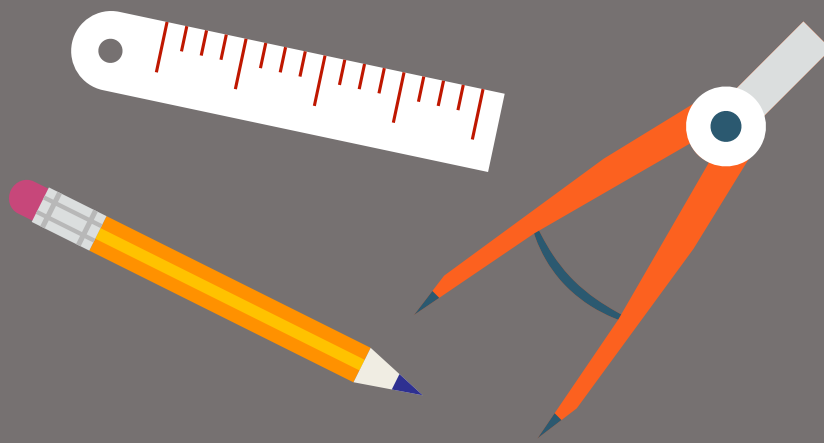


15 Practical Training Tools To Help New Employees Succeed



PRACTICAL TOOLS

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All managers know training new employees is a crucial part of the onboarding process. Whether you're training just one new hire or a bunch at a time, these 15 training techniques will never fail you.

1. Relate The Subject Matter To A Common Theme

Apply some of the material you're teaching to concepts your trainees can relate to.

If you're training people in communication strategies, for example, use the idea of targeted advertising, or the concept of messages that can have double meanings.

It helps to have something relatable to everyday life to illustrate your points, and it helps those you're training retain your message.

2. Repeat Important Names And Concepts

You don't want to sound too repetitive, but remember at certain intervals to reinforce the idea or concept you're training people on.

If you break down your training into chapters, for example, make sure to repeat the chapter concept throughout the training. It'll help trainees connect the new information with a common thread.

3. Use A “What’s In It For Them” Approach

People who are learning something need to know why they’re learning it. If you’re teaching a trainee how to archive material, for example, stress that the process is critical not only for the rest of the department, but for the trainee’s work as well; they will likely have more trouble doing their jobs if they don’t understand the process.

4. Put Some Information In A Q&A Format

For some information you present, try framing a question-and-answer section. Or use the idea of common questions people ask about the specific topic you’re teaching. This technique is especially effective at the beginning of a training session; it reinforces the idea that there aren’t any stupid questions.

5. Create A Relaxed Environment

You want to encourage interaction and also make sure everyone has equal access to any visual aids you’re using. If possible, swap uncomfortable, stiff chairs for ones with more support. Push desks into a circle, or hold some training sessions in a different setting. But don’t get everyone so comfortable that they lose concentration.

6. Get To Know Your Audience

Ask for a show of hands to see if anyone is already familiar with the topic you’re teaching, or for a general age or education range if it’s appropriate to your subject matter. You don’t want to be addressing people who you think are experienced in the topic, only to learn that most of your group are novices – and vice versa. You then would need to tailor your training to fit the audience.

7. Explain, Don't Eliminate, Jargon

Not all jargon is bad; in many instances it's the only way to train people on specific subjects, such as finance and law. Just make sure your information doesn't rely too heavily on it, especially if your audience is less familiar with the terms used. Avoid jargon when and if you can, but if not, take time to explain it in layman's terms.

8. Try Not To Do All Of The Talking

First, you'll go hoarse. Secondly, and more importantly, you'll lose your training audience. Break things up a bit with either short videos or letting one of your trainees read part of a chapter you're going to discuss. Or if possible, involve other managers or co-workers as "guest speakers" if they're seasoned in the information you're teaching. This is especially important if your training lasts for more than a few hours or days.

9. Get Trainees To Do A Little Classwork

In the same vein, before launching into your training spiel first-thing, have your trainees start the session. Tailor a quick brainstorm about that day's topics, or ask them to explain a concept you're focusing on in their own words. The more you engage trainees, the more likely they'll retain the concepts you're teaching.

10. Recap When Needed

Like the old TV serials, which began each episode with a short snippet of the last one, this technique puts the past sessions the training covered in perspective and adds continuity to what is being learned. Recaps are appreciated by trainees, especially if you're covering a lot of training ground in a short period of time.

11. Use Pop Quizzes

Most training manuals have short recap quizzes at the end of each chapter. You might be tempted to gloss over them to save time, but having your trainees do a short quiz on material you just taught is a proven way to reinforce what is learned. It's worth the extra 15 to 20 minutes it might take.

12. Take Breaks

This tip is hard when you're rolling along and making progress, but people who are giving you their undivided attention need to relax a bit. Pick a place to wrap up your chapter or lesson point and break for 10 minutes, allowing trainees to stretch or use the facilities. As an even better tip, assign one of the trainees the task of letting you know when a certain amount of time goes by so you can remember to break.

13. Stick To The Time Limits

If you told your trainees the session would last two hours, watch the clock and don't go over the time. Many trainers fall into a habit of getting "just one more point in" to wrap up a lesson, especially if they have only one or two points left to make on a specific subject. But going over the set time frame for training usually backfires for several reasons. One is that even if you have just a little bit more information to teach, you're likely losing your trainees' attention regardless. It's more difficult to grasp and retain information that's squeezed in as an afterthought. Secondly, dragging out the session over the allotted time could make your trainees annoyed, especially if it cuts into their other responsibilities.

14. Get Trainees To Assess Their Progress

The best method for doing this is an end-of-training survey. But you don't have to wait until the training is over. Midway through is also an optimal way to see how trainees are picking up the information you're teaching – and a good way to assess how you're doing as a trainer.

15. Most Important – Keep Things Lively

You're not going to have positive results as a trainer if you don't make learning fun. This can be hard to do if you're a "serial trainer," having taught the same material repeatedly to new groups. Make sure you develop ways to keep your material from going stale. Try new approaches and activities to shake up things (both for the trainees and you!) Enthusiasm for the information you're sharing will be contagious – and trainees will enthusiastically show up to learn.