Train the Trainer

Instructor Lesson Plan

Time Required: 1.75 Hours

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| Lesson Description | |
| The information below provides the instructor with an overview of the lesson and the materials that are required to effectively present this instruction. | |
| TMS # | 4178547 |
| Prerequisites | Prior to this lesson, the trainees should have experience within VBA. |
| target audience | The target audience for Train the Trainer is any employee who will be conducting training.  Although this lesson is targeted to teach employees who will be providing training to others, it may be taught to other VA personnel as mandatory or refresher type training. |
| Time Required | 1.75 hours (1 hour classroom lecture and guided discussion; 30 minutes practical exercise; 15 minutes lesson review, assessment, wrap-up) |
| Materials/ TRAINING AIDS | Lesson materials:   * Train the Trainer PowerPoint Presentation * Train the Trainer Trainee Handouts * Train the Trainer Answer Key |
| Training Area/Tools | The following are required to ensure the trainees are able to meet the lesson objectives:   * Classroom or private area suitable for participatory discussions * Seating, writing materials, and writing surfaces for trainee note taking and participation * Handouts, which include a practical exercise * Large writing surface (easel pad, chalkboard, dry erase board, overhead projector, etc.) with appropriate writing materials * Computer with PowerPoint software to present the lesson material   Trainees require access to the following tools:   * VA TMS to complete the assessment |
| Pre-Planning | * Become familiar with all training materials by reading the Instructor Lesson Plan while simultaneously reviewing the corresponding PowerPoint slides. This will provide you the opportunity to see the connection between the Lesson Plan and the slides, which will allow for a more structured presentation during the training session. * Become familiar with the content of the trainee handouts and their association to the Lesson Plan. * Practice is the best guarantee of providing a quality presentation. At a minimum, do a complete walkthrough of the presentation to practice coordination between this Lesson Plan, the trainee handouts, and the PowerPoint slides and ensure your timing is on track with the length of the lesson. * Ensure that there are copies of all handouts before the training session. * When required, reserve the training room. * Arrange for equipment such as flip charts, an overhead projector, and any other equipment (as needed). * Talk to people in your office who are most familiar with this topic to collect experiences that you can include as examples in the lesson. * This lesson plan belongs to you. Feel free to highlight headings, key phrases, or other information to help the instruction flow smoothly. Feel free to add any notes or information that you need in the margins. |
| Training Day | * Arrive as early as possible to ensure access to the facility and computers. * Become familiar with the location of restrooms and other facilities that the trainees will require. * Test the computer and projector to ensure they are working properly. * Before class begins, open the PowerPoint presentation to the first slide. This will help to ensure the presentation is functioning properly. * Make sure that a whiteboard or flip chart and the associated markers are available. * The instructor completes a roll call attendance sheet or provides a sign-in sheet to the students. The attendance records are forwarded to the Regional Office Training Managers. |

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| Introduction to Train the Trainer | | |
| INSTRUCTOR INTRODUCTION | | Complete the following:   * Introduce yourself * Orient learners to the facilities * Ensure that all learners have the required handouts |
| Purpose of Lesson | | This lesson is intended to provide an understanding of the different teaching methods used by effective instructors. Your success, as an effective instructor, is determined to a large degree by the ability to organize the material and to select and utilize a teaching method appropriate to a particular method. The following will be discussed in this lesson:   * Establish best practices with the organization of lesson materials * Preparing to teach the lesson * Utilizing the Demonstration-performance method |
| Lesson Objectives  Slide 2  Handout 2 | * Understand and interpret the established best practices in regards to **organizing the lesson materials**, and be able to apply the principals to future training sessions. * Demonstrate one of the principles of **delivering the lesson** and discuss effective ideas of providing direction and the use of effective questions. * Recognize and define the (3) three fundamental **demonstration skills** that an instructor should utilize in a classroom setting. * Understanding the importance of the conclusion and the evaluation phase of the lesson. | |
| Explain the following: | Each learning objective is covered in the associated topic. At the conclusion of the lesson, the learning objectives will be reviewed. | |
| Motivation | In order to make the best use of training time and increase trainee retention, this will enable trainers to select and utilize solid principles of training and adult learning. | |
| References  Slide 3  Handout 2 | Explain where these references are located.   * Bonwell, C. C.; Eison, J. A. (1991). Active Learning: Creating Excitement In the Classroom. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, No. 1. Washington, DC: George Washington University, School of Education and Human Development. * Christensen, C. R. (1991). "The Discussion Instructor In Action: Questioning, Listening, and Response." In C. R. Christensen, D. A. Garvin; A. Sweet (Eds.), The Artistry of Discussion Leadership (pp. 153-172). Boston: Harvard Business School Press. | |

