decisions or conclusions are reached; there are no follow-up assignments or responsibilities
10. The group is not self-conscious about its process.

Planning and facilitating a meeting, Continued

This seems easy enough to fix

Conversely, if you want to be guaranteed a productive and effective meeting, simply do the opposite of the previous list:

1. Have a clear, results-oriented, well timed agenda. Distribute it in advance. Stick to it
2. Start the meeting on time. Stay on track according to agenda times. End the meeting on time
3. Make sure there's a substantive reason for holding this meeting—state this in the first 20 seconds
4. Have only the *right* people in attendance—people who can make decisions, or have requisite expertise or technical knowledge
5. Make sure people do their homework—distribute all resource and back-up materials at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting
6. Control the meeting and manage the "people" issues—deal with disruptive, hostile, or silent behaviors as appropriate
7. Conclude the meeting by restating its purpose, recap what was accomplished, and make follow-up tasks and assignments as appropriate.

In the *Appendix* section of this *Handbook*, you'll find a job aid that will help you plan better meetings.

Positive task roles

In any group, team, or meeting situation, there are both positive and negative behaviors that individuals engage in. Let's start with the "good news." We've all seen individuals who are good team members—positive, committed to "the cause," and who make things happen. Positive *task* group behaviors include:

- information giver—an individual who provides expertise—contributes technical or content knowledge to the group
- information seeker—an individual who asks good questions—hits the nail on the head by seeking "the right information" to move the process along
- clarifier—an individual who rephrases what was said in plain, straight language that everyone can understand, or who helps clear up disputes on content issues
- prober—an individual who uses skillful questioning to help others think more deeply about issues, and helps others better rationalize their positions
- summarizer—an individual who helps the group "take stock" from time to time, and let's the group know where it stands at that moment.

Continued on next page

Planning and facilitating a meeting, Continued

Positive process roles

Just as some individuals are great technical and information contributors, there are others who engage in positive *process* behaviors that help foster a healthy socio-emotional climate. These are individuals who function as colleagues rather than adversaries, and who seek to facilitate and mediate rather than cause disruption and controversy. Desirable process roles are:

- harmonizer—an individual attempts to smooth out conflicts and find common ground
- helper—an individual who assists others by adding to their information, or raising questions that help clarify their thoughts
- quality controller—an individual who comments on the emotional climate of the group; he or she may also make a comment or two that reinforces the positive group behavior of others
- follower—an individual who is a good team member, and will support the ideas of others and go along with the group when appropriate
- active listener—an individual who is actively trying to take in everything that's being said—not interested in being the center of attention by talking all the time.

The bad news

Unhappily, not all is sweetness and light. Just as many individuals engage in positive, supportive, dynamic, "can do" behaviors, so other individuals engage in dysfunctional and negative behaviors that hamper and inhibit the work of the group. Said differently, these are individuals who are not bringing good will to the table. You know who these people are, and the specific behaviors they engage in:

- silent one (never says a word or makes a contribution)
- negativist ("It won't work…they tried that one last year….etc."
- dominator (doing all the talking; doesn't listen to others
- know-it-all (he or she "wrote the book")
- attention seeker (makes shocking, inappropriate comments)
- quibbler ("No—that's not 99%--that's 98.9%)
- tangent-taker (makes comments that continually take the discussion off track)
- class clown (always looking to amuse and draw laughs)
- sidebar commentator (engaged in private conversations with other attendees—not paying attention to the topic at hand).

Continued on next page

Planning and facilitating a meeting, Continued

What's to be done longer term

The behaviors just described can have a destructive effect not only on a specific business meeting or class, but also on a group, a department, a project team, or even a large company. For this reason, many organizations are now using 360 degree feedback instruments, Team Development Surveys, and Meetings Participation Profiles as ways to provide employees objective, specific, and descriptive feedback about their behavior, and commentary about how these behaviors are perceived by others. These instruments, in conjunction with mentoring and coaching initiatives, will go far to help individuals gain insight into their own behavior and its impact on others. In the words of Dr. Phil, "Before you can solve a problem, you've got to acknowledge that a problem exists." Most people, when presented with data and impact statements, will be willing to try and change to more constructive approaches.

Handling a disruptive participant

Short term, however, classroom management challenges arise that trainers must deal with in the "here and now." Such a challenge arises when an openly hostile or disruptive participant erupts in a class or during a business meeting. Let's note that this type of behavior is the exception rather than the rule. Typically, a group is either neutral or "for you." If overtly hostile or disruptive behavior does occur, however, you're obligated to respond swiftly and effectively. You're responsible for the welfare of all participants, and you can't let one or two disruptive individuals compromise the learning or participation opportunities of other class members or meeting attendees.

Be assertive

What's the right action to take? You can't "lose your cool," nor can you ignore the disruptive behavior or make light of it. You've got to demonstrate *assertive communications skills*—behavior that is "for you and the group" and not "against" the other party. Additional information on assertive communications skills can be found in the *Bibliography*.

Planning and facilitating a meeting, Continued

Actions to take   Here are some suggestions on managing the sort of extremely disruptive behavior that threatens the cohesiveness of the group, the learning opportunities of the class, or the general welfare of those in attendance:

- •say, "Let's take a quick break," and tell the offending individual you want to speak with him or her privately
- •let the offending individual know in no uncertain terms that the behavior is unacceptable and you will not tolerate it
- •spell out to the offending individual the impact the negative behavior is having on other class members;
- •state explicitly what you expect in terms of acceptable classroom behavior;
- •get the disruptive participant's commitment that he or she will stop the negative conduct and behave appropriately
- if the person doesn't agree to "cease and desist," ask the participant to leave, and notify his or her manager immediately.

What we've learned   In this chapter we reviewed the major roles that an effective instructor must play, and discussed the activities, learning objectives, questions, etc. that are associated with each of these roles. We also discussed classroom management and effective facilitation.

Chapter 7—Questioning Techniques

How to ask effective questions

Rationale The ability to ask the right question at the right time is a critical skill of effective trainers and instructors. Focused, targeted, and relevant questions are indispensable to the instructional process; and are strongly related to achieving the stated objectives of a given learning intervention. Good questions enhance classroom communication, keep participants alert and involved, and provide feedback for both the instructor and the participant(s).

An "art" or a discipline? Knowing what question to ask and when—and being able to raise a variety of questions, as appropriate—might seem intuitive—a natural gift that effective instructors possess. Far from it. In fact, most instructors who demonstrate this "natural gift" have spent many hours learning and practicing questioning skills and techniques. Their success is the result of a great deal of planning, analysis, and practice.

Objectives and questions must "match" The questions which are raised during an instructional session are so critical, in fact, that one quick way to evaluate a lesson's effectiveness is by comparing its objectives with the *instructor questions* that were raised. For example, if a lesson's objectives are written at the *application, analysis,* and *synthesis* levels, and the instructor's questions are at the *knowledge* and *comprehension* levels only, it's a safe bet that participants have not engaged in high level cognitive activity. A mismatch between instructional objectives and instructor questions is evident.

Tools for formulating questions Since effective questioning is integral to results-oriented instruction, let's begin focusing on this skill by using two frameworks that you're already familiar with—Bloom's 6 level taxonomy (Chapter XX), and basic communications and questioning techniques, which you use every day in your professional and personal life. By using these, either separately or by creative "mix and match," you'll be able to formulate a wide variety of questions, and pose the "right" questions when and where you want them.

A point of departure

Bloom's taxonomy is a particularly good starting point, since *verbs* are the common denominator of both instructional objectives and instructor questions. By using the verbs (or variants of these) listed in each of the 6 categories, you can not only create instructional objectives; you can also formulate questions at various cognitive levels according to the verbs you choose.

Cognitive level (based on Bloom's Taxonomy)	Outcome-oriented action verbs	Variations for question formulation
Knowledge	to identify, define, name, list, state, repeat	define, name, state, etc. (who, what, when, where, why, and how types of questions)
Comprehension	to restate, discuss, describe, explain, review, translate, locate	state in your own words, describe, translate
Application	to operate, use, solve, illustrate, employ, install, update, implement	use, set up, solve, demonstrate the use of
Analysis	to analyze, differentiate, compare and contrast, distinguish between, categorize	analyze, diagnose, detect, uncover, compare and contrast
Synthesis	to create, compose, produce, propose, write, design, construct, discover	compose, develop, devise, invent, produce, design
Evaluation	to evaluate, judge, assess, appraise, rate	judge, estimate, argue, evaluate, make a case for

How to ask effective questions, Continued

Examples:
knowledge

Questions in the *knowledge* category (also referred to as "closed" or fact-based questions) require recall of memorized material or recall of information acquired previously. Questions at this level are generally raised to determine the "who," "what," "when," "where," "why," or "how" of a specific content area or topic. Examples of *knowledge* questions include:
- Define *distance learning*.
- Describe how to conduct a search on Google.
- What FM radio station to adult learners listen to?
- Name the six levels according to Bloom.

*Note: In an instructional context, "questions" do not necessarily have to end with question marks. For our purposes, a "statement" which directs the learner to state an answer based on information he or she has learned is also considered a question.

When to use

Questions at the *knowledge* level are appropriate to use when:
- you want to check that factual content has been properly communicated and retained;
- you want participants to develop a basic conceptual framework on a given topic;
- you want to keep participants involved and "on their toes" by frequent content review and summary.

