

Skillbook

Training for Non-Trainers

Team Management
Skills



Mindtools

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This Skillbook is published by Mind Tools Ltd.
21 Young Street, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH2 4HU.

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Version 5.0.

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1. Introduction

Have you ever been asked to train your team members, a group of your peers, or even someone more senior than you, even though you have little or no formal training experience?

If you have particular skills and expertise, it makes sense for you to pass on your knowledge to others. But just because you have specialized knowledge doesn't necessarily mean that you know how to teach it. And even experienced trainers can find it daunting to train their peers or senior members of staff.

In this **Skillbook**, we'll explore how to prepare a training session, so that you can pass on your skills and knowledge effectively and enjoyably.

Over the next hour you'll learn how to:

- Build your confidence as a trainer.
- Prepare a training session brief.
- Define learning objectives for your training session.
- Select training techniques that suit your learners.
- Use feedback and evaluation to measure the success of your training session.
- Create a lesson plan.

2. Building Your Confidence as a Trainer

If you're new to training, you'll probably feel nervous at the prospect of running a learning session. But remember, you wouldn't have been asked to do it if your boss thought you weren't capable. They clearly have faith in your ability, so now you have to work on building your self-confidence.

Let's begin by looking at the three key skills you'll need to conduct a successful training session:

- 1. Subject matter expertise.** If you have expert knowledge, it won't be long before others begin to recognize your unique and valuable talent. So, be generous and share it by seeking out opportunities to help people to grow. Sharing your knowledge in this way will help to build your reputation as a reliable and helpful member of the team.
- 2. Instructional skills.** You need to pass your knowledge on to others in a confident and assured manner, and listen actively to any concerns or questions that they have.
- 3. Interpersonal skills.** It's essential that you are able to relate to your trainees on a personal level, and to adapt your way of teaching to suit their preferred learning styles. This means that "soft skills" such as emotional intelligence, communication, and conflict resolution are crucial if you want to engage your learners.

Chances are, you already have what it takes to be an excellent trainer. But to prove it, let's identify the qualities that you possess in each of these three key areas.

Action:



In the table on the next page, list all of the qualities that you think a good trainer needs for each of the three skill areas covered above. For instance, under Instructional Skills, you could list presentation skills. Or, under Interpersonal Skills, you could write down teamwork, giving feedback, or conflict resolution.

Once you have done this, think about your level of ability for each of the qualities. Next to each quality, tick the correct box according to whether you have a strong ability, average ability, or whether you need more experience. This will help you to design a training session that plays to your strengths, and to identify areas that you may need to improve before hosting the session.

Qualities of an Effective Trainer			
1. Subject Matter Expertise	Strong Ability	Average Ability	Need More Experience
2. Instructional Skills	Strong Ability	Average Ability	Need More Experience
3. Interpersonal Skills	Strong Ability	Average Ability	Need More Experience

3. Put the Prep Work In

If you're planning to train people in a subject or skill that you're very familiar with, you may feel tempted to "wing it." Don't! A lack of planning is one of the most common reasons training sessions fail.

In this chapter, we'll ask you to create an outline of what you aim to achieve with your training session, and the key points that you want it to cover. We'll also get you to put together some questions and answers that you think your audience might ask you. This will help you to feel more prepared, and you can use it as a guide when you come to develop your final lesson plan.

Action:



In the boxes below, write down what you want your colleagues to learn from your training session, and the main points that you want it to cover.

Avoid listing too many points here. The best training sessions are those that focus on two or three key messages. Any more than that and you risk becoming sidetracked or going "off topic," which may leave your learners confused.

My colleagues need to learn about...
The main points that I want to cover are...
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.



Action:

Now think about four or five key questions that your colleagues might ask you about the topic during the training session. Write these questions down in the left-hand column in the table, below. Then, prepare answers to each of these questions in the right-hand column.

Questions People Might Ask	Your Answers
<i>Example question: What team-building activities can we carry out to boost creativity?</i>	<i>Example answer: There are a number of exercises that you can try. For example, brainstorming, hosting a debate, role-playing, or building sculptures that represent the team out of fun materials, such as balloons, lollipop sticks, or even cake!</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

4. Define Your Learning Objectives

Have you ever been on a training course that seemed pointless? Unnecessary training is a waste of everyone's time. If your trainees can't see the benefit of attending your session, they may be unwilling to give you their full attention. They may even resent being taken away from their normal duties to take part in it.

You need to show your colleagues **why** the training session is worthwhile. Why are the concepts and skills that you are teaching important? How will they be able to use them in their everyday jobs?

The best way to ensure that people “buy in” to your training session is to set some clearly defined learning objectives. These are the goals that you want them to achieve by the end of the session. Doing this will help your learners to stay focused and give them direction. It will also help you to measure the success of your training session.