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| Topic 1: Lesson Preparation | |
| Introduction | This topic will allow the trainee to organize materials in a manner that is easy to follow. |
| OBJECTIVES/ Teaching Points | | Topic objective: Understand and interpret the established best practices in regards to **organizing the lesson materials**, and be able to apply the principals to future training sessions. |
| Preparing the Teaching Lecture  Slide 4  Handout 2 | | The competent instructor knows that careful preparation is one key to successful performance as a classroom lecturer.  This preparation should start well in advance of the presentation. The following four steps should be followed in the planning phase of preparation:  Establishing the objective and desired outcomes;  Researching the subject;  Organizing the material; and  Planning productive classroom activities.  While developing the lesson, the instructor also should strongly consider the use of examples and personal experiences related to the subject of the lesson.  **What is an Objective?** Statements that describe what the trainee should be able to do after instruction are completed. |
| Organizing Material  Slide 5  Handout 3 | | Regardless of the teaching method used, an instructor must properly organize the material.  The lessons do not stand alone within a course of training. There must be a plan of action to lead instructors and their trainees through the course in a logical manner toward the desired goal. Usually the goal for your trainees is to complete the mandated training hours or in some cases receive a certificate of completion. |
| Course Introduction  Slides 6 - 9  Handout 3 - 4 | | In brief, the introduction is made up of three elements: attention, motivation, and an overview of what is to be covered.  A good visual aid can help the instructor show the trainees the path that they are to travel. The introduction should be free of stories, jokes, or incidents that do not help the trainees focus their attention on the lesson objective. Also, the instructor should avoid a long apologetic introduction, because it only serves to dampen the trainees' interest in the lesson.  A good visual aid can help the instructor show the trainees the path that they are to travel. The introduction should be free of stories, jokes, or incidents that do not help the trainees focus their attention on the lesson objective. Also, the instructor should avoid a long apologetic introduction, because it only serves to dampen the trainees' interest in the lesson.  For example, the instructor may talk about an occurrence where the knowledge in the lesson was applied. Or the instructor may remind the trainees of an upcoming test on the material.  For example, the instructor may talk about an occurrence where the knowledge in the lesson was applied. Or the instructor may remind the trainees of an upcoming test on the material.  For example, the instructor may talk about an occurrence where the knowledge in the lesson was applied. Or the instructor may remind the trainees of an upcoming test on the material.  **Attention**   * Establish common ground between the instructor and trainee. * Capture and hold the attention of the class. * Specify the benefits the trainee can expect from the lesson   The purpose of the attention element is to focus each trainee's attention on the lesson. The instructor may begin by telling a story, making an unexpected or surprising statement, asking a question, or telling a joke. Any of these may be appropriate at one time or another.  **Motivate**   * Establish receptive attitude toward the lesson * Create smooth transition into the lesson   For example, the instructor may talk about an occurrence where the knowledge in the lesson was applied, or the instructor may remind the trainees of an upcoming test on the material.  **Overview of what is to be covered**   * Indicate what is to be covered and relate this information to the overall course   A good visual aid can help the instructor show the trainees the path that they are to travel. The introduction should be free of stories, jokes, or incidents that do not help the trainees focus their attention on the lesson objective. Also, the instructor should avoid a long, apologetic introduction because it only serves to dampen the trainees’ interest in the lesson. |
| Development *Open up the lesson by asking one of the prepared lead off questions.*  Slide 10  Handout 4 | | Development is the main part of the lesson. Here, the instructor develops the subject matter in a manner that helps the trainees achieve the desired learning outcomes.  After asking a question, the instructor should be patient. The question should be determined by the lesson objective and the desired learning outcome. |
| Lecture Method  Slide 11  Handout 4 | | The lecture method is the most widely used form of presentation.  The lecture method is adaptable to many different settings, including either small or large groups. Lectures also may be used to introduce a unit of instruction or a complete training program. Finally, lectures may be combined with other teaching methods to give added meaning and direction.  When using a teaching lecture, the instructor plans and delivers an oral presentation in a manner that allows some participation by the trainees and helps direct them toward the desired learning outcomes. |
| Topic 2: Lesson Delivery | | |
| Introduction | | This topic will allow the trainee to understand delivery methods that can be used in presenting a lesson and principles important to successful information delivery. |
| OBJECTIVES/ Teaching Points | | Objective: Demonstrate one of the principles of **delivering the lesson** and discuss effective ideas of providing direction and the use of effective questions. |
| **Suitable Language**  Slide 12  Handout 4 | | In the teaching lecture, simple rather than complex words should be used whenever possible.  Good newspapers offer examples of the effective use of simple words.  Good newspapers offer examples of the effective use of simple words.  Good newspapers offer examples of the effective use of simple words.  Good newspapers offer examples of the effective use of simple words.  If the subject matter includes technical terms, the instructor should clearly define each one so that no trainee is in doubt about its meaning.  Another way the instructor can add life to the lecture is to vary his or her tone of voice and pace of speaking. In addition, using sentences of different length helps, since consistent use of short sentences results in a choppy style. To ensure clarity and variety, the instructor should normally use sentences of short and medium length. |