The downside of *knowledge* questions

Research shows that during an "average" instructional session, over 75% of the instructor questions that are raised are at the *knowledge* level. Clearly, overuse of *knowledge* questions has a number of disadvantages:
- responses require factual recall (rote memorization) only;
- the instructor is doing most of the talking and relatively little listening;
- participant responses tend to be short;
- participants may lack psychological ownership of the content;
- the instructor gets no feedback about the respondent's thought processes;
- higher level cognitive activity and problem solving are not required or developed.

Examples: *compre hension*	Questions in the *comprehension* category require a response which translates or interprets material in one's own words. Some examples are: • Can anyone give us an everyday example of high level problem solving? • Explain distance learning in your own words. • Translate the following pie graph into everyday language. • State in your own words the differences between a CD-Rom and a DVD.
When to use	*Comprehension* questions are especially useful in ensuring that a learner is able to interpret and translate material learned at the *knowledge* level and incorporate these ideas into his or her own cognitive framework. There is no "downside" to *comprehension* questions. Indeed, they are an important bridge to *applications* questions and activities, and ultimately, to higher level thinking and problem solving.
Examples: *application*	Questions in the *application* category require the learner to use or apply in a *new situation* the information which has been taught. Examples are: • Construct an EXCEL spreadsheet. • Use the Internet to research the number of videoconferencing providers. • Write three instructional objectives in the *comprehension* category. • Using principles of behavioral psychology, what should a manager say or do when an employee engages in appropriate behavior?
When to use	This important category of questions is appropriate to use when you want the learner to move from *knowing* and *comprehending* ideas in a theoretical sense to *applying* these ideas in new, practical, and previously unknown situations. A solution, answer, or work product is the intended result. Said differently, *applications* questions and activities are the only way an instructor can ensure *transfer of training.*

How to ask effective questions, Continued

Examples:
analysis

Questions in the *analysis* category require the learner to examine the parts of a whole and relationships between these parts, such as similarities, differences, cause and effect, etc. Examples are:
- What are some of the similarities between planning for traditional classroom teaching and planning for distance learning teaching?
- What are the main differences between these two?
- Compare and contrast a "win/lose" mentality with a "win/win" attitude.
- Were the system analyst's conclusions accurate based on the known technical data?

When to use

Analysis questions are an important bridge between content acquisition and application, and higher level thinking and problem solving. The learner is required to uncover logical errors, faulty reasoning, and other relevant issues in order to respond correctly.

Examples:
synthesis

Questions in the *synthesis* category require the learner to create a new whole by engaging in inductive, deductive, associative, or creative thinking. Known ideas are reassembled to form new ones. The learner may also form and test hypotheses. Examples are:
- What strategic directions would Microsoft be pursuing today if the Internet had not achieved its present levels of growth and popularity?
- What are the common features of all the web-based courses we've reviewed that have been judged "effective"?
- Write a one hour presentation on *How to Prepare an Effective Web-based Training Event*.

When to use

Questions at the *synthesis* level encourage respondents to engage in creative problem solving and high level thinking. Once a solid foundation of *knowledge* has been established, integrative and high level *synthesis* questions enable learners to explore, create, and take risks.

A *caveat*	*Synthesis* does not occur in a vacuum. A solid content foundation must be in place for substantive synthesis to occur. High level thinking skills are hierarchical, and build upon the previous cognitive levels that have gone before.
Examples: *evaluation*	Questions in the *evaluation* category require the learner to make a value judgment based on using accepted guidelines and/or appropriate selection criteria. This judgment must be reasoned and capable of being rationalized. Examples are: • Which customer presentation do you consider the best? Tell us why. • Which of our classroom-based courses would be most suitable for DL delivery? Which selection criteria did you use? • Which one of these newspaper accounts of the current situation in Iraq is most objective? What criteria are you using?
Adding to this framework	Now that we have the "basics" in place, we can supplement Bloom's 6-level framework, develop a wider range of questioning skills, and construct more varied and challenging questions by using methods drawn from the standard communications techniques.
Closed questions	These are fact-based questions or short-answer opinion questions requiring brief and specific answers. Here are examples: • Do you approve of the new pension plan changes? • How long have you worked here? • What are the 5 steps used in the consultative selling process?
Open-ended questions	Open ended questions are useful in encouraging participants to "open up," and can be used effectively when you want to learn where people are "coming from" and what their concerns are.

Continued on next page

How to ask effective questions, Continued

Examples of open ended questions

Here are some examples:
- What skills do you want to acquire as a result of attending this class?
- What's your worst fear about speaking in public?
- What are your long term goals?
- What do you consider the most significant challenges our firm (industry, economy, etc.) faces?

Advantages of open-ended questions

Specific advantages of open-ended questions are:
- allows the participants flexibility in answering;
- a variety of answers emerge--not just "one right answer;"
- encourages participants to talk and share their concerns;
- participants have more psychological ownership of the content;
- the instructor does more listening, since questions tend to be shorter and participants' answers longer;
- participants engage in higher level and more thoughtful cognitive activity.

Disadvantages of open-ended questions

- There are several disadvantages of open-ended questions:
- questions may be too broad;
- you can lose control of the class and foment a "free-for-all" if the questions are not skillfully phrased;
- planning and preparation are required--you often have to write these out in advance.

Open-ended "problem" questions

An open ended problem question (a variation on open-ended questions) involves posing a real or hypothetical situation/problem and asking the participants how they would handle it. This type of question allows you to "tighten up" the subject, while still maintaining the benefits of an open ended question. Open-ended problem questions are closely related to Bloom's *synthesis* questions, in which a hypothetical "what would have happened if" is posed.

How to ask effective questions, Continued

Examples of open-ended problem questions

- Here are examples:
- Suppose you were a manager and had reason to believe one of your staff members was falsifying expense reports—how would you handle this?
- If you had my job, how would you deal with this problem?
- Suppose you were given one week to plan and host a major customer presentation, and your two most important team members were on vacation,--how would you proceed?
- There's just no place for employees to park anymore—any ideas on what we could do?

Advantages

- Open-ended problem questions have a number of instructional advantages:
- often reveal a great deal about the respondent;
- challenge the participants to engage in higher level thinking;
- foster psychological ownership of content;
- elicit a variety of acceptable participant responses--not just "one right answer;"
- the instructor is talking less and listening more.

A word of warning

There are no disadvantages to using this type of question, but there is one important *caveat*: skillful planning and well-constructed questions, based on relevant problem situations, are required.

Choice questions

Choice questions are useful in recovering after a previous question has "failed." The instructor can use them to provide more structure after an open-ended question elicits over-general responses, or a closed question elicits no responses or the wrong answers.

Continued on next page

Examples	• Instructor opening question: What are some of the things you find most challenging about your job? <u>Participant response—I'm not quite sure.</u> • Follow-up choice question: *Is it the opportunity to work directly with customers or the challenge of developing innovative solutions?* • Instructor opening question—Do you have any ideas about how we could improve employee morale? <u>Participant response—I'm not following you—I don't know what sorts of suggestions you're looking for.</u> • Follow-up choice question: *Well, for example, do you think our people would prefer direct financial incentives or enhanced benefits?* • Instructor opening question: What are some techniques we could use to present this content visually? <u>Participant response--A flipchart?</u> • Follow-up choice question: *I was thinking a little more "hi tech"--which could be used most effectively--videotape, 35mm slides, or PowerPoint slides?*
Advantages	• Advantages of choice questions are: • useful in recovering after a previous question has failed; • provides more structure; • gives participants examples to build on.
A *caveat*	Again, there are no disadvantages to using this type of question. The only *caveat*: choice questions require planning and preparation.
Clarifying (probing) questions	Clarifying or probing questions are used to encourage a participant to expand on or go into greater detail about the *content* of a previous response. In essence you're saying, "That's interesting--tell me more about it."
Examples of probing questions	Examples of probing questions are: • Could you expand on that? • Help me to understand how you came to that conclusion. • Flesh out that idea for me--it sounds promising. • Could you develop that point in greater depth?

Advantages of probing questions	The advantages of probing questions are: • you're assisting participants in gaining insight and clarity about their own thought processes; • you're indicating to the respondent that you've been listening; • you're validating the respondent--the question signals that his or her input is worthy of additional discussion; • you're doing less talking and more listening.
A *caveat*	Again, no specific disadvantages, but there's one *caveat*: use appropriately and sparingly. Many responses don't require additional clarification. Use your best professional judgment to follow up on the ones that do.
Dealing with the unanticipated	Occasionally, a seemingly neutral and straight-forward instructor question elicits an unanticipated and potentially disruptive participant response. If this occurs, it's best to communicate directly and calmly, using a probing question which focuses on the *feelings* underlying the response.
A typical scenario	Imagine this scenario: in a two-hour class, *How to Increase Customer Satisfaction*, an instructor asks the question, "What are some value-added services we could be offering our customers?" A participant responds angrily, "I've got plenty of ideas, but what good does it do to talk about them--management trashes everything I suggest!"
Probing questions/ feelings-related	A probing question, such as the ones suggested below (or your own variations of these), will go far to diffuse tension: • You sound upset--help me understand why. • It's obvious you feel strongly about this. Do you feel comfortable talking in front of the group, or would your rather take this "off line" and speak privately with me? • Clearly, this is a sore point with you. What's going on?

