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BUSINESS MATTERS 1

**How to design a training workshop**[[1]](#footnote-1)

Lots of charities run training workshops, whether for their beneficiaries, staff, customers or trustees, but it can be daunting to turn your knowledge into something that makes sense to other people. This guide helps you plan, format and review a workshop to suit different learning styles.

**1 Draw a workshop planner**

Draw a table with the following headings:

* Topic
* Detail
* Learning Style/Activity
* Time
* Materials

**2 Decide what you want your participants to learn**

"If you don't know where you're going, you're never going to get there."

So goes the saying, and it's very relevant here. If you don't know what you want people to learn, it will be very hard to design your training workshop.

Think about your participants leaving the room at the end of the workshop. They go back to their office and their boss says, "So what did you learn?" What do you want them to say?

Try to set 1 - 3 learning outcomes for a one-day workshop. Instead of saying, "I want to teach people about potatoes," try to be clear:

By the end of the day, participants will:

* know how to plant potatoes
* know which diseases affect potato crops and how to avoid them
* have the knowledge and tools to complete their own planting and sowing time planner.

This also makes it much easier to market your training workshop, as participants can easily decide if it's right for them.

**3 Be clear who your audience is**

Who do you want to learn from your workshop? What level of knowledge do they already have about the topic? Do you know them, or are they strangers?

People have different learning styles – some find it easier to learn through discussion, group exercises or using pictures, whereas others prefer to be lectured at, or given information to read themselves. Most people fall somewhere in the middle of this spectrum, and it’s normally easier to use a mix of learning styles.

A group of older trustees, for example, might be less used to interactive exercises. That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t use them, but be aware that your audience might be hesitant or even resistant to making bridges out of matchsticks.

Is there any reason why your audience could be hostile towards you or the topic? They might not know you, or they might have been ordered to attend the training by their boss. In this case, think about how you can put them at ease from the start – give them a chance to introduce themselves, and take care to explain why you are there and where your expertise comes from. Ask them if the learning outcomes will meet their needs.

Don’t forget that some people may need extra help with learning, or will be less able to take part in some activities.

**4 Bullet point three things they need to know to reach the learning outcomes**

Under each learning outcome, write a bullet point list of up to three things your participants need to learn about.

Write these in the ‘topics’ column of your planner, one per row.

For example:

**Learning outcome 1 - know how to plant a potato**

* best time to plant/seasons
* seeds and tools required
* soil types and feed.

**5 Decide how you want to teach each section**

Thinking about your audience and what you’re trying to communicate, decide what learning style would be best. Write this in the column marked ‘Learning Style’, beside each bullet point in the ‘topic’ column. For more complex topics, it’s useful to use two or even three styles for each learning point, to make sure that all participants are taking it in.

Learning styles could include:

* **Presentation** – where you present information using slides or a flipchart, and participants listen. Useful for introducing a topic, and for communicating clear facts.
* **Whole group discussion** – ask a question of the whole group, and discuss together. Useful for easy questions that can be answered quickly, and at the start of the session to give participants a chance to speak.
* **Small group discussion/exercises** – explain an exercise to the whole group, then ask them to address it in smaller groups. This is usually when you’ve presented something a bit more complex. Asking them to discuss it and answer a question together will help them digest what you’ve told them, and then verbalise the new information for themselves. In a group format, it reduces the pressure on the individual to come up with an answer themselves. This can also be useful if you want to make 'force' certain participants to interact with each other.
* **Pairs exercise** – ask participants to talk to their neighbour. This works when you’re confident that everyone has a basic understanding of the topic, so won’t be stuck with only one person to help them. It also works when you have little time for an exercise, as there are less people involved in the conversation.
* **Individual exercise/reading** – this works when participants need to think about something unique to themselves or their organisation, or where there is a lot of text they need to read (people have hugely differing reading speeds and it can be intimidating to read as a group).

Once you’ve done an exercise with an individual or a pair, you can ask them to join another pair up, doubling the number of people who share their idea or conclusion.

**Don’t forget to factor in time for feedback**. This can take up a lot of time, and you need to control it. Decide in advance whether you want to take feedback from every individual, from each group, or not at all. Explain what you’re going to do before you start the exercise.

**6 Add the finer details**

Now you know your audience, what you want to teach them, and how you want to teach them, you can flesh out the ‘Detail’ column. It can be helpful to write down what you’re actually going to say, if it’s not going to be in your slide presentation notes.

For example:

**Topic:** best time to plant/seasons

**Learning style:** presentation + group exercise

'Present Potato Council slides on ‘Best times for potatoes’. Ask if anyone has any questions.

Introduce the ‘Potato Grower Calendar template’ (handout). Explain that they have 10 minutes to work as a group, and, using the information I’ve just given them, fill in the blanks in the calendar.

“At the end of 10 minutes, I will ask each group to tell everyone what they’ve put in one section of the calendar, as well as anything they disagreed on.”

Put the exercise instructions and times up on the screen.'

**7 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Work through the ‘time’ column and estimate how long it will take you to complete each section. You might find you’ve got too much. If this happens, you need to decide whether you can use a different learning style (for example, cutting down on feedback), or if you need to lose a topic.

Don’t scrimp on time for group discussion and feedback for the sake of packing everything into one day – rather cut down the amount of topics you’re trying to cover.

Remember to factor in breaks, and time at the end for an evaluation form. Always build in some flexibility in time – if the participants have lots of questions, you should give yourself some leeway to answer them without rushing the rest of the day.

Be very clear about timings at the beginning of the day – some people like to sneak away early and this can be very disruptive if you’re running an interactive session. Ask people to tell you if they need to leave before the end.

You might find it easier to write the actual (clock) times rather than the length of time, e.g.

2.45 – 3pm (15 mins)

This means you know exactly when you need to finish a section.

**8 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

In the ‘materials’ column, work through each row and mark down which materials you’ll need. This might include a flipchart, pens, post it notes, a hand out or slides. You might put some handouts in delegate packs, or you might hand out them out as you explain each exercise.

Once you’ve got your list, you can prepare it in advance so you’ve got everything you need on the day.

**9 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Now you’ve completed your table, read through it again to make sure it flows together. Do you have the right balance of learning styles? Do the topics follow each other coherently? Is everyone going to get a chance to speak?

You might want to add an introductory or ‘warm-up’ exercise where participants introduce themselves to each other. This can do wonders in reducing nervousness or ambivalence, as participants have to interact with each other from the beginning, and they can feel comfortable in talking about something they know (themselves).

**10 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Now you’ve designed the workshop, you need to actually write the content. This might be in slides or in handouts, but you’ll find it’s a whole lot easier if you’ve followed these steps as you’ll have a structure to work to.

This article has been adapted from: How to design a training workshop. In: *NCVO knowhow non-profit.org*. [online]. [cit. 19.09.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://knowhownonprofit.org/how-to/how-to-design-a-training-workshop>

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