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| Types of Delivery  Slide 13  Handout 4 | Lectures may include several different types of delivery. However, depending on the requirements of any particular circumstances, a lecture is usually delivered in one of four ways:   * Reading from a typed or written lesson plan. * Reciting memorized material without the aid of a lesson plan. * Speaking from an outline. * Speaking impromptu without preparation.   The instructor speaks from a mental or written outline, but does not read or memorize the lesson material to be presented. Because the exact words to express an idea are spontaneous, the lecture is more personalized than one that is read or spoken from memory.  Since the instructor talks directly to the trainees, their reactions can be readily observed, and adjustments can be made based on their responses. |
| Clear, Complete Directions/Instructions *Slide 14 Handout 5*  *(Recite important information 3x)* | Instructors need to provide directions and instructions that contain clear, precise terms exactly what trainees are to do, in what order, with what materials, and when appropriate, what trainees are to generate as evidence of their mastery of targeted content and skills.  These directions need to be given to the trainees before they engage in their group learning efforts. |
| Answering Questions  Slide 15  Handout 5 - 7 | The instructor often uses a question to open up an area for discussion.  After responding you may want to check to see if you have really answered the question by saying something like: "Does that answer your question?" or "Was that what you were asking?" etc.  After responding you may want to check to see if you have really answered the question by saying something like: "Does that answer your question?" or "Was that what you were asking?" etc.  Characteristics of an effective question?   * Have a specific purpose * Be clear in meaning * Contain a singe idea * Stimulate thought * Require a definite answer * Relates to previously covered material   **Directly answer the question**. One obvious option an instructor has when a trainee asks a question is to answer it. In general, we do not recommend answering a trainee's question directly if you wish to foster thinking or problem-solving skills. However, when the questions ask for information that other trainees in the class are not likely to have (or questions asking for the instructor's opinion), directly answering the question is appropriate.  Directly answering questions takes less time than attempting to have a trainee or groups come up with answers. If you choose to answer directly, make your answer brief and to the point.  After responding, you may want to check to see if you have really answered the question by saying something like, “Does that answer your question?” or “Was that what you were asking?”  **Postpone answering the question.** Trainees are more likely to learn and remember if the instructor answers their questions when they ask them. Nevertheless, on certain occasions you may decide to put off answering a question, for instance: when you are very short of time, especially if the answer is complex, or when the material will be covered in an upcoming class, or when the answer is of interest to only a few trainees.  When the material is covered later, call it to the trainee's attention: "Here is the answer to the question you asked before, Frank ...." If the answer will not be covered during the course, we recommend that you offer to answer it after class or make an appointment to get together with the trainee sometime. By doing this you very clearly communicate to all of the trainees your willingness to try to answer their questions. Generally, you should answer more questions than you postpone or you are likely to find the trainees asking fewer and fewer questions.  **Repeat the question, paraphrasing it.** This serves two purposes: it insures that the entire class hears the question. More importantly, it lets the questioner check your understanding of his or her question. When you have not completely understood, often the trainee will rephrase or elaborate upon the question. In doing so the trainee is often "thinking out loud" and may come to his or her own conclusions without further help. This process also gives the other trainees time to think about the question and possible answers to it.  **Ask probing questions.** You might respond to the trainee's question by directing her (or his) attention to a particular aspect of the issue she has raised, or drawing her attention to some previously learned course material that is relevant to answering the question or by going beyond what the trainee has said in some way. The intent of probing questions is to draw the trainee's attention to things that may be only implied in her answer, and so help her answer her own question.  **Discourage inappropriate questions.** Usually trainees ask questions because they wish to learn, but sometimes a trainee will ask a question to sidetrack the class, to get attention, or even to embarrass the instructor. Handling such questions presents a dilemma. If you treat them like other questions you may encourage the trainee to ask more of the same, but if you turn that trainee down abruptly you may discourage not only that trainee but the rest of the class from asking any kind of question. In reacting, it is probably best to tactfully indicate what about the question is inappropriate.  **Admit when you do not know an answer**. If you do not know the answer to a trainee's question, we recommend that you say so. Although one of the roles of an SME instructor is that of "expert" and "information source," admitting that you do not know the answer to a question will probably not damage the trainees' confidence in you. In fact, giving the trainees clues about how certain you are of your answers is likely to increase their confidence in you, for example: "The experts agree that....," "as I recall they found....," "I'll have to look that up....," etc. On the other hand, if you try to fake it, there is a good chance the trainees will find you out and your credibility will be seriously damaged. Unless the question is tangential to the objectives of the course, we recommend that you assume responsibility for finding the answer to questions you do not know and report back to the entire class. |