Advantages	The benefits of using a probing/feelings-related question are: • you've accepted the participant's feelings as valid, which goes a long way to diffuse anger; • you're controlling the situation, rather than letting the situation control you; • you haven't agreed with the participant's *assertion* (which may or may not be true)--only that strong feelings have been expressed; • you've displayed sensitivity and responsiveness; • by hearing the person out, you can better understand what the underlying issues may be, and react as appropriate.
Disadvantages	The obvious disadvantage of raising a question of this sort is that you've taken the chance of opening up a can of worms. Other potential risks: • the discussion becomes group therapy; • everyone voices an opinion and the learning objectives of the class go by the wayside.
Linking questions	Linking questions encourage and stimulate group discussion, and are especially important for instructors to use. Indeed, group interaction is greatly enhanced because: • participants are encouraged to *listen* to one another; • the instructor talks less and listens more; • participants take a more active role and have greater psychological ownership of the content.
Setting the stage	Let's set the stage for a linking question. An instructor question has been raised, which elicits a participant response. The content of this response provides the stimulus for the next question, and requires participants to *react* to the previous response. What comes next is "linked" to what went before.

Examples of linking questions	Here are some common linking questions: • Does anyone disagree with Alan's answer? • Who agrees? Tell me why. • Can anyone add to that point? • I'd like to hear a reaction to the point Megan just made. She obviously feels strongly about this. • Any other reactions • Any strong disagreement?
Other variations	A variation of the linking technique involves incorporating a participant's response (or a portion of this response) in a follow-up question, as seen in this exchange: *Instructor question*: Tell me about the "best" business meeting you've ever attended. *Participant response*: It was well-planned and started on time. *Instructor linking follow-up*: What made this particular meeting so well-planned?
How to construct	In order to frame this type of linking question, listen carefully to the initial participant response, and select a relevant portion of the response as the content "stem" of your next question.
Advantages	The obvious benefits of raising linking questions are: • the instructor is demonstrating active listening; • participant responses are validated; • participants are encouraged to listen to one another; • the class has greater psychological ownership of the content.
Disadvantages	No obvious disadvantages, but again, a *caveat*: vary your use of linking questions so that you don't overuse them, or become too predictable in your questioning pattern.

Debriefing questions/ remarks

Debriefing questions/remarks are used in conjunction with small group problem solving or "buzz group" activities. Here's a typical scenario: a class of 25 participants has been divided into groups of five to execute a 15 minute brain-storming session. After fifteen minutes, the instructor reconvenes the whole class, and calls on a spokesperson from each small group to "report."

Examples

Commonly used debriefing questions/remarks are:
• Group 1--let's hear from your spokesperson.......Group 2....etc.
• Alan--let's hear what your group came up with.....
• Mary, what can you (your group) add?
• What about Ed's group--anything else?

When to use

Instructor debriefing and "sharing" remarks are appropriate following a small group break-out activity, so that all members of the class can hear the ideas and output their colleagues have generated.

Which questioning technique is best?

At this point you might be thinking—which type of questions are the "best?" The answer: you must be prepared to use *all types of questions*, depending on the instructional objectives, the time available, and the specific situation. By using a wide variety of questioning techniques, you'll be able to get a full range of feedback about important aspects of the learning process, and better ensure that the course's learning objectives are achieved.

Planning and practice is critical

Planning key questions, practicing questioning skills, and developing a comprehensive range of communications techniques will serve you and your participants well. The more time you spend learning this important skill, the better and more focused your learning results will be.

Handling Participant Questions

When you're on the receiving end

Responding to questions that participants raise is a natural part of a trainer's job. You've got to create an environment in which participants feel free and comfortable raising questions about the course and its content. Remember—the only dumb question is the unasked question.

Demonstrate active listening

When handling spontaneous participant questions, it's important for you to demonstrate *active listening* with both your *body language* and your *verbal responses*. Here are several techniques:

- raise your hand slightly as you ask, "Are there any questions?"--you'll send a strong message that you're *seeking* two-way communication and audience involvement;
- move slightly forward and look directly at the person asking the question;
- repeat or rephrase the question to verify the questioner's meaning and ensure that everyone else has heard;
- take a moment to think about and evaluate the question before responding;
- if a slide is being displayed while a question is asked that doesn't relate to that content, blank out the screen;
- answer the question briefly, directly, and honestly;
- seek closure, by asking, "Does that respond to your question?"
- if audience members seem reluctant to participate, you can use a targeted remark such as, "Tom, you seem puzzled? What would you like clarified?"
- try to relate your responses to the content you are presenting.

What if you don't know the answer

If a participant asks a question to which you don't know the answer, simply say so. Don't apologize or get rattled. Make a remark such as, "I don't know the answer. What's your Email address? I'll get back to you on that."

What if the question is way "off-base"

Assuming that the question is sincerely asked but doesn't relate to the course you're teaching, respond with, "Mary, we're not going to be covering that in this class. That subject is beyond the scope of this course. Let's take this off-line and perhaps I can suggest someone who can get you that information."

Chapter 8—Platform Techniques and Body Language

Overview

Introduction

This section discusses how effective presentation and platform techniques support and enhance overall instructional effectiveness. It also presents techniques and ideas for improving platform and presentation skills.

Important research findings

Research findings about the importance of effective platform techniques and energetic body language are clear and unambiguous:

- instructor effectiveness increases significantly when the verbal message is supported by movement and appropriately-animated body language;
- participant *retention* of ideas presented verbally improves substantially when effective instructor body language and platform techniques are used to "showcase" and emphasize important content;
- less than 20% of a message is communicated verbally--the rest is communicated to participants by "body language" (voice, gestures, movement, posture, and facial expression).

Therefore, if you want your message to have greater impact, be more energized, and remembered by participants, develop good platform techniques and non-verbal communication skills.

Main topics

Specific platform techniques and body language topics are:

- appearance and dress
- eye contact
- gestures and body movement
- vocal techniques
- focusing techniques
- use of the pointer
- use of the flipchart;
- use of audio-visual aids.

Appearance and Dress

Importance of appearance and dress

It goes without saying that your appearance and attire makes a significant impression on your audience. Your can't go wrong by choosing conservative clothing—comfortable, in good taste, and consistent with the dress code of your organization.

Changing dress codes

As corporate America becomes more diverse, "business casual" has become commonplace in many companies. In a "business casual" company, I suggest dressing one notch up from the participants. A blazer or jacket, even over casual pants or khakis, suggests a more professional image.

Dressing in a formal business suit when the attendees are in "dress down" mode may create a visual distance between you and the participants. On the other hand, you'd be at a decided disadvantage coming in to a class dressed casually when all the attendees are in more formal business attire. "When in Rome…….." is a safe rule of thumb. Also, be aware of industry and local standards.

Eye Contact

Eye contact-- the "do's"

Who to look at--and when--often seems a perplexing problem. Here are some guidelines for making direct and confident eye contact with *individual participants*:

- look an individual participant in the eyes for about 5--8 seconds and imagine you are speaking directly to that person--complete your thought and then focus on another individual in a different part of the room and repeat the process;
- one thought spoken to one person enables you to individualize mentally – sometimes it's less daunting to think about talking to individuals rather than the group as a whole.

Eye contact-- the "don'ts"

Just as good eye contact enables you to "connect" with your participants, poor habits will have just the opposite effect. Try to avoid:

- scanning the room nervously, trying to make eye contact with every person in the room;
- staring above the tops of the audience's heads;
- talking to the screen rather than your audience;
- turning your back on the audience.

Gestures and Body Movement

Hand and arm gestures

One of the most difficult platform skills to acquire is knowing what to do with your hands, and using hand and arm movements effectively. You'll be able to develop your own style and comfort level by practicing these techniques:

- stand alone in front of a mirror and talk through parts of your instructional materials as if you were "signing" it or speaking to a group of hearing-impaired people. This will require you to use somewhat exaggerated hand and arm gestures;
- "lock" your hands to your lower arms in a soft karate-like "chop" movement--this prevents you from flopping your hand up and down;
- try out a variety of gestures and movements;
- observe the effect, and decide what you like, what looks good, and what you feel comfortable with;
- incorporate these movements into your platform skills repertoire, and practice in front of a mirror and with a video recorder.

Body movement--the "do's"

At the beginning of instructional activities, and during those portions of classes where you're functioning as a "lecturer," you'll generally be standing in front of your audience. Here are some pointers on how to position your body, and how to move in front of a group:

- think of your feet as being "anchored" to the floor--this enables you to feel balanced, and will prevent you from rocking or pacing;
- use your arms and hands in the above-the-waist gestures you've practiced, and let your hands fall easily to your sides when you're not using them;
- when you walk from place to place in front of the group, make sure the movement is *purposeful* and supports your verbal message;
- move from the speaker's table or podium back to the screen to *point* to something--this gives you a reason for moving;
- once you've indicated the relevant material on the screen and discussed it, resume your speaker's position;
- when a participant responds to a question, asks a question, or makes a comment, move slightly towards that person--this signals attentiveness on your part;
- maintain erect and confident posture.

Gestures and Body Movement, Continued

Body and hand movement--the "don'ts"

Nervous mannerisms are visually distracting and prevent participants from focusing their full attention on the substantive *content* you're communicating. Avoid the following:

• rocking;
• pacing back and forth;
• moving around without a purpose;
• locking your hands in back of you;
• plunging both hands in your pockets;
• holding or wiggling an object (a marker, a pointer, etc.) in your hands;
• jiggling coins or keys in your pocket.

It's also worth noting that many of these movements are unconscious. Most instructors are totally unaware that they're doing this. That's why being videotaped from time to time is invaluable--it's the only way you get to see yourself as others see you.

