

Training Delivery Options

by: Dr. Nanette Miner

When we think of a workplace training program we often visualize the classroom setting of our childhood. There are various delivery options that allow for better interaction among participants, however.

The next time you are designing training consider a delivery option that complements the topics being taught. You may find 3-4 different styles of delivery help to keep participant interest and interactivity up.

- A **lecture** is typically a presentation or demonstration by one or more speakers. It employs a minimal amount of participant interaction, usually in the form of a question-and-answer session at the end of the presentation. Lectures work best when they are interspersed throughout a workshop (see below) because most people cannot concentrate on a lecture for longer than twenty minutes.
- A **workshop** engages participants in exercises, case studies, or other hands-on activities. The emphasis is on group interaction.
- **Roundtables** are used for group discussions, brainstorming, or problem solving in small groups. This format is beneficial if participants will gain value by interacting with their peers.
- A **cracker barrel presentation** features a number of guest speakers seated at various stations throughout the training

room and has the participants rotate among the stations/experts.

- **Conference calls** are useful for short presentations which require no audiovisual support or participant interaction, and when the training group is geographically dispersed.
- **Web conferences** and **video conferences** are useful when it is important to have the participants interact with one another but it is *not* crucial that they be in the same location.
- A **retreat** is typically a two or three-day event that is held at a "getaway" location such as a golf resort or mountain cabin. Retreats are used when the participants need to be intensely focused on the topic at hand.
- **Self-study** training is an independent activity for the learner which may be in the form of reading or a tutorial accessed via the internet or a CD/DVD.

The ability to drive-home training concepts can be enhanced when the right delivery option is utilized - one which complements the topic being taught and focuses on providing the best learning experience for the participant.

Author Credit:

Dr. Miner is the founder of the non-profit support group The Accidental Trainer (www.TheAccidentalTrainer.com); created to help all trainers who have found themselves "thrust" into the role. This article is based on ideas from her book by the same name, *The Accidental Trainer*, (c) John Wiley & Sons, Inc., (2006).