



Training Guide and Template

Use the Training Guide and Template to design and deliver effective trainings that build staff skills.

Training Design

Effective trainings share an essential feature: They are well planned. Key elements and implementation details have been carefully thought through.

Objectives

- What should participants know, understand, and be able to do as a result of the training? What do they already know? Tailor objectives to the participants.
- Write objectives as specifically as possible, stating what participants will learn and how you can check whether objectives have been met.
- Detailed objectives help you design the training itself. For example, “Participants will learn about aligning to the school day” is less useful in designing a training than “Participants will be able to state five techniques for successful alignment.”
- Consider process and staff development objectives as well. These may include, for example, building staff cohesion, encouraging leadership, or helping staff see themselves as informal educators.

Content and Time

- Use the amount of training time available to determine the content, rather than trying to cram all the content into a time slot.
- Clearly align training content to the objectives.
- If the content seems too much for the time allotted—there are too many new concepts or techniques, or it’s too big a leap from what participants already know or is too complex—divide it into smaller sections and work with them over two or more sessions. Adjust objectives for each session accordingly.
- All trainings should have a purposeful opening; an intensive content development, demonstration, and practice component; and a closing and wrap-up.
- Allow time for a closing that includes consolidation of key points covered, implications for immediate practice, and implementation steps.

Presentation and Practice Activities

- Generate enthusiasm for and interest in the training topic. If you seem bored, it will be boring!
- Know your topic and the training.
- Be sure participants know the objectives and time frame of the training.
- Organize different ways to present information and engage participants. A good rule of thumb is “Ask first, then show or explain.” On any concept, topic, idea, or technique, ask participants what they think, what they know, or what examples they have from their own experience. Then debrief or extract key elements to illustrate the points. Or you can engage participants in an activity that illustrates the point, then debrief, ask for other examples or experiences, and summarize with the main point you want to make.
- Use varied activities and groupings throughout the training to engage participants, who may have different learning styles, in different ways. For example, have participants work as individuals, pairs, trios, half-groups, and full groups; ask groups to chart and report their discussions; request group activity and demonstration; and initiate discussions, role-playing, fishbowl, mapping concepts, physical activity (e.g., by dividing the room into subgroups) or quiet. For longer trainings, aim to mix up the groups.
- Be sure that every activity and its format help achieve the overall training objectives.





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Logistics, Setting the Stage, Materials and Prep

- Map out your training, with the template provided or another tool. Time it. Be aware that large groups and large-group activities take longer because of the need to move people and materials.
- Set up training materials and space in advance, and make the space as enticing as possible.
- Provide warm-up activities or materials for participants to play with, work on, or fidget with as others arrive. This models afterschool transitions!
- Make training materials attractive and easy-to-use. Have extras.
- Provide take-and-do materials that staff can use right away.
- Allocate time for breaks if the training is more than 90 minutes.

Leading Trainings

Pre-Start

Create a welcoming, inclusive, and open environment; greet people, by name if possible.
Have your notes and presentation materials at hand.
Start on time.

Opening and Introductions

- Effective trainings often begin with an opening activity that relates to the training objectives and gets participants thinking, talking, and sharing their experiences.
- Introduce yourself to the group, and have participants introduce themselves or one another, as needed.
- Introduce the topic; explain its importance.
- Ask about and connect the topic with participant experience, successes, and challenges.
- Tweak training emphases and timing based on participant experience and feedback.

Training Content Middle

- Engage participants in new concepts or practices.
- Explain concepts and/or practices; demonstrate them to the group.
- Build on participants' prior knowledge and experience.
- Provide time for participants to discuss, explore, and practice.
- Have participants apply new concepts and practices concretely and specifically to their own work, program, and youth.
- Elicit discussion of challenges and of potential approaches to challenges.
- Provide time for discussion and questions, whether in pairs, small groups, or full group.

Closing

- Circle back to objectives, and consolidate or recap learning from the training..
- Ask participants to reflect on their learning in some way.
- Have participants address action plans or next steps to implement or act on learning.
- Acknowledge participants' time and effort.
- Solicit input on the value of the training, its effectiveness, and topics for additional trainings.





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Template and Tips

Topic: _____

Objectives: _____

Tip: Objectives should be clear, specific, and results-oriented. Identify clearly and specifically what you want participants to learn, know, or be able to do by the end of the training. Concrete objectives that demonstrate learning lead to better—and easier to design—trainings. Customize objectives in the Design Studio to fit your staff and program.

Tip: Divide trainings into segments, if necessary, and map the time for each part. Trainings of more than 60 to 90 minutes need a break.

Total amount of time: _____

Number of participants: _____

Preparation:

Tip: Prepare facilitator notes as needed, think about processes such as distributing handouts, and get the space organized for the session activities.

Tip: Materials should be attractive, clear, and of as high a quality as possible; include instructions where relevant. It may be worth making some materials reusable. Supply everything needed for all activities in sufficient quantity.

Materials:





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Training Opening

- Engage Participants. _____ minutes
(Icebreaker/warm-up activity related to the topic) _____

- Introduce the Topic. _____ minutes
(Motivate participants, show them why the topic is important, share objectives and agenda.) _____

Tip: The training opening is the hook. Think of it as a performance: What will engage participants' hearts and minds? You want them to care about this, or they'll drift off. Link concepts to participant knowledge.

Tip: The middle is the heart of the training, and the place where the most customization is needed to ensure that new material is aligned with program and staff needs. Guide participants in understanding the concept in practice with children and youth. Facilitate participants' independent thinking about, engagement with, and application of the concept or practice.

- Training Middle _____ minutes
(Explain the topic in detail, demonstrate and discuss the concept, practice and apply the topic.)

Tip: Break big or complex concepts or techniques into smaller parts or steps. Avoid rolling too many new ideas into too short a segment. Debrief, sum up, check for questions, and recap in multi-concept trainings to consolidate and reinforce along the way.

Tip: Summarize learning, ask for questions, look back at objectives. Discuss questions in full group; ask for participant responses to questions.





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Training Wrap-Up and Closing

- Summarize the Topic. _____ minutes
(Reconnect with the objectives, check for understanding, discuss questions.)

- Plan Next Steps. _____ minutes
(Be specific about application to immediate practice.) _____

Tip: Creating an action plan or listing the next two things each participant might do are good ways to wrap up. Directors can ask staff what support they'd like for implementation and how they foresee supporting one another's efforts.

- Closing Comments. _____ minutes
(Acknowledge, motivate, inspire) _____

Tip: Reinforce the importance of the topic ,confirm that time was well spent, and thank participants; reinforce group respect and rapport.

Tip: Keep training plans and reviews for reference, and build a repertoire of trainings that work.





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Quick Check for Facilitator/Trainer

Reflect on how the training went to develop training skills, think about future training topics, and note potential next steps.

Topic: _____

Date: _____

Attendees: _____

Check all that apply.

Response from participants

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Was meaningful and useful. | <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respectful but neutral. | <input type="checkbox"/> Apparently bored or indifferent. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected or resisted ideas. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

The material seemed to be

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting, motivating. | <input type="checkbox"/> Doable. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understandable. | <input type="checkbox"/> Right amount, appropriate level. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irrelevant to the program and staff. | <input type="checkbox"/> Too advanced or complex. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too much for the time available. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Changes for this or other sessions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Add activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Better prep by facilitator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draw more on participants' experience | <input type="checkbox"/> More review, move more slowly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate more collaboration | <input type="checkbox"/> Move faster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Other Topics to Cover: _____

Notes and Next Steps: _____