Classroom seating arrangements

Depending on the size of the group, several classroom set-ups are possible. For groups of 30 and under, a U-shape or small clusters of tables affords both the participants and the instructor greater flexibility. You can move easily around the room, and have closer contact with the participants. Traditional classroom style seating imposes artificial restrictions on the instructor's movement and your ability to connect with participants.

Vocal Techniques

Importance of good vocal presentation	A good speaking voice is an important asset for an effective instructor. If your voice projects confidence and energy, the group will be more attentive and retain more of your message.
Vocal techniques--the "do's"	Here are suggestions for effective verbal techniques: • enunciate your words clearly; • vary your pace and volume; • *raise* or *lower* your voice (it's your call!) to emphasize key points; • *speed up* or *slow down* (again, it's your call) your pace for greater emphasis; • use the "pregnant pause" to stimulate anticipation and interest before presenting a key point; • insert a mental *period* at the end of a complete thought, have a moment of *silence*, and mentally count to two before beginning a new point. • practice with a tape recorder--(you can recite someone else's great speeches like we did in junior high, or you can practice with you own material). Remember--participant attention is maintained at a high level when you *vary* your vocal style--sometimes louder, sometimes softer, sometimes a pause, sometimes slower, and sometimes a quicker pace.
Vocal techniques--the "don'ts"	Avoid these verbal mannerisms: • speaking in a monotone; • speaking too softly; • saying "ugh," "okay?" "well, um," "like," etc.--these are generally verbal fillers that are used instead of silence. Get in the habit of making a statement that finishes a complete thought. PAUSE (silence). Continue with your next statement.

Focusing Techniques

Focusing	Focusing is the instructor's way of intentionally controlling the *direction* of class attention. This control is accomplished by: • verbal statements; • gestures and body movement; • a combination of the two.
Examples of verbal focusing	Here are some examples of verbal focusing: • *Look* at the diagram; • *Listen* closely to this; • Here's a point that's *critical*; • *Watch* what happens next; • *Follow* the flowchart carefully; • *Observe* the difference in these two procedures; • *Imagine* what an empowered team would be able to do; • *If you remember nothing else from today's discussion, remember this!* In essence, you're using *words* to focus your audience's attention and bring them to a state of vigilance. You're also using verbal stimuli to influence audience members to draw on their visual and creative senses.
Examples of non-verbal focusing	Non-verbal focusing includes these moves: • using a pointer to indicate something; • turning your body toward something or someone; • nodding your head; • using arm or hand gestures; • using facial expressions; • using *exaggerated* facial expressions or body language.
Examples of combination verbal and non-verbal focusing	Here are several ways you can combine the two: • instructor points to the diagram and says, "Look at this feature"; • instructor uses mouse pointer on the slide while saying, "Follow this flowchart carefully."

Use of the Pointer

When to use a pointer

Use a pointer when you want to direct your participants' attention to a particular item or idea which is being displayed on the screen. It's important to maintain eye contact with your audience by:

- 1. walking back to the screen;
- 2. locating with the pointer the material you're discussing;
- 3. turning your face toward the audience and making eye contact with a specific participant;
- 4. speaking *only after* you've made eye contact and are facing forward.

This technique also gives you a *purpose* for moving from one place to another.

Types of pointers

There are several types of pointers, and each has certain advantages and recommended uses. Here are the main types:

1. the mouse on your laptop

2. a "telescope"(retractable) pointer that opens to 2-3 feet--use this when the display screen is too high for you to reach with your hand. If you use this type of pointer DON'T JIGGLE IT UNCONSCIOUSLY in your hand when you're not using it;

3. a laser pointer. Use this for presentations to larger groups in larger rooms. A small beam of red laser light can be projected from distances of 20-30 feet to your screen. DON'T OVERUSE, however, and try to keep your hand steady.

An alternative to using a pointer

An instructor can communicate effectively with a small to medium-sized audience by using his or her *hand* and *arm* instead of a pointer to indicate key points displayed on a screen. This technique is less formal than using a pointing device; and research shows that audiences perceive an instructor who doesn't use a pointer as "warmer," less officious, and more accessible. Here's how to handle this technique:

- 1. walk back to the screen;
- 2. locate the material you're discussing and place your hand (palm out) on this section;
- 3. now turn your face to the audience and make eye contact with an audience member;
- 4. after you've made eye contact and are facing forward, begin speaking.

This technique has the added advantage of giving you a *purpose* for moving from one place to another.

Use of the Flipchart

Always have a flipchart nearby

A flipchart can a particularly useful tool for handling spontaneous concerns that arise, managing unanticipated questions, and recording participant responses. By using a flipchart to jot down these types of inputs, you're communicating to participants that you're responsive to their needs and ideas, and that you've planned for *spontaneity and flexibility*. Additionally, this allows you to maintain control of the situation and keep on track with your instructional plan.

Opening the class

After opening a class with brief introductory remarks, it's often a good idea to inject a phrase such as, "Before I begin, I'd like to hear some of your concerns and reasons for being here so I can make sure to respond to these issues....what questions *must* you have answered so that your time here is well-spent?" Write these on the flipchart and weave them into your instructional presentation.

Handling an unanticipated question

One of the most disconcerting things that can happen once you've begun teaching is an unanticipated question that interrupts your content flow. The *last thing* you want to say is, "I'll be covering that later," because you may be perceived as being dismissive or rude to the questioner. Here's a technique that you can use to be responsive to the group while still maintaining control of the situation:
1. write the question, or the kernel of the question, on the flipchart, noting the questioner's name, if possible;
2. briefly respond to the question--you've got to assume that this person has asked the question sincerely, and is not being willfully disruptive;
3. after your response, say, "Does that respond to your question for now? I intend to cover this topic at greater length in the next few minutes."
4. finally, when you come to this point in your discussion, refer to your flipchart and say, "Now John raised this issue before. I'd like to discuss this more fully now......" This exchange will indicate to the group and to the participant who asked the question that his/her concern is important, and that you've listened and are being responsive. Conclude your remarks with, "Do you have everything you need on this subject, John?" or words to that effect.

Audio-Visual Aids

The case for using visual aids

Here are two of the more compelling reasons for using well-prepared visual aids in conjunction with your instructional activities:
- over 75% of the information a group retains is communicated visually;
- over 50% of learners report that they learn more effectively when information is supported by visual aids rather than by words alone.
- Need we say more?

Primary goal of a visual aid

A visual aid should support, reinforce, and illustrate your ideas, and make the content more vivid and meaningful for the participants. Remember that the operative word is *aid*, however, and that a visual display alone is never sufficient to tell the story. Your words are what clarify and bring to life what's depicted on the visual. Don't let the tail wag the dog.

Getting started

There are several guidelines to use when deciding which visual aid to use. Proper media selection depends on:
- size of audience;
- availability;
- cost;
- portability or convenience in transporting;
- ease of use;
- lighting conditions.

Audio-Visual Aids, Continued

Selecting the right visual aid Use the selection table below to help choose the right medium:

Audio-Visual Selection Table

Item	Audience size	Availability	Cost	Port-ability	Lighting Conditions	Ease of Use
PowerPoint Slides/laptop	medium/ -large	professional support	moderate	very	normal	easy
Flipchart	all audiences	widely available	inexpen-sive	very	normal	easy
Videotape/ CD-ROM/DVD	small/ -medium/ large	widely available	moder-ately expen-sive	very	dim/ low normal	easy
Projector/ Screen for laptop computer slides	small/ medium/ large	professional support required	fairly expen-sive	cumber-some	dim in screen area	not difficult, but may require profes-sional support
Overhead transparen-cies	small/ medium	not widely used in corporate training	Inexpensive	very	normal	easy

Audio-Visual Aids, Continued

General rules for visual aids-- the "do's"

Whether you use computer-generated Power Point slides, videotapes, CD-ROMs, DVDs, a flipchart, or overhead transparencies made on a copier, remember that the objective of visual aids is to connect with your group's *visual sense.* Here are some rules you should follow which will maximize the effectiveness of any chart or visual you display:

- first and foremost, your audience should be able to *see it and read it*---no exceptions;
- visuals should be simple in both detail and word usage;
- no more than 8 lines of text per visual should be used;
- the visual should present *highlights* only, requiring interpretation by the instructor;
- the chart should have large, clear, bold, non-crowded letters and lines;
- color should be used to highlight important facts or features;
- each visual should represent *one idea only*, and have a title;
- use *visual representations* instead of words, wherever possible;
- talk to the participants--not to the visual or the screen;
- use relatively *few* visuals--10 to 12 charts per every 15 minutes is a reasonable "rule of thumb."

The "don'ts"

Just as there are "rules of the game" *for* effective use of visuals, there are also *things to avoid*:

- *do not* use visuals that the audience can't read; *never* say to your audience, "I know you can't see this but......";
- avoid using too many visuals--a good working guideline is, "Less is more;"
- don't turn your back to the audience and read the material displayed on the screen--have hard copy of visuals positioned in front of you so that you can face forward as you review the content;
- don't read your charts word for word;
- don't leave a slide displayed when it isn't relevant to class discussion or activity; when using an overhead projector, don't leave it on when you're not displaying material--the bright light is distracting;
- never use a visual aid you haven't rehearsed with beforehand.