| Asking Questions  Slide 16  Handout 7 - 8 | **Ask open-ended, not just close-ended questions.** A close-ended question structures the response for the trainee and can be answered by one word, often "yes" or "no", or by a very brief phrase. An open-ended question leaves the form of the answer up to the person answering and so elicits much more thinking or information.  **Wait, pauses and silence are not inappropriate class behaviors.** The discomfort many, if not most, instructors feel when a pause leads to an extended silence probably stems from a cultural norm for social conversation where the silence is taken to mean that there is some inadequacy in the communication.  **Wait, give the trainees time to think.** The basic reason for pausing after asking a question is to give the trainees time to think about possible answers. If the question is worthwhile (and more than rhetorical), even at the memory level, it deserves a wait. Questions at higher levels require considerable time-minutes-for trainees to think before they can adequately answer.  If you really want the trainees to answer the question, you must give them enough time. You might want to try one or more of the active learning techniques.  Students are often more than willing to let the instructor answer all of the questions. If you want your students to answer the questions you ask, you must be careful to cultivate that expectation by waiting after you ask a question.  **Do not put down the trainees.** In general, you should avoid anything which would embarrass the trainee who asks the question. Here are a few instructor responses well-calculated to insure that the trainee asking the question will not ask any more questions. We have suggested possible alternatives.  **EXAMPLES**  Poor: You should know that we covered that in....  Better: What about ... that we covered ... weeks ago? How does that fit in?  Poor: You're completely wrong.  Better: How would you reconcile what you're saying with ... (something previously covered)?  Poor: I entirely disagree.  Better: I'm not sure I agree, (or I think I disagree) because ...  Rather than responding with a value judgment to a student's question or comment, ask a probing question. You may help the student arrive at the correct answer, or an acceptable answer; in which case, rather than proving the student "wrong” you have helped him or her to be "right." |
| Topic 3: Lesson Demonstration | |
| OBJECTIVES/ Teaching Points | Topic objectives:   * Recognize and define the (3) three fundamental **demonstration skills** that an instructor should utilize in a classroom setting. * Understand the importance of the conclusion and the evaluation phase of the lesson. |
| Demonstration  “We learn by doing”  Slide 17  Handout 8 | Trainees learn the skills by performing those skills under supervision.  “An individual learns to write by writing, to weld by welding, to fly a plane by performing flight maneuvers.”   * 1. Identify the most important learning outcome   2. Explain and demonstration the steps involved to perform the task   3. Allow the trainees time to practice each step. |
| Trainee Performance with Instruction  *Slide 18 Handout 8* | The trainee performing the skills. To learn the skill the trainee must practice. It is important that the trainees be given an opportunity to perform the skill as soon as possible after a demonstration. |
| Conclusion  Slide 19  Handout 9 | An effective conclusion retraces the important elements of the lesson and relates them to the objective.  This review and wrap-up of ideas reinforces trainee learning and improves the retention of what has been learned. New ideas should not be introduced in the conclusion because at this point they are likely to confuse the trainees.  By organizing the lesson material into a logical format, the instructor has maximized the opportunity for trainees to retain the desired information. |
| Evaluation Phase  Slide 20  Handout 9 | The instructors will assess the trainee’s performance. To assess each trainee’s ability to perform, the instructor should have the trainees work independently and provide comments to how each performed the skills relative to the way it was taught.  From this method the instructor can assess the effectiveness of the instruction.    Note: Positive feedback can motivate them to greater effort because it makes their goal seem attainable. Also, ask your trainees how they feel they are doing. |

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| Practical Exercise | |
| Time Required | .5 hours |
| EXERCISE  *Handout 9* | Utilizing the material in this lesson and group discussion. Have the trainee instructors create a lesson plan and provide in a discussion setting examples of effective demonstrations and clear and complete questions that can be used.  Ask if there are any questions about the information presented in the exercise, and then proceed to the Review. |

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| Lesson Review, Assessment, and Wrap-up | |
| Introduction | The Train the Trainer lesson is complete.  Review each lesson objective and ask the trainees for any questions or comments. |
| Time Required | .25 hours |
| Lesson Objectives | You have completed the Train the Trainer lesson.  The trainee should be able to:   * Understand and interpret the established best practices in regards to organizing the lesson materials, and be able to apply the principals to future training sessions. * Demonstrate one of the principles of delivering the lesson and discuss effective ideas of providing direction and the use of effective questions. * Recognize and define the (3) three fundamental demonstration skills that an instructor should utilize in a classroom setting. * Understanding the importance of the conclusion and the evaluation phase of the lesson. |
| Assessment | Remind the trainees to complete the on-line assessment in TMS to receive credit for completion of the course.  The assessment will allow the participants to demonstrate their understanding of the information presented in this lesson. |