



Unit 1

Basic Requirements for a Trainer

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Understand the essential background for trainers to have
- ✓ Explore how being genuine enhances training
- ✓ Identify the elements of good questions

Unit 1

Basic Requirements for a Trainer

What Makes a Good Trainer?

Background Information

What is a Trainer?

Sometimes people have an idea of what a term means because of the way it gets used in everyday language. In the same way, there are several terms used to mean someone who is a workplace “**trainer.**” We will use the word trainer throughout the day today in order to provide consistency and to reinforce the concepts that will be covered. A trainer may be called by other titles, some of which reflect a specific type of training or method. Generally speaking, a workplace trainer is a specialist who provides essential work-related skills, techniques, and knowledge that are particular to an organization and the roles that its employees each have.

One of the key challenges for trainers is that sometimes trainees can demonstrate **barriers to learning**, including:

- They think it is a waste of time.
- They attend training, but their minds are focused on what they will have to catch up on when they get back to work.
- This course could be a pre-requisite for something else. They are looking forward to that next course, but not this one.

These issues can present problems for a trainer, but they also present an exciting opportunity. **A trainer who has an understanding of the next four points can motivate their trainees and accelerate learning:**

- Principles of adult learning
- Facilitative training
- The different types of learners
- The different types of trainers

Pre-Assignment Review

What was the topic for this training?

How long was it (less than a day, a day, several days, weeks, or months)?

What specifically made the training experience meaningful for them?

If they were in charge of training at your workplace, what aspects of the training would they like to see again? What would they improve on?

What do they think are the skills that a good trainer needs?

Adult Learning

The basic principles of adult learning are;

We learn to do by doing.

We have five senses.

We learn when we are ready to learn.

We make connections.

We learn one thing at a time.

We learn more rapidly when results are satisfying to us.

We need to understand what we learn.

We develop skill through practice.

We differ from one another in abilities and background.

Personal Best, Professional Best

Good trainers are **comfortable with how they look**. Then you can stop thinking about yourself and start thinking about others and your training program.

You don't need a closet crammed full of clothes. You just need a few outfits that fit nicely and that look good. Details like sleeves that are too long, shoes that need polish, or fingernails that should be cleaned can ruin an otherwise great outfit.

Go through your closet. Look critically at what you wear.

- Do these clothes suit you?
- Do they feel comfortable on you?
- Do they fit?

If you answer yes to all three questions, great! Take care of these clothes. If you answered no, give them away to charity and buy clothes you can forget about once you put them on.

Here are some more **tips for looking professional**:

- Dress the way you want to be perceived. Look like you care about what you are doing.
- Dress comfortably and be proud of who you are.
- Always appear as neat and clean as possible: hair that is clean and neatly trimmed, fingernails that are clean and neatly trimmed, and shoes that are clean and polished.
- Choose clothes carefully and make sure they fit properly. You will not feel good and you won't look good if your clothes are too tight or too loose.
- You don't have to appear too fashion conscious nor spend a lot of money trying to keep up with trends.
- Know the colors and styles that suit you and stick to them.

Identify one thing that you would like to change about your appearance.

What can you do to get started on this change today?

Being Genuine

Being genuine is one of the key aspects of a great trainer. **Genuine is being real**; not pretending to be someone or something else.

Do you know what you like and what is important to you?

Are you interested in helping people develop and learn new things?

What does it mean to be genuine as a trainer?

Assertiveness Skills

When leading a workshop, you want to stay in control so participants aren't walking all over you. However, you also don't want to scare participants away. You want to have an assertive attitude.

Assertiveness is a word we tend to use always understanding what it means. **Assertiveness is not** about getting your own way and it is not a way to manipulate people so you get your own way while you look like you are being considerate. Those are **aggressive traits**. Rather, assertive people express their feelings, needs, and opinions in a forthright manner, while respecting how other people feel and think. Assertive people stop short of the abrasive manner that is the hallmark of the aggressive person.