Audio-Visual Aids, Continued

Using your judgment

When working with a *Leader's Guide* or other instructional materials that have been prepared by other parties and that you're required to use, you may decide after reviewing the materials that you want to include additional AV support (charts, slides, videos, etc.) to personalize the material. Prepare these well in advance of the class.

Murphy's Law of visual aids

You're all familiar Murphy's Law--"whatever can happen, will happen." Never is this truer than when using visual aids. Here are some ideas that may help you avoid disaster:

• anticipate worst case scenario--always have back-up capability, especially when using more complex technologies--a flipchart is your most reliable tool in case all else fails (including the electricity)—so is an extension cord;

• always keep the instructional materials and visual aids you'll be using handcuffed to your wrist—never check materials when traveling--never delegate to a colleague, co-instructor, or subordinate the task of bringing the visual aids--this is setting yourself up for a major foul-up;

• when using a laptop computer and video projector, make sure it's hooked up and working properly well before the beginning of your class;

• rehearse, rehearse, rehearse--never use a visual aid before you've practiced with it *several* times;

• when teaching a class at an unfamiliar location, try to visit the classroom *beforehand* to get the feel of the room, become familiar with lighting conditions, locate electrical outlets, and make sure the audio-visual equipment you've requested is hooked up and working;

• never assume anything where visual aids are concerned.

A final word-- be paranoid!

In the case of visual aids, being paranoid is a reasonable state of affairs! As the saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Chapter 9—Alternative Delivery Training Options

Background Information

What is alternative delivery?

The purpose of this section is to provide core information about alternative delivery training options. The term *alternative delivery* refers to any learning activity that is not delivered in a traditional classroom setting. This includes such training initiatives as self-study workbooks, CDs and audiotapes, video-conferenced classes, and web-based training.

The challenge

Today's business environment is changing faster than anytime in modern history due to rapid developments in communications technology. Organizations are challenged to meet the ever-increasing learning needs of a diverse and geographically dispersed workforce—a workforce whose competitive advantage lies in its knowledge, skill set, and performance expertise.

Blended solutions

Since the competitive edge often goes to the best trained workforce, this suggests that organizations must provide more frequent, more focused, and, indeed, almost continuous learning interventions. Although this idea may sound impractical and economically unrealistic, in fact it's highly doable and cost-effective through the use of alternative delivery approaches that can be used in conjunction with traditional classroom based instruction. This combination is often referred to as a "blended learning solution."

Promoting learning

The goal of all instruction is to promote learning. Whether you're an instructor in a traditional classroom, or a trainer/instructional designer providing instruction via alternative delivery methods, your goal is to bring about a targeted and intentional *change in participant behavior* through planned and purposefully designed instruction. Therefore, the goals of traditional and alternative delivery instruction—blended, non-blended, pureed, sautéed, stir-fried, and all other approaches in between—are one and the same.

Distance Learning

Learners and instructor are not face-to-face

Several of the most popular alternate delivery systems involve video-conferenced and satellite-based classrooms, and also, the now almost ubiquitous web-based training. These approaches are often referred to as distance learning (DL). *The distinguishing characteristic of distance learning (DL) from other forms of education is that the learner and the instructor are geographically remote from one another.*

Unique challenges of DL

In a DL instructional environment, there are several added challenges:
- because the instructor(s) and the participants are geographically remote from one another, the instructor(s) is teaching in an environment with reduced face-to-face participant feedback;
- conversely, participants have less opportunity for direct interaction with the instructor(s), and may feel uninvolved;
- planning for DL instruction takes longer—generally 2 to 3 times as long—and is typically more detailed and rigorous than the planning efforts needed for traditional classroom delivery. However, planning time is generally much less for one-time information exchanges, updates, or conversion of an existing course.

Another challenge—managing the *perception* of distance

An important goal of distance learning is to overcome the barriers of space and time between the learner and the instructor. Research has shown that the learners' *perception* of distance in DL systems varies directly as a function of *interactivity.* The rule of thumb is: the greater the opportunity for interaction and dialogue between instructor(s) and participant(s) during the distance learning experience, the "shorter" the perceived distance. Many of today's technological advances, such as response keypads, chat rooms, two-way audio, and Email make this type of "real time" participant interaction possible.

Distance Learning, continued

Why teach at a distance?

Since distance learning imposes requirements over and above those needed for conventional face-to-face instruction, why use these methods? There are many substantive reasons, and the benefits are numerous:

- the ability to reach a wider audience;
- the avoidance of travel and living costs involved in attending classes at a central education location;
- the capacity to meet the needs of participants unable to attend out-of-town classes;
- the involvement of outside speakers or "content experts" who would otherwise be unavailable;
- the rapid transfer of information to field locations;
- the increase in productivity that occurs when employees are able to remain in their home territory;
- the capability of linking participants from diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds;
- the means to shorten cycle time between instructional interventions;
- to ability to provide participants "just-in-time" instruction and information, such as "hot off the press" product updates, changes in the law, or other late-breaking news that affects their lives and jobs immediately;
- learning time is often reduced by l5% to 25% due to the more rigorous planning requirements of the technology;
- greater participant satisfaction occurs due to fewer travel disruptions;
- the potential economic benefits and savings for the organization due to all of the above.

Types of training delivery methods

A trainer/instructional designer has a number of options to choose from when selecting a medium for the delivery of his or her course. These include:

- traditional classroom;
- self-study (self-paced work books, audio-cassettes, video/DVD cassettes)
- audio conferencing;
- videoconferencing;
- interactive television (delivered by satellite, cable, or microwave).
- tutored video instruction;
- web-based training.

A brief discussion of each of these methods follows.

Other Alternative Delivery Approaches

Self-study materials	Self-study materials fall into several categories: • Printed workbooks usually consist of a series of readings and exams that the participant completes at his or her own pace, and that may be reviewed with instructors or managers for grading and feedback. These materials are inexpensive, and are particularly appropriate for communicating factual content; • Audio-cassettes or CDs are particularly useful in capturing the verbal expertise and enthusiasm of subject matter experts, and are convenient for participants to use and listen to in otherwise "down" time situations, such as driving or exercising. And the costs of producing these are coming down every day. • Video-cassettes and DVDs are a technology whose time has come. DVDs used in conjunction with the almost ubiquitous portable DVD player or laptop computer provide the benefits of portability as well as high quality sound and sight. Since prices of DVDs have come down considerably, this is a effective and moderately priced way to deliver high impact content to trainees.
Audio-conferencing	Audio conferenced instruction can be thought of as a two-way phone conference built around instructional materials and the accomplishment of specified instructional objectives. Participants can either call in a central phone conference number, or small groups can convene in a room equipped with a speaker phone. Both methods allow trainees to get in voice contact with other participants and the trainer/instructor. Modern communications technologies make the timely distribution of materials easy and inexpensive. This training approach is cost effective, and uses a tool found on every participant's desk. And cell-phone users (another ubiquitous technology) who are on the road can also be included in conferences of this sort.
Video-Conferenced DL	Video conferenced DL allows participants in remote locations to engage in dialogue with each other and also to see and hear the trainer. There are several types of video conferencing, including one-way video/two-way audio (the trainer can be seen but can't see the participants yet all can hear each other) or two-way video/two-way audio (where the trainer can both see and be seen by the participants). Video conferenced DL is usually delivered through land line technologies (phone lines) or satellite broadcast delivery systems.

Other Alternative Delivery Approaches, continued

Tutored videotape instruction	Tutored Videotape Instruction (TVI) consists of a small group of learners, a VCR or DVD player with instructional tapes or DVDs, and a facilitator who "starts" and "stops" the tape or DVD at key instructional moments and poses integrative questions. TVI is a viable and a cost-effective way to deliver both initial instruction and follow-up review, since videotapes are a natural byproduct of any instructional television activity.
Computer based training	In recent years, the term computer-based training has meant self-paced training distributed to participants via a CD-ROM. This is rapidly being displaced by the Internet, where the content of any CD-ROM can be placed on a website, distributed on the Internet, and made readily accessible to any class participant.
Interactive satellite TV	Interactive satellite TV systems are generally divided into two categories: 1. dedicated purpose; 2. *ad hoc* seminars. A dedicated purpose network is designed for and targeted to a specific purpose, such as training. An *ad hoc* network is one that is assembled from existing public resources for a special event, such as a sales meeting, policy announcement, business seminar, etc., and is better suited for a one-time information exchange than sustained professional development programming. Participants assemble at "receive locations," perhaps a large hotel ballroom or a movie theatre, and view the proceedings on large screens via projection TV. Company executives, high level instructors, motivational speakers, and other thought leaders deliver content presentations from a studio-like origination site.
Web-based training	The Internet has made possible the convergence of almost every alternative delivery method previously discussed for distribution over one medium. This does not mean that all other training technologies will be displaced or become obsolete. What it does mean is that web-based training is an idea and a technology whose time has come. Since many earlier training methods can just as easily and more cost effectively be delivered over the Internet, web-based training will no doubt become the medium of choice.

Other Alternative Delivery Approaches, continued

Two types of web-based classes

The two basic types of web-based classes are:
- Synchronous classes, in which the instructor and the participants are online at the same time, working through the material in real time. Many of these technologies allow for two-way audio and one way video. The medium typically utilizes PowerPoint slides that the instructor narrates and advances, interactive quizzes and exercises, and an occasional live instructor shot
- Asynchronous classes, in which the instructor and participants are not online at the same time. These classes are typically "produced" professionally, and are made available to participants through proprietary access technology. An exception might be synchronous classes that are "saved," and accessed by participants unable to attend at the time.

