Effective training

If individuals and organisations are to thrive and prosper in our rapidly changing world, they need to upskill, grow and become faster learners than ever before.

Education not only develops skills and knowledge, it is also motivational and a building block to career success. Organisations, large or small, need to plan training for employees. Training needs to be for the right people, it needs to be relevant and it needs to occur at the right time.

HOW PEOPLE LEARN
There has been a significant amount of research carried out over the years to ascertain how people learn. In my years of training, I believe William Glasser’s research holds true. People take in:

- 10% of what we read
- 20% of what we hear
- 30% of what we see
- 50% of what we see and hear
- 70% of what is discussed with others
- 80% of what is experienced personally
- 95% of what we teach to someone else

The above research highlights the importance of training in a workshop format.

DIFFERENT STYLES
Everyone thinks and learns differently. Some people retain written information, while others find learning easy if they listen to someone talking. Still others prefer to physically try things out.

A training session should cater for the three different learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic. Provide opportunities for visual learners to use their eyes, auditory learners to use their ears and kinaesthetic learners to use their bodies.

THE WAY TO TRAIN
When designing a training session, dig deep inside yourself to find the lessons and key principles the trainees need to learn. You will learn a lot from the interaction among participants as you share your personal insights and discoveries.

To make full use of this phenomenon, I recommended taking the time to teach your colleagues. To improve your knowledge, the most effective way is to research new concepts or information and then pass this knowledge onto others.

KEY TECHNIQUES
All training sessions should be interactive, fun and entertaining. Most people learn best through playing games, cooperative competition, group discussions, and lessons. Instead of punishing mistakes in training, you should encourage mistakes. Rather than asking participants to take a test on their own, participants should be required to take tests as a team. Teach by playing games instead of lecturing. It is crucial that the trainer is not just a teacher, but someone working in their field – the trainer must practice what they preach.

THE TRAINING ENVIRONMENT
Different people need different training environments. Any training environment, be it face to face or online should feel welcoming for participants and it is important that trainees feel supported and comfortable in their training space. When running face to face training, consider factors such as lighting, music, temperature and the time the training will take place.

THE THREE STEPS
Experience has taught me three key steps to effective learning.

Step one: Distribute core knowledge.
Learning should begin by dispersing core knowledge to participants by way of a training medium.

Step two: Practical exercises. Many people learn best by doing, so trainees must be provided with a number of practical exercises to complete. These should be graded or assessed by the trainer, highlighting where the trainee is doing well and areas for improvement.

Step three: Real life. The point of training is to apply this newfound knowledge in the real world. Accordingly, opportunities need to be given to put the principles and concepts learnt into practice.

Daniel Hunt CA is a tax trainer and advisor. daniel.hunt@dhatax.co.nz

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