As we explore the differences among assertive, passive, and aggressive behaviors, you may begin to feel that a little assertiveness is just what you need to cut through many of the interpersonal problems that spring up every day.

Often the best way to understand something is by comparison, so we'll do a little of that here.

People can have difficulty being assertive. They choose **passive** responses to life, perhaps to avoid conflict. They feel helpless, insecure, or resentful, and have a difficult time saying "no." They may feel defensive but unable to defend themselves.

On the other hand, people may also be arrogant, pompous, and presumptuous to compensate for feelings of inadequacy. They may yell, argue, and cajole to get what they want. They meet life in an **aggressive** way.

The **assertive** person is someone who communicates with others on the best of all possible levels, where there are no losers, fools, or enemies—just two people who are mutually trying to solve their problems.

Assertiveness is behavior that allows a person to express honest feelings in a straightforward way and to exercise personal rights without changing or threatening the rights of others. Assertive people feel positive about themselves and others. They are willing to give others a chance to be reasonable before using less positive tactics. They want to openly discuss problems based on facts and needs. Assertion is based on respect for you and respect for the other person.

Aggressive Behavior

Definition

- Needs and wants are taken care of in a forceful and self-serving way

Characteristics

- Self-serving
- Demanding
- Dogmatic
- Competitive
- Pushy
- Uses intimidation, power, and status
- Insensitive
- Strong need to control and dominate others
- Fears rejection
- Impatient
- Temperamental

Major Consequences

- May accomplish personal desire and goals
- Tends to alienate people, create distrust and tension, and undermine the ability to establish lasting and healthy relationships

Manipulative or Passive-Aggressive Behavior

Definition

- Needs and wants are taken care of in an indirect, cunning, deceptive, and crafty way with ulterior motives in mind

Characteristics

- Game player (using pouting, looking hurt, silence, dropping hints, flirting, giving or withholding attention or caring, and other indirect methods to manipulate people)
- Uses double messages (say one thing and mean another)
- Hides real feelings and intentions
- Inward feelings and outward expressions often incongruent
- Rebellious
- Gets defensive and angry when caught manipulating
- Strong need for approval and attention
- Insecure but wears facade
- Distrusts others

Major Consequences

- May be successful in manipulating others in indirect ways
- Undermines credibility and trust
- Causes self to lose touch with real self and real feelings

Passive Behavior

Definition

- Needs and wants are taken care of by suppressing them or maneuvering others to take care of them
- Also use manipulative behaviors to get others to take care of them

Characteristics

- Denies needs, subordinates them to others, or manipulates others to take care of them
- Often plays martyr role
- Creates conditions in which others will take the lead or make decisions
- Follower
- Tries to do what they think others expect of them
- Lacks self-confidence
- Easily intimidated and controlled by others
- Indecisive
- Moody
- Occasionally cashes in on stored-up anger and feelings
- Uncertain about who they are

Major Consequences

- May result in some needs getting met
- Often results in sacrificing needs, getting them met in inappropriate ways, and the loss of identity and ability to take care of self

Assertive Behavior

Definition

- Needs and wants are taken care of by knowing, accepting, and acting on them in constructive, straightforward, and authentic ways.

Characteristics

- Caring
- Genuine
- Sensitive to the needs and feelings of others

- Unselfish
- Expresses needs and feelings in constructive and straightforward ways
- Persistent without being offensive
- Levels and confronts from caring and reasonable position
- Good sense of timing and judgment about when to assert themselves
- Self-confident
- Calm in a crisis

Major Consequences

- Able to know and take care of needs in a constructive way without doing so at the expense of others

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Bennis, Warren. On Becoming A Leader. Perseus Publishing, 2003.*
- ✓ *Bens, Ingrid. Facilitating with Ease. Jossey-Bass, 2005.*
- ✓ *Bernstein, Albert. Am I The Only Sane One Working Here? McGraw-Hill, 2009.*
- ✓ *Biech, Elaine. ASTD's Ultimate Train the Trainer. ASTD Press, 2009.*