But does it work?

All this is well and good, but the question educators, instructional designers, and training professionals most frequently raise is, "Does this really work? Are learning results comparable to those accomplished in traditional classroom settings? The selected research results which follow should be of particular interest to those parties:
- in a great number of instances, participants prefer DL over traditional classroom instruction, citing easier access, greater convenience, and increased learner autonomy;
- studies also show significant reduction in time spent in training, due to more flexible learning time and elimination of compulsory attendance at sessions that cover material already learned;
- participants accomplish course objectives more efficiently because higher planning standards are required of course developers and better quality instructional materials are developed;
- many studies indicate that alternate learning mediums are just as effective as classroom-based instruction in delivering measurable participant learning gains and retention of material;
- the average savings in learning time using alternative delivery approaches can be as high as 20% to 25%, resulting in significant dollar savings as well.

Criticisms of Alternative Delivery

Criticisms of alternative delivery

Alternative delivery is not without its downside. The main criticisms include:
- content issues are overemphasized to the detriment of interpersonal processes and teamwork;
- a "talking head" is the most frequently used instructional style on video-conference networks, even when the technology provides for greater interaction and participant involvement;
- in web-based training, the opportunity for participant involvement and interaction is often minimal;
- many web-based and computer-based courses are no more than self-study workbooks that have been superficially upgraded for Internet delivery.

Although many of these criticisms are valid, each can be addressed by more effective and creative instructional design, greater use of visualization and graphics in program development, and better trained instructors.

There's no one "magic bullet"

While it is helpful to discuss individual delivery systems separately in order to examine specific characteristics of each, a comprehensive learning solution consists of more than one type of technology. ***No one delivery system is a panacea.*** Organizations should use multiple delivery systems and training approaches, choosing for a given intervention the one which is the "best fit" in terms of cost-effectiveness, the target audience, the learning objectives to be accomplished, the timing of the event, and available technology.

Alternative delivery is a *means*

Alternative delivery approaches are a *means* by which the larger objective of professional development and training can be accomplished. It is a complex *system* made up of many components, including a variety of delivery technologies, administrative support, technological support, instructional development efforts, evaluation initiatives, and policies and procedures.

Criticisms of Alternative Delivery, Continued

The GIGO phenomenon

It the final analysis, let's emphasize that hardware doesn't teach. The adage, "Garbage in, garbage out! (GIGO)" is especially true for alternative delivery approaches and technology. Ultimately, it is through the course developer's instructional design skills, creative planning approach, effective utilization of resources, development of supporting job aids, and built in feedback opportunities that participants can be assured of a successful and stimulating learning experience.

Doing it "right"

If traditional classroom instruction is effectively supplemented and enhanced by alternative delivery approaches, the benefits for individuals and organizations can be enormous. By utilizing "blended" training solutions that are properly selected, effectively and creatively designed, and skillfully delivered, organizations will be able to:
- build intellectual capital;
- create a knowledge community;
- enhance individual competence and productivity;
- reduce knowledge transfer costs.

Summary of key discussion points

In this section, we discussed:
- reasons for implementing alternative delivery initiatives;
- background information about various distance learning systems;
- selected research results regarding distance learning/alternative delivery effectiveness.

Alternative Delivery System Selection Table

Item	Audience size	Resources needed to create	Cost	Instructor Preparation	Lead time to create	Ease of use for participants	Ease of use for instructors	Maintenance	When to use
Self-study printed materials	All audiences	Simple reprints can be used—no special support needed	Inexpensive	N/A	Less than 1 month	Easy	N/A	Easy and inexpensive	Pre-work, advance preparation
Self-study audio-cassettes	Medium/large	Professional support—need a good "voice"	Relatively inexpensive	N/A	1 month	Easy	N/A	Expensive to update	Advance preparation; post-class review
Self-study videotape/ CD-ROM/DVD	Medium/large	Professional support	Moderately expensive	N/A	1 month	easy	N/A	Expensive to update	Pre-work, advance preparation, post-class review
Audio-conferencing	Small/medium	No special skills	Inexpensive and under utilized	Low	1 week	Easy	Easy	Easy and inexpensive	Teaching current topic; post-class review

Alternative Delivery System Selection Table, Continued

Item	Audience size	Resources needed to create	Cost	Instructor Preparation	Lead time to create	Ease of use for participants	Ease of use for instructors	Main tenance	When to use
Video-conferencing DL	Large—can be small individual groups	Professional support	Expensive	Specialized training	3 months	Medium	Need specialized presentation training as well as technical support	Easy to update; expensive by its very nature	Teaching current topic
Tutored video instruction	Small	Not widely used; can be quite effective	Inexpensive	Low	Normal	Easy	Easy	Can't update current videos	Teaching current topic
Web-based — Synchronous	Large; can be set up in many small groups or even one individual	Instructor needs specialized instruction on use of system; also high level instructional design skills are needed	Relatively Inexpensive	Medium	Specialized training	Easy/ medium	Instructor needs specialized instruction on use of system; relatively easy after that	Easy and inexpensive ;; just add new slides	Teaching current topic; post-class follow-up
Web-based— Non-Synchronous	Large; can be used by individuals	N/A	Cheap	N/A	N/A	Easy	N/A	Expensive; the die has been cast	Teaching current topic

Chapter 10—Evaluating Instructional Effectiveness

Rationale and Methods

Why measure educational products?

The founder of modern educational measurement, Edward L. Thorndike, said it all in 1918:

Whatever exists at all exists in some amount. To know it thoroughly involves knowing its quantity as well as it quality. Education is concerned with changes in human beings; a change is a difference between two conditions; each of these conditions is known to us only by the products produced by it—things made, words spoken, acts performed, and the like. To measure any of these products means to define its amount in some way so that competent persons will know how large it is, with some precision, and that this knowledge may be conveniently recorded and used. This is the general Credo of those who in the last decade have been busy trying to extend and improve measurements of educational products.

Educational evaluation

Whenever you teach a program, a number of questions arise:
• Has the instruction been successful?
• Have participants accomplished the course objectives?
• Are participant behaviors being changed in the desired direction?
• Are teaching methods effective?

In order to be a successful instructional developer, you must plan specific activities to get answers to these questions. Said differently, you've got to devise ways to measure and document learner outcomes and results at the time you create the instructional plan. This is what educational evaluation is all about.

How can I measure course effective ness?

At the time you create your instructional plan, pay particular attention to the *objectives* you've set forth. As you continue writing your plan, ask yourself this question: How can I ensure that my participants have accomplished the instructional objectives? You then must plan the necessary activities and feedback exercises so that participants can demonstrate that they have learned.

Levels of Evaluation

Four levels of program evaluation

In training parlance, there are four levels of program evaluation that are frequently discussed:
- Level I—Did the participants like the course?
- Level II—Did the participants accomplish the course objectives?
- Level III—Are the participants better on their jobs as a result of participating in the training?
- Level IV—Are we more profitable or effective as a company because of the training initiative?

The answers to all four questions provide useful feedback, although it's obvious that some questions are more important to ask and get answers to than others. And finally, as you'll see, some are far more difficult to get answers to than others.

Level I evaluation

Did the participants like the course?

We've all seen program evaluation forms that seek *only* this type of feedback. Essentially, these are referred to as "happy sheets." This type of feedback is conducted at almost 100% of training events. While it's always good to know that the participants responded favorably to the course and didn't object to being in class, Level I feedback really doesn't tell us very much about whether, indeed, they achieved the course objectives or whether or not they will be able to apply their knowledge back on the job.

Level II evaluation

Have the participants accomplished the course objectives?

This type of evaluation seeks to determine whether or not the participants have mastered the knowledge and application objectives that have been specified. To secure this type of feedback, activities must be designed in which participants can demonstrate the appropriate behaviors—by actions that can be observed, by completing appropriate tasks and assignments, by passing a test, etc. Level 2 feedback is quite important in letting you know that, in the short term at least, your instruction has or has not accomplished its stated objectives. If "yes," fine. If "no," remediation is in order. Most organizations attempt to secure some sort of Level 2 feedback at the conclusion of training activities.

Continued on next page

Levels of Evaluation, Continued

Level III evaluation

Are the participants better practitioners back on the job as a result of having completed the training?

This is, of course, a critically important question; and because it's so important, one might think it's frequently raised in evaluation efforts. Think again. Level 3 evaluation efforts are rarely initiated. First of all, it would have to take place after the training is completed, and involves coordination and ongoing communication with the participants and their managers or supervisors. Many organizations will not spend the time or the resources necessary to get answers to this question. In this writer's view, however, Level 3 evaluation is singularly important; and organizations should make more of an effort to build this feedback into their training initiatives.

Level IV evaluation

Are we more effective or profitable as a company as a result of this training initiative?

If you think Level 3 evaluation is rarely conducted, Level 4 evaluation is practically nonexistent. At present there doesn't seem to be a clean and universally agreed-upon formula or model for calculating ROI on training dollar investment. This is an intriguing and important question, however; and as statistical approaches and technologies become more sophisticated, companies will develop better methods to find the answers to this question. It certainly makes good business sense to try to determine whether the dollars an organization is spending on training has an impact on its bottom line.

