

Methods to create an interesting and varied learning experience

Instructor-led methods	<p>Instructor-led training remains one of the most popular training techniques for trainers. There are many types including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blackboard or whiteboard. This may be the most “old-fashioned” method, but it can still be effective, especially if you invite trainees to write on the board or ask for feedback that you write on the board. Flipcharts are great to use as they allow you to move back and forth between themes and what you had drawn/written previously. - PowerPoint presentation. Presentation software is used to create customized group training sessions that are led by an instructor. Lectures can be broken up with video portions that explain sections of the training topic or that present case studies for discussion. - Anecdotes, Metaphors and Storytelling. Stories can be used as examples of right and wrong ways to perform skills with the outcome of each way described. This technique makes communication easier since it is nonthreatening with no one right answer. It is cost effective, especially if trainers have their own stories to tell. Stories can also make sessions more personal if they involve people trainees know. You can also find many training stories online.
Interactive methods	<p>Interactive sessions keep trainees engaged in the training, which makes them more receptive to the new information. They make training more fun and enjoyable and provide immediate feedback to trainers on how well people are learning.</p> <p>In general, interactive sessions are more difficult to control, require preparation and trainer skills. Many of the tasks take longer because activities, such as taking quizzes or breaking into small groups, are time-consuming. Trainers will need to make sure that all necessary information is covered.</p> <p>There are many ways that you can break up training sessions and keep trainees attentive and involved, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plenary discussions – lead a full group discussion, by launching questions around the subject and allowing an open exchange of thoughts and ideas. As a moderator you need to know when to allow more freedom and when to steer the discussion more. - Individual reflection – launching a 2 -3-minute self-reflection exercise, often (but not necessarily) followed by a plenary discussion. - Self-Assessments – In the preparation materials, before or even during the training, it is a great way of building interest and getting involvement to make a short self-assessment on the subject matter (and one’s own maturity in the matter). - Buzz sessions – small group discussions. Break the participants down into small groups and give them case studies or work situations to discuss or solve. This is a good way for knowledgeable veteran employees to pass on their experience to newer employees. - Group work and Case studies. Adults tend to bring a problem-oriented way of thinking to workplace training. Case studies are an excellent way to capitalize on this type of adult learning. By analysing real job-related situations, employees can learn how to handle similar situations. - Active summaries. Create small groups and have them choose a leader. Ask them to summarize the lecture’s major points and have each team leader present the summaries to the class. Read aloud a prewritten summary and compare this with participants’ impressions. - Role-playing. By assuming roles and acting out situations that might occur in the workplace. Role-playing is an excellent training technique for many interpersonal skills, such as customer service, interviewing, and supervising. - Q & A sessions. Informal question-and-answer sessions are most effective with small groups and for updating skills rather than teaching new skills. - Quizzes. For long, complicated training, stop periodically to administer brief quizzes on information presented to that point. Variant: Question cards – During the lecture, ask participants to write questions on the subject matter. - Participant control/speaker. Create a subject menu of what will be covered. Ask participants to review it and pick items they want to know more about. You could also ask participants to prepare subjects for the following session to run a short lecture on the theme. - Guest speaker – Invite an external subject matter expert with an interesting and relevant take on the area. - Try it yourself and demonstrations. Whenever possible, bring tools or equipment that are part of the training topic and demonstrate the steps being taught or the processes being adopted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Real life action (mailing, calling, visits, team tour) o Field activity (Joint preparation, visit, debrief, report)