In this chapter, we'll look at how you can set out thorough and complete learning objectives using the ABCD Learning Objectives Model.

The ABCD Learning Objectives Model

The ABCD Learning Objectives Model was first developed by Robert Heinich, along with his colleagues Michael Molenda, James D. Russell, and Sharon E. Smaldino in 2001. It outlines four key elements that trainers need to consider to ensure that training sessions have a clear objective and outcome.

The four elements of the model are:

1. Audience.
2. Behavior.
3. Conditions.
4. Degree.

1. Audience

The information that you include in your training session and the structure that it takes will depend heavily on your audience members' needs and wants.

Think about:

- What roles do they currently fill?
- What do their day-to-day tasks look like?
- How can the training help to improve these?

You should also consider your trainees' skills and experience. You may have expert insight and know all about the topic you're teaching, but your audience may not. Remember that your trainees need to be able to understand the information and data that you are presenting.

You wouldn't try to teach something highly technical to a junior member of the team, for instance.

If you're unsure about your audience's current skill level, carry out a Training Needs Assessment before your lesson. This will allow you to identify the skills they already have, as well as any gaps in their knowledge.



Action:

Use the table on the following page to clarify your audience's wants and needs. Write down who you will be teaching (for instance, senior members of the team, experts, junior staff). Then jot down their current level of knowledge (this may also include skills gaps).

When you have done that, explain how you can adapt your lesson to meet your trainees' needs. For example, should you use simplistic language, or highly technical language? Are they complete beginners, or do they already have some knowledge of the topic that you're teaching?

Your Audience
Who are you teaching?
What is their current level of knowledge? Do they have any skills gaps?
How can you adapt your session to suit your audience's needs? For instance, what information, data, and style of language should you use?

2. Behavior

Next, think about the specific behavior that you want trainees to be able to demonstrate when they have completed the training session. Try to think of this behavior in terms of verbs that express your learning outcomes. For example, do you want the IT department team to be able to **analyze** new data? Do you want team leaders to **schedule** people's vacations using a new system?

Take a look at the table below for some more examples of the types of verbs you can use to describe the behavior that you want trainees to develop.

Analyze	Defend	Create	Demonstrate	Support	Reproduce
Interpret	Organize	Set	Schedule	Calculate	Identify
Describe	Discuss	Evaluate	State	Locate	Predict



Action:

In the table below, list the behaviors that you want your trainees to demonstrate by the end of the training session. Be as specific as possible and avoid general terms such as “know” or “understand,” as these will be hard to measure.

Behavior
What behaviors do you want learners to demonstrate after your training session? List these behaviors below.

3. Conditions

This part of the ABCD Model refers to the specific conditions under which your trainees must demonstrate the knowledge or skill that they have learned. For instance, will they need to recall what they’ve been taught from memory? Or, will they have access to tools or resources, such as software, graphs, process documents, or reference materials?



Action:

In the table below, write down the conditions under which learners must be able to demonstrate their knowledge.

Conditions
What are the specific conditions under which learners must demonstrate their knowledge or skills by the end of the session?

4. Degree

The final element of the ABCD Model refers to the measurable standards that you'll use to assess your learners' performance once they leave the training session. For instance, you might want your IT department to analyze a new set of data by the end of the month. Or, you might want team leaders to schedule holiday using a new vacation system right away and without error.



Action:

In the table below, write down how you will measure your learners' performance once they leave the training session.

Degree
What are the measurable standards you'll use to assess learners' performance?

When you've considered all four elements of the ABCD Model, you can put together your key learning objectives. For example, you might say:

*"Using the data set and key parameters provided (**condition**), IT department members (**audience**) should be able to analyze (**behavior**) the information by the end of the month (**condition**)."*

Or:

*"Using the new vacation software system (**condition**), team leaders (**audience**) must now deal with and book in (**behavior**) staff holiday requests within one day of receiving them, without error (**condition**)."*



Action:

In the box below, write down the learning objectives that you want trainees to achieve by the end of your lesson. Specify who your audience members will be, the behavior that they need to demonstrate, the conditions under which they will be assessed, and the standards that they will be required to meet.

Learning Objective(s)

5. Plan Your Lesson

Now that you have a better idea of your key learning objectives, it's time to develop your lesson plan. This will help you to structure your session, and to plan out any relevant learning activities that you want to use during it.

Your learning plan needs to include:

- The different stages of your presentation, and the key points that you want to cover in each stage.
- Details of the learning techniques and activities that you want to use.
- Any training aids that you'll require.
- The length of time that you want each stage to last.

You can use the lesson plan template provided on [page 20](#) to plan out your training session.