Formative vs. summative evaluation

Another important evaluation concept involves "in process" vs. "at the conclusion of" evaluation. Simply stated, *formative* evaluation takes place while the training is going on—in process, as it were—so that a barometer of learner performance is available at important milestones during the training, and corrective action can be taken if necessary. Summative evaluation, on the other hand, is gathered at the conclusion of a training sequence. While data on terminal participant performance is valuable if you're giving out grades or Pass/Fail certification, from an instructional point of view it's not particularly useful. After all—it's too late to do anything about the content, the teaching methods, or the instructional sequence at this point, much less rehabilitate a participant who has failed to make the cut.

Purposes and Types of Tests

The purposes of tests

Tests are designed to give instructors and participants feedback on their performance. They're given to answer the question the former Mayor of New York, Ed Koch, used to ask, "How am I doing?" Tests are given to:
- measure achievement (mastery of information or skills)
- diagnose learning difficulties or deficiencies
- evaluate teaching success
- rate a participant
- use as a teaching device (obtain in-progress feedback and take corrective teaching action).

Types of tests

There are 4 major types of tests, which will be discussed below:
- norm-referenced
- criterion-referenced
- informal tests
- self-referenced judgments.

Norm-referenced tests

Norm-referenced tests are tests that are tried out many times until a group norm is established. Norm-referenced judgments are then made by comparing information about an individual with information you have about a group of similar individuals. Standardized tests, such as the SATs, LSATs, etc. are examples of this type of test. In statistical terms, this is modeled on the concept of a bell-shaped curve.

Criterion-referenced tests

Criterion-referenced judgments are made by comparing the information you have about an individual with some predetermined performance criteria. These criteria are usually descriptions of expected behavior stated in observable and measurable terms.

A norm-referenced typing class

Imagine a high school keyboarding (typing) class based on a norm-referenced model. You'd have a lot of variance in the students' performance at the semester's end. A few As, some Bs, lots of Cs, a few Ds, and one or two failures. Not too promising for future employers of typists. In this case, the length of instruction is fixed; the student performance is varied.

A criterion-referenced typing class

Imagine, on the other hand, a criterion-referenced approach: everyone in the class must leave typing 75WPM. No one leaves who can't accomplish this result. You can take as long as you want, or as little time as you need. There's only one thing that's not negotiable—the terminal performance. Seventy-five words per minute or you're not certified. Which group of typists would you prefer to have working for you?

In this case, the length of time of instruction is varied; the terminal performance is fixed. In many adult training situations, criterion-referenced assessment makes a great deal of sense. After all, you want your "graduates" to all be performing at a consistent and reliable baseline set of acceptable standards.

Informal tests

This type of test is constructed by the instructor to measure a specific type of participant behavior—knowledge acquisition, performance, quality of work, etc.

Some skills measured by instructor-made tests

Tests measure a variety of participant skills. Here's a representative sample:
• performance
• quality of work
• knowledge of subject matter
• use o tools and equipment
• ability to analyze and solve problems
• speed
• accuracy
• ability to form judgments
• ability to read diagrams
• Etc.

Self referenced judgments

In this instance, the instructor is comparing the learning feedback he or she has accumulated about an individual with other information available from other sources about that same individual. Let's say an individual does very well in a consultative selling class during the role-play exercises, but in the same class, does poorly in the pre-planning and preparation aspects of a sales call. You also receive a note from this participant's manager that one of this participant's "areas for improvement" is timely organization and submission of paperwork. Thus, you have 2 pieces of valuable information about how best to individualize remediation and instruction for this participant.

Characteristics of a Good Test

Character istics of a good test

A "good" test has 4 important characteristics:
1. validity
2. reliability
3. objectivity
4. usability.

Validity

The *validity* of a test means that it should measure what the instructor wants it to measure as determined by the objectives of the course.

Reliability

The *reliability* of a test means that it should measure with consistent accuracy and give the same results when used with similar learners who have received the same instruction.

Objectivity

The *objectivity* of a test means that the results should not be influenced by the opinion, attitudes, or bias of the instructor.

Usability

The *usability* of a test means that its administration and scoring should not be too complicated and time consuming.

Objective vs. Subjective Tests

Objective tests In this case, the term *objective* refers to a type of short-answer testing that provides for only one correct answer. These test items are time-consuming and fairly difficult to construct, but easy to grade. Here are some examples:

- completion tests—can be used to test the ability of the participant to recall exact words or facts
- multiple choice tests—call for the selection of the correct answer from a "menu" of possible answers
- matching tests—usually involves 2 columns of items (for example, definitions in one column; the words that are defined in the other column) and tests the ability of participant to match a word with it's correct definition
- True/False (T/F) tests are used to test for recall and recognition of actual information and to judge whether or not a given statement is T or F.

Subjective tests (essay-type questions) In this type of test, the learner is asked to write a complete response to a question in his own words. This type of test is easy to construct, but difficult to score.

Which type of test should I use? As an instructor, your job is to bring about systematic and purposeful behavioral change. As an instructional evaluator, the task becomes one of measuring and documenting the behavioral changes that have occurred. Issues to consider when deciding which type of testing program is the "best fit" on your class include:

- length of class
- subject of class
- instructional objectives
- purposes of evaluation.

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Appendix

A Guide for Training Effectiveness

- Instructional Design Template
- Bloom's Instructional Objectives Generator
- Planning Guidelines for Effective Meetings
- Action Plan Template

Guidelines for Creating a Training Design Document:

How to Use

What this document includes	This template is formatted in two parts: 1: Suggested guidelines and category descriptions of information to include in each sub-section. 2: A blank template for use in planning your next training program.
Types of learning interventions	This template is suitable for a wide variety of learning interventions, including, but not limited to: • a complete course; • a module; • a self-study program; • a job aid; • a structured "on-the-job-training" assignment; • an alternative delivery training program.
Benefits of using this template	By using this template to guide the development of your design documents, you will be able to: • adopt a standard format and "language" for all training interventions; • reduce the cycle time necessary to create a design document; • articulate your ideas and those of your colleagues "up front" so that consensus about a project or intervention can be reached at the *design stage* rather than once project development is underway; • ensure that learning interventions are linked to your organization's initiatives and goals.

Part I: Guidelines for Creating a Training Design Document

Sections to Include

Company's goals and objectives

Your company's strategic organizational goals and objectives—and the knowledge and skill set needed by the organization's people to accomplish these goals and objectives—should be first and foremost in your mind as you plan to design a specific learning intervention. The program you develop is a systematic response to a specific organizational need. Include a statement of your organization's goals and strategic objectives at the beginning of your design document, and keep these clearly in mind throughout the entire design process.

Rationale for this intervention

State in several brief sentences why this project is being created, and how it will help your organization better accomplish its stated goals and objectives. This section answers the question, "Why are we designing this intervention in the first place?" *If you can't complete this section with **ease** and with **conviction**, rethink the necessity of the entire project; and go back to the drawing board!*

Audience description

Identify the specific target audience for which this intervention is intended. This subtopic could include descriptors such as who, how many, where located, professional level, educational background, etc. Here's a suggested list of questions to raise:

1. How many participants are in target audience?
2. What is their level of experience and education?
3. Describe their general morale and stress level.
4. What relevant activities are taking place before and after the training event?
5. What's the gender ratio?
6. What's the age range?
7. Are there relevant geographic considerations (section of country, pace, customs, slang, etc.)?
8. What's the typical personality of attendees (serious, calm, upbeat, etc.)?
9. What are the participants' attitudes about the training (resistant, receptive, etc.)?

Sections to Include, Continued

Prework/ advance preparation requirements	Identify any coursework, self-study, or other learning experience that should be completed by participants *prior* to embarking on this learning experience. Said differently, this section identifies the necessary groundwork that must be in place in order for the participant to successfully complete the present program, and conversely, without which success cannot be assured.
Overall goal	In this section, identify the overall goal of the specific learning intervention you are creating. This can be stated in a sentence or two, and is more global and conceptual in scope than the specific instructional objectives of a given program.
Instructional objectives	State the objectives of the learning intervention using *behavioral language* which is descriptive of a *desired learning outcome*. A well-written instructional objective should be: • participant-oriented; • descriptive of a desired participant *outcome*; • clear and understandable; • observable, measurable (if possible), and subject to assessment. The learning outcome should be stated as an *action verb* followed by the desired *direct object.*
Specific topics/skills addressed	Identify the specific topics and skills this intervention addresses.
Instructional format	Specify the major types of learning activities that will be included in this project, such as guided discussion, lecture, case study, simulation, role play, etc.
Delivery plan	Specify how and in what setting this intervention will be delivered, such as classroom based, self-study, web-based, blended solution, etc.

Sections to Include, Continued

Length of course   At the design stage, you may not know exactly how long this intervention is intended to take. Nonetheless, it's important to have a *working estimate* of the length of time the participants are expected to spend engaged in this project. Naturally, a design document for a week-long course is far different in scope and complexity than one for a 3 hour module.

Job aids   Identify the performance support tools you intend to develop in conjunction with this intervention to ensure "back-on-the-job" transfer and application. Job aids might include check lists, process flow charts, step action tables, etc.

Follow-up   • Specify any "back-on-the-job" follow-up initiatives that would reinforce and support the learning intervention once it has concluded. This might include management coaching, networking with other participants, follow-on newsletter update, on-line dialoguing, a live web cast, etc.
• Also, specify learning interventions which might logically follow this project and continue the participants' professional development activities.

