

TRANSFER FOR HABIT TRAINING

*A guide to creating learning transfer for
learning that requires habit building*

*Use this template as a basis to inform your
training and transfer design*

*March, 2019 Prepared by:
Practical Training Transfer™*

Table of Contents

<i>page</i> 3	<i>page</i> 4	<i>page</i> 5	<i>page</i> 6	<i>page</i> 10
<hr/> <i>Introduction</i> <hr/>	<hr/> <i>How to use this template</i> <hr/>	<hr/> <i>Design Overview</i> <hr/>	<hr/> <i>Program Elements</i> <hr/>	<hr/> <i>Summary</i> <hr/>

Introduction

The habituation of small tasks to create a composite skill set is done through focused practice and repetition.

Unfortunately, when left to their own devices participants find it difficult to set up and maintain practice sessions. This isn't because of a lack of commitment but rather due to either a lack of understanding about how much and how often practice needs to happen, or overconfidence in thinking that they already 'have it' internalised.

So, for this type of learning the emphasis on making a concrete plan to practice is on the shoulders of the learning designer.

The plan will have to be watertight, meaning that there should be a complete schedule, examples of exactly how to practice, and tools for setting goals, recording what has been practiced, and reviewing the practice activity.

Another really important element is peer support and benchmarking. It is important that participants can see how other people are progressing compared to themselves and to be able to see, read, listen to other people's practice activities.

In the end the whole cohort needs to succeed and so sharing as much as possible will help the group move towards that goal.

The other important element is that of manager support. Actually, in this solution the manager doesn't get so involved, but has a crucial early role in helping to decide which of the participant's work is most relevant to the training and can be improved through it.

He or she also needs to acknowledge the needs for spaced practice and allocate appropriate time for it. In other words if the manager is bought into the program it's easier for the participants to be bought in too.

How to use this template

The diagram on the following page illustrates a fictional training program. It is mocked up to demonstrate how learning transfer can facilitate the use of knowledge in the workplace.

Use this diagram as a reference when looking at the more detailed program elements page to see where in time each of the elements sit.

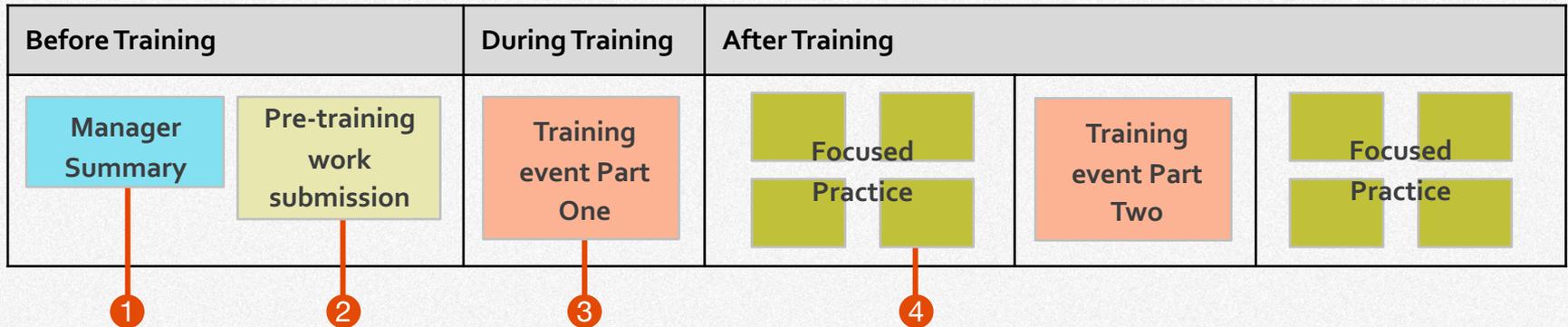
Each of the program elements pages describes what the element is and how it should be used.

There are also images of what a sample of each element could look like. These samples are for illustrative use, and can be your launchpad to creating your own elements.

Take time to understand the program overview and each of the elements in order to adapt what is in this template to suit your own knowledge-heavy program design.