Organizing Your Material

Begin by deciding how you will organize your learning objectives for the session. For example, you might wish to start with the simplest concepts and work your way up to the more complex ones. Or, you could work through them in chronological order. Other approaches you could use include:

- From general to specific.
- Working through key examples/case studies before moving on to the theory behind them, or vice versa.
- Working through procedural steps.

Action:



Fill in the lesson plan on [page 20](#). Begin by writing the name of your session at the top. Next, write your learning objectives.

Then, structure your training session into three or four stages, and write down the key points that you want to cover in each stage.

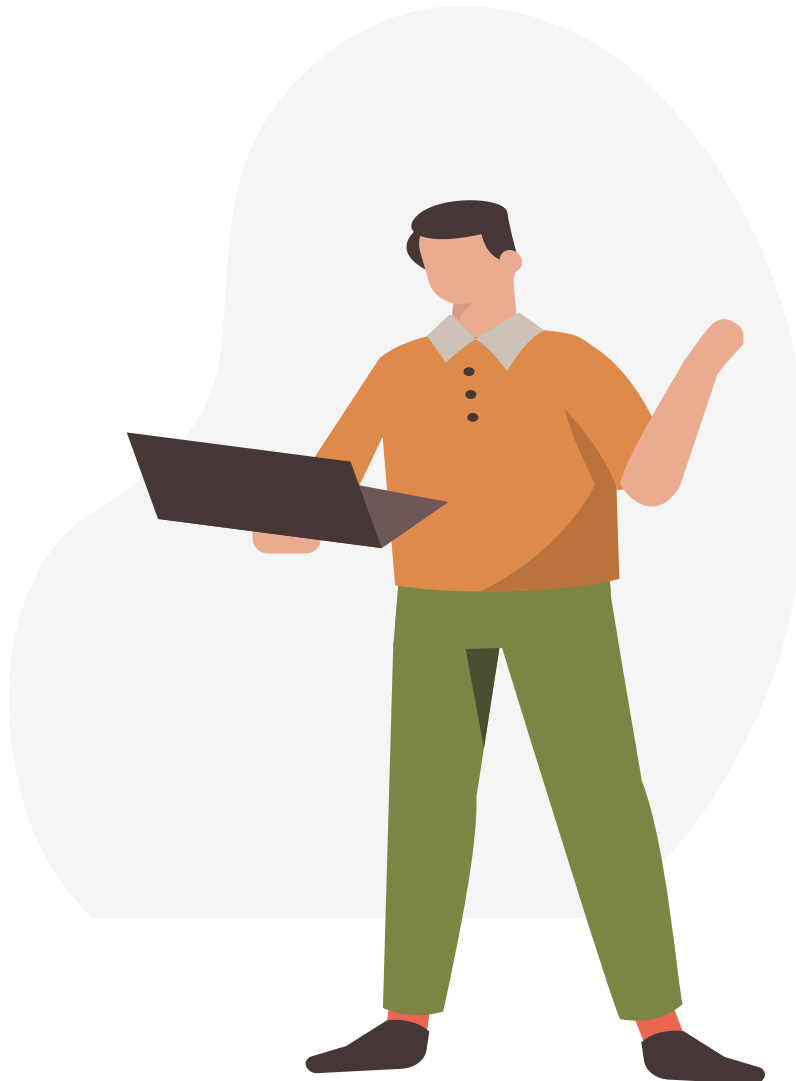
Training Techniques and Learning Activities

The next step is to decide what techniques and activities you want to use in your lesson to help improve your trainees' understanding of the topic.

The success of the techniques you use will depend on your trainees' preferred learning styles. Some people, for instance, prefer to learn the theory of a concept before putting it into practice, while others are more "hands on" and prefer to dive right in.

Bear in mind that people are generally more engaged if the training session involves activities that encourage participation. So, make sure that your session includes a good balance of theory-based and practical exercises.

You can take a look at some common, popular training techniques and what they involve on the following page.



Lectures	These are great for introducing a new topic. They enable you to speak for a time, without interruption, while referring to pre-prepared slides, data or statistics. Try to keep lectures to 30 minutes or less, and allow time for a summary at the beginning and end, as well as a set time for questions. Provide handouts at the start of the lecture and keep your language simple throughout.
Discussions and Debates	These work well as a follow-up to a lecture, because they allow learners to ask questions about the concepts that they have just learned. Consider handing out a list of key questions or topics to prompt a discussion. Or, split the group into two to debate the pros and cons of the topics you have covered.
Demonstrations	A demonstration works best when you need to show the steps in a specific task or process. Learners can try out the task for themselves, or you can demonstrate it in front of them.
Case Studies	Case studies show how what you're teaching can apply to real-life situations. They help learners to understand how the topic is relevant to their jobs. Get the most out of your case studies by asking learners to analyze various aspects of them, and to offer solutions.
Role Play	This activity involves getting people to act out a new skill in a simulated environment. It's most useful if you need to prepare people for difficult or unfamiliar situations (for instance, difficult customers, sales pitches or conflict resolution). By acting out scenarios, participants can explore emotions and feelings, suggest solutions, and build on other people's contributions.

