

Top Ten List

1. **Clear Session Goals**

It is crucial that you are clear about what you want your learners to learn during each session. The effect that such clarity has on learner results is 32% greater than the effect of holding high expectations for every learner (and holding high expectations has a sizeable effect). If you cannot quickly and easily state what you want your learners to know and be able to do at the end of a given session, the goal of your session will be unclear. Clear session goals help you (and your learners) to focus every other aspect of your session on what matters most.

2. **Show & Tell**

You should normally start your sessions with show and tell. Put simply, telling involves sharing information or knowledge with your learners while showing involves modelling how to do something. Once you are clear about what you want your learners to know and be able to do by the end of the session, you need to tell them what they need to know and show them how to do the tasks you want them to be able to do. You don't want to spend your entire session having participants listening to you, so focus your show and tell on what matters most. To do this, have another look at your session goal.

3. **Questioning to Check for Understanding**

Research suggests that trainers typically spend a large amount of teaching time asking questions. However, few trainers use questions to check for understanding within a session. However, you should always check for understanding before moving onto the next part. Techniques such as randomised sampling, learner answer-boards and tell-a-friend help you to check for understanding before moving on from the show and tell part of your session while you can use other questioning techniques at different stages of your session.

4. **Summarise New Learning In A Graphical Way**

Graphic outlines include things such as mind maps, flow-charts and Venn diagrams. You can use them to help summarise what they have learned and to understand the interrelationships between the aspects of what you have taught them. Discussing a graphical summary is a fantastic way to finish off your show and tell.

5. **Plenty of Practice**

As saying says, practice makes perfect. Practice helps to retain the knowledge and skills that they have learned while also allowing you another opportunity to check for understanding. Giving time to practice what they learnt during your show and tell, which in turn should reflect your session goal. Research shows that learners do better when their trainer has them practice the same things over a spaced-out period of time.

6. **Provide Your Learners With Feedback**

Giving feedback involves letting your learners know how they have performed on a particular task along with ways that they can improve. Unlike praise, which focuses on the learner rather than the task, feedback provides your learners with a tangible understanding of what they did well, of where they are at, and of how they can improve.

7. Be Flexible About How Long It Takes to Learn

The idea that given enough time, every learner can learn is not as revolutionary as it sounds. It is also the central premise behind mastery learning, a technique that has the same effect on learner results as socio-economic status and other aspects of home life. When you adopt mastery learning, you differentiate in a different way. You keep your learning goals the same, but vary the time you give each learner to succeed. Within the constraints of a crowded curriculum, this may be easier said than done; however, we can all do it to some degree.

8. Get Learners Working Together (in productive ways)

Group work is not new, and you can see it in every room. However, productive group work is rare. When working in groups, learners tend to rely on the person who seems most willing and able to the task at hand. To increase the productivity of your groups, you need to be selective about the tasks you assign to them and the individual role that each group member plays. You should only ask groups to do tasks that all group members can do successfully. You should also ensure each group member personally responsible for one step in the task.

9. Teach Strategies Not Just Content

You can increase how well your learners do in any session by explicitly training them how to use relevant strategies. As with content, you need to tell learners about these strategies, to show them how to use them and to give them guided practice before asking them to use them independently.

10. Nurture Meta-Cognition

Many trainers believe they are encouraging learners to use meta-cognition when they are just asking learners to use strategies – strategies such as making connections when self-verbalising when solving problems. Meta-cognition involves thinking about your options, your choices and your results – and it has an even larger effect on learner's results than training strategies. When using meta-cognition your learners may think about what strategies they could use before choosing one, and they may think about how effective their choice was (after reflecting on their success or lack thereof) before continuing with or changing their chosen strategy.

For further information see:

<http://www.evidencebasedteaching.org.au/evidence-based-teaching-strategies/>