

Feature: Boost your Impact

Hugh Alford, an experienced trainer for TACK International, shares his thoughts on ways to improve trainer innovation and success. Click [here](#) to find out how Mark Honey, lead trainer at HBOS, uses some of these tips.

In order to keep training lively and fresh, it's important for today's trainers to be aware of the latest practices and develop their own approaches to delivering training sessions. A compulsory step should be getting feedback on sessions from a fellow trainer. In our experience at TACK International, our trainers use a mixture of the advice outlined below in order to inspire and engage delegates on our bespoke and open training programmes.

1) Be open, enthusiastic and inspire your delegates.

Becoming a successful trainer should not centre on demonstrating your own skills set. The delegates need to understand that they are capable of achieving the focus and purpose of the course.

2) Preparation is key and vital.

It is essential to prepare materials thoroughly. This is not restricted to the teaching materials, but also includes the teaching environment, set-up of equipment and additional props. Make sure you set up the room in advance and rehearse and practice with your materials. First impressions count, especially in the sales sector.

3) Learn to use delegate names

Using and remembering the names of your delegates will help to engage them in the training programme. Recognition of individuals can also build relationships between others attending the course. A useful tip for trainers is to write the name of each attendee on each handout to aid the learning spirit of each session.

4) Remember the participation challenge

Delegates do not attend training programmes to listen to a self-publicist! Nor do they wish to be lectured. Employees want to learn and advance their ability to succeed in their role using your knowledge and advice. To encourage an environment of participation, use a mixture of verbal, written exercises and role-plays. It is also useful to reorganise the table layout of the room. Use a bistro layout rather than a U shape design to drive delegate interaction.

5) Lead by example by being punctual

Set the pace for time-keeping and smart appearance. Do not be too relaxed otherwise your delegates will follow your lead.

6) Knowledge is power!

Continue to remain informed about the latest business practices and industry research. If you are up to date on the latest thinking, this will be an invaluable addition to your training knowledge and credibility. TACK International recently launched its Buyers' Survey, a detailed review of purchasing behaviour and buying patterns. Using the results of the research with your audience is an example of a great way to break the ice! Make sure you use this power to demonstrate knowledge and show your thinking is contemporary.

7) Delegate presentation and feedback.

It is really important to your self-development to get constructive feedback from delegates. This is also a great way to get the learners to be active and 'get up on their feet'.

8) It is essential to vary session styles.

Death by PowerPoint is a phrase commonly used in business. As trainers, we have a responsibility to vary our style by using video, audio and delegate interaction exercises.

9) Use breaks to energise the training programme.

The average learning span for an adult learner is 20 minutes, so natural breaks are a must to allow delegates to think and process their learning. One way of measuring when a natural break is required is to watch the consumption of bottled water by the delegates. This will reveal when a break including a change in stimulus is required.

10) Finally, memorise the following sentence to help you create a winning formula with your delegates:

Stand up to be seen, speak up to be heard and sit down to be appreciated.