Other popular training techniques include:

- Getting people to participate in quizzes or group games.
- Splitting trainees into smaller groups to discuss topics and issues.
- Holding group brainstorming sessions.
- Setting up simulations or practice drills.



Action:

Decide which training techniques will help you to demonstrate the key points that you want to cover during your training session. Write these down in the Training Techniques column of the lesson plan on [page 20](#).

Organize Training Aids

Instructional aids are a great way to make a lesson more enjoyable, interesting and interactive. They may include visual, auditory or practical aids or equipment.

Common training aids include:

- **Whiteboards/Interactive whiteboards and flip charts.** These are great if you want to take down notes, or discuss diagrams and theory.
- **Data projectors.** If you need to refer to data, diagrams or charts, or present web pages or videos, make sure you have a projector set up in advance.
- **Audio equipment.** You may want to play songs or use other audio material during your training session. If so, you'll need to set up audio equipment and speaker systems.
- **Handouts.** These allow trainees to study the information that you are teaching and refer back to it once the lesson has finished.
- **Equipment for practical exercises.** This might include game boards, art and crafts equipment, notebooks and pens, or any other educational material that will help your trainees to carry out the practical exercises that you set them.

Be selective when you are deciding which training aids to use. Only use something if it adds real value to the training – not just because you think it looks impressive. And avoid overusing one type of training aid. Back-to-back presentation slides can quickly become boring, but a combination of slides, Q&A sessions, and brainstorming, can mix things up and gives trainees a chance to share their thoughts and ideas, too.



Action:

Think about how you're going to test your learners' knowledge at each stage of your session. For instance, will they need to answer quiz questions or add notes to a flip chart? Jot these actions down in the Learner Activity column of your lesson plan on [page 20](#).

Then, write down the training aids you'll need to prepare for each activity and add these to your lesson plan, too.

Finally, estimate how long each stage of your session will take and write this down in the final column of your lesson plan.

Feedback

Remember to factor in some time during your training session to gather feedback from your learners. (You may want to include this in the final stage of your lesson plan.)

Assess how people are responding to your lesson by regularly asking them questions about the content.

You may also want to hand out a feedback questionnaire at the end of the session to test whether people have achieved their learning objectives and enjoyed the session. You could ask questions such as:

- What were your expectations of the training session?
- What is your current level of skill?
- Did you enjoy the training?
- Was the pace satisfactory?
- Did you get what you wanted out of the training?
- How relevant was it to you?
- How will you use what you learned going forward?

Once you've got all of your feedback together, make sure that you learn from it! And apply what you learn in any training sessions you host in the future.

6. Evaluating Your Training Session

Finally, you need to think about how you're going to evaluate your learners' progress after the training session has finished.

If you've used the ABCD Learning Objectives Model that we talked about in Chapter 4, you should already have a clear idea of how you'll do this.

Your evaluation could be as simple as getting learners to fill out a questionnaire, asking them to write a short essay, or getting them to put together a short presentation on what they've learned.

Beyond that, you need to know that they are able to apply what you've taught them. So, be sure to provide your learners with regular opportunities to demonstrate their new skills or knowledge. Schedule "practice runs," or have a follow-up session to review their performance. And give them feedback to help steer them in the right direction.

Action:



Decide how you're going to evaluate your training session and write this down in your lesson plan on [page 20](#).

Then, prepare five evaluation questions that you can ask learners in a written exercise at the end of your training session. Record your five questions, and the corresponding answers, in the tables on the next page.

Evaluation Questions and Answers

	Written Exercise
Question1	
Question 2	
Question 3	
Question 4	
Question 5	

	Answers
Question1	
Question 2	
Question 3	
Question 4	
Question 5	

7. Key Points

You may not be a qualified trainer but, with the right preparation, you can share your skills and experience and deliver effective, enjoyable training sessions.

Start by setting some clear learning objectives that you want your trainees to achieve by the end of the session. This will help you to demonstrate how the training can personally benefit them, and will give your lesson a clear focus.

Then, develop a lesson plan based around your learning objectives. Break your lesson down into different stages, and write down the key points that you want to cover in each stage, as well as the time that each stage should take. Make your lesson interactive and engaging by including relevant training techniques and instructional aids.

Make sure that you get feedback on your training session from participants. This will help you to improve your training style going forward. And set some evaluation exercises that will enable learners to demonstrate the new skills and knowledge that they have learned.

Lesson Plan Template

Session Name:	
Learning Objectives:	

Stage	Key Points	Training Technique	Learner Activity	Training Aids	Time
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
Evaluation					