Part II: Your Design Planning Template

Sections to Include

Company's goals and objectives

Rationale for this intervention

Audience description

Continued on next page

Sections to Include, Continued

**Prework/
advance
preparation
requirements**

Overall goal

**Instructional
objectives**

**Specific
topics/skills
addressed**

**Instructional
format**

Delivery plan

Sections to Include, Continued

Length of course

Job aids

Follow-up

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives:

Cognitive Domain

Taxonomy Classification	Infinitives (to)	Direct Objects
1.00 Knowledge		
1.10 Knowledge of specifics	define, distinguish, acquire, identify, recall, recognize, repeat, list, state	vocabulary, terms, terminology, meaning(s), definitions, names, elements
1.12 Knowledge of specific facts	"	facts, factual information (sources, names, dates, events, persons, places, time periods), properties, examples, phenomena
1.20 Knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics	"	"
1.21 Knowledge of conventions	"	form(s), conventions, uses, usage, rules, ways, devices, symbols, representations, style(s), format(s)
1.22 Knowledge of trends and sequences	"	action(s), processes(es), movements(s), continuity, development(s), relationship(s), force(s), influence(s)
1.23 Knowledge of classification and categories	"	area(s), type(s), feature(s), class(es), set(s), division(s), arrangement(s), classification(s), category(ies)
1.24 Knowledge of criteria	"	criterion(ria), basics, element(s)
1.25 Knowledge of methodology	"	method(s), technique(s), approach(es),
1.30 Knowledge of the universals and abstractions in a field	"	principle(s), generalization(s), fundamental(s), law(s), principal element(s), implication(s)
1.31 Knowledge of the principles and generalizations	"	"
1.32 Knowledge of theories and structures	"	theory(ies), base(s), interrelation(s), structure(s), organization(s), formulation(s)
2.00 Comprehension		
2.10 Translation	translate, transform, give in own words, illustrate, prepare, read, represent, change, rephrase, restate	meanings(s), sample(s), definition(s), example(s), representation(s), word(s), phrase(s)

2.20 Interpretation	interpret, reorder, rearrange, differentiate, distinguish, make, draw, explain, demonstrate	relevancy(cies), relationship(s), essentials, aspect(s), new view(s), qualification(s), conclusion(s), method(s), theory(ies), abstraction(s)
2.30 Extrapolation	estimate, infer, conclude, differentiate, determine, extend, interpolate, extrapolate, fill in, draw	consequences(s), implications(s), conclusion(s), factor(s), ramification(s), meaning(s), effect(s), probability(ies)
3.00 Application		
3.00 Application	apply, generalize, relate, choose, utilize, organize, use, employ, transfer, restructure, classify, code	principle(s), law(s), conclusion(s), effect(s), method(s), theory(ies), abstraction(s), situation(s), generalization(s), process(es), procedure(s), rule(s)
Operational	demonstrate, perform, operate, enter, initiate, modify, update, execute, load, run	machine, equipment, word processor, computer, program, software
Manipulative	install, replace, insert, repair, adjust, remove, fix, build	machine, equipment, tool, gauges
Documentation	record, complete, update, document, maintain	program, checklist, file, process, steps, record
4.00 Analysis		
4.10 Analysis of elements	distinguish, detect, classify, compare and contrast, analyze, categorize	elements, hypotheses, conclusions, assumptions, characteristics, components
4.20 Analysis of relationships	analyze, contrast, compare, distinguish, deduce	relationships, themes, arguments, causes, assumptions, ideas
4.30 Analysis of organizational principles	analyze, distinguish, detect, deduce, discern, break down	form, pattern, purpose, point of view, structure, theme, arrangement
5.00 Synthesis		
5.10 Production of an unique communication	write, tell, relate, produce, create, document, draw, represent, code, develop	design, structure, pattern, work, communication, program, proposal, composition
5.20 Production of a plan or proposed set of operations	propose, plan, produce, design, create	plan, proposal, specification, schematic, solution
5.30 Derivation of a set of abstract relations	produce, derive, develop, formulate, create, modify, synthesize, discover	concept, theory, hypothesis, discover
6.00 Evaluation		
6.00 Judgments in terms of evidence and criteria	judge, validate, assess, evaluate, rank, appraise	accuracy, effectiveness, usefulness, products, theory, reliability, superiority, relative merits

Planning Guidelines For Effective Meetings

1. **Purpose: What is my reason for holding this meeting?**

Example: I am holding this meeting to communicate background information about the problems faced in the old sales training program, and to inform the group about the new training initiative that was developed to address these issues.

2. **Desired Outcomes: What do I want the group to accomplish as a result of this meeting?**

Always state the session's desired outcomes as simple sentences using a verb/noun format. Examples:

> 1. Create group enthusiasm and "buy-in" for the New Hire Sales Training Program
> 2. Have the group fully informed about new training initiative
> 3. Assign roles and responsibilities to group members that are related to this new training initiative.

3. **Is a group session required to achieve my stated purpose and desired outcomes?**
   ☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**

If "no", other alternatives I could pursue are:

4. **If a meeting is required, who should attend?**

List the names of attendees. Remember: your objective is to invite the *smallest* number of people necessary to achieve the desired outcomes!

5. **What advance preparations have to be made?**

6. **What advance material(s) or background information has to be circulated to attendees prior to the meeting?**

7. **What is the probable interpersonal climate of this group?**

Potential strengths: Potential problems:

8. **What should I be prepared to do to manage any potential problems that do arise?**

Specific actions I could take are:

9. **What is the agenda content, topic flow, and clock times?**

THE PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS OF A MEETING

1. A meeting defines the team, the group, or the working unit. It creates a collective identify for participating group members.

2. A meeting provides the individual team members an opportunity to revise, update, communicate, deliberate, etc. as a group. A shared pool of knowledge and expertise is developed.

3. A meeting helps an individual team member understand the collective purpose(s) of the group and the way in which his or her contributions and responsibilities fit in.

4. A meeting creates a common sense of commitment to the mission, goals, objectives, initiatives, and decisions of the group.

5. A meeting provides the opportunity to ventilate and resolve interpersonal problems and conflicts which are a natural outgrowth of any group undertaking.

BUILDING YOUR AGENDA--THE PLANNING PROCESS

☐ Circulate the key particulars (date, time, location, purpose, etc.).

☐ Note participants who are assigned key roles.

☐ Classify agenda topics as either *information-sharin*g (presenting information about content) or *information-processing*.(discussing, making a decision , debating alternatives, etc. about content).

☐ Make sure that each *information-processing* topic has an intended or stated outcome.

☐ Determine times for each agenda item.

☐ Arrange the agenda topics, with suitable time allocation, in the most appropriate sequence to ensure the achievement of the desired outcomes.

☐ Keep to the agenda.

☐ Start the meeting on time. End the meeting on time.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

• **Primary facilitator** - this person is the positional team leader (senior, in-charge, chairperson, etc.) responsible for calling and planning the meeting. He or she is responsible for focusing both the *task* and *process* aspects of the meeting. He or she should also state "up front" positive expectations for group process behaviors and make explicit that "win/win" outcomes are sought. The primary facilitator typically functions in two roles: *facilitator* (directing and moving the group towards accomplishing its objectives; and *participant* (contributing content, ideas, opinions, and expertise as any other team member). Therefore, the primary facilitator is always wearing "two hats," and he or she should verbally indicate any time there is a switch in roles.

• **Team member responsibilities** - a productive meeting cannot be achieved by the singular efforts of one primary facilitator. Every member of the group shares the responsibility for making the meeting maximally productive by doing two things: being prepared regarding the *task* or content aspects of the meeting; and monitoring the interpersonal *process* that's taking place so that negative behaviors which interfere with the group's progress can be identified and dealt with, and more constructive "win/win:" approaches set in place.

• **Timekeeper** (optional) - The timekeeper monitors how long the group is taking to accomplish its tasks and provides regular updates to make members aware of where they are with regard to time spent. If the desired outcome is not close to being achieved at key points in the meeting, the group can decide whether to continue working on the current topic, move on to the next agenda item, or adjust the meeting's time allotments. Thie role can also be assumed by the primary facilitator in less formal meetings.

• **Recorder** (optional) - The recorder takes notes concerning decisions reached and action item assignments (who has agreed to do what and by what date). This information should be reviewed and confirmed before the session's end. A brief narrative of the meeting (minutes) of the session should also be prepared. After the meeting, this information should be typed and distributed to all attendees (and other key individuals not at the meeting) within two working days. Again, in less formal meetings, the primary facilitator can assume this rule

MEETING AGENDA

Time of Meeting:_____   Date:_____

Meeting called by:_____   Starting Time:_____

Place:_____   Ending Time:_____

Purpose:_____   Desired
Outcomes:_____

Agenda Items	Person Responsible	Process	Time

Meeting participants and names in key roles:

MAJOR REASONS WHY MEETINGS ARE UNPRODUCTIVE

• Purpose of the meeting is unclear.

• There is no agenda; or it is vague, unclear, and not results-oriented.

• The leader tries to accomplish too much.

• The meeting starts late, doesn't end on time, and has no clock integrity.

• There are too many people at the meeting (unnecessary attendees).

• The *wrong* people are in attendance

• The *right* people are not in attendance.

• The leader loses control.

• One person dominates the meeting.

• People wander from the topic.

• No clear decisions or conclusions are reached.

• The group is not self-conscious about its process.

• The individual group members are insensitive about their behaviors and the effect of these behaviors on others.

• Individual group members are unaware of their interpersonal style, their strengths, their hot-buttons, and the areas they need to improve and develop.