Design Overview

Transfer for Habit Training



This diagram represents a mocked-up habit forming learning program. The elements play out from left to right over time. In the case of this kind of program the amount of training events usually depends on the number and complexity of the composite skills that need to be habituated.

For the purposes of illustration, this program is shown to have two parts. The parts themselves can be quite short if they are used only to demonstrate the skills and get people practicing them in groups. As these skills are composites of communication strategies it's important to practice them in groups and anchor them to specific work tasks. In that way they can be made relevant to the users and the process of habituation can start early.

Remember to use this design overview as a time frame for designing your solutions. The descriptions on the follow pages gives more detail about each element.

Program Elements

Manager summary

A program support document should be sent to all managers of the participants attending the training as the first step in the process or learning journey. The reason why this is necessary is that the manager has a big say in making sure that skills get practiced.

The manager also has to meet with the participants to select appropriate work where the new skills will be applied. This would be impossible to do if the manager didn't have a detailed description of what the course is about and the skills being learned.

The program summary needs to be fairly detailed and can include a number of media or channels. At least the manager should receive a PDF outlining the course objectives, illustrating the whole learning journey, and instructions about what the participants should do including how and when to do the focused practice. In this way the manager – although has only a small role to play – can make sure that everything is set up correctly for the journey to be completed and to get off to a positive start.



Program Elements

Pre-training work submission

To make sure that the participants feel that the course is relevant to their specific work, they should be required to submit a genuine piece of work that illustrates a starting point, and a goal they need to achieve.

In this example the participant has submitted an email he wrote to a customer. Although well-meaning the email reply is not appropriate. The participant has explained why it isn't appropriate and what the desired outcome post-learning should be in future email communication.

If the nature of work isn't physical, i.e. the participant mainly speaks to customers instead of writing to them, then he or she can describe the situations they would like to improve.

It's important that this is done with the full blessing of the manager and that all names are redacted. The samples also help to put people in learning groups of similar interest.

Customer Service Training - Work Sample

Submitted by: [REDACTED]

Sent to: Customer in reply to a complaint about the late delivery of a package sent from our central warehouse

Result: The customer complained about my reply.

Desired output: I need to write my customer service emails in a more logical structure and use a tone that the customers feel comfortable with. I should also use non-confrontational language.

Sample

Subject: re: Why was my package two weeks late?

Body:

Dear [REDACTED]

I'm sorry you didn't get your package on time. We normally don't get this type of email from customers because our deliveries arrive within 48 hours of being shipped.

I looked at your order form and it seems you made a mistake. You wrote the wrong zip code on the application and so the postal service could not deliver it to you address. They sent it back to us and we had to search for your correct zip code and resend it.

There was also some misunderstanding about what items you wanted delivered, which caused a delay in shipping. Your form was faxed to us and we couldn't read your handwriting clearly. Our website says that you should fill in the online form because that is easier for us to read.

Please remember for future orders that the fax number is only for confirmation if we need a signature from you.

Thank you and please continue to enjoy our products.

[REDACTED]

Program Elements

Training events

If you are running a habituation type program most likely you are training communication soft skills, or job management skills.

The variety of skills that could be part of a program like this are too varied to mention here. However there are some constants that all programs will have.

The first is that this type of program isn't knowledge-heavy, but if there is some knowledge that helps the participants use the skills better

then it should be sent ahead of time as pre-learning and all knowledge questions should be answered before training begins.

The second is that participants should practice from the beginning in the groups that they will practice with until the whole journey ends. This is so they can support each other when adapting how to use skills in their particular context.

The third is that having a structured approach always works best. In other

words, a structure such as: demonstrate-practice-review works very well even if that appears at first to be quite repetitive.

Never underestimate the benefit of repetition especially when it is in the safe environment of the learning space.

Finally, always remember to justify the tasks you are practicing - people definitely need to be convinced that something is worthwhile before they'll even try it out.

Program Elements

Focused practice

Focused practice is a critical element of this solution. Participants need to have a realistic plan to practice their skills every day and to keep a record of their progress. That plan needs to be decided in the learning design because participants will most likely not know how to structure their practice sessions.

Give people examples of what needs to be done and how to do it, and a schedule. They'll also need to have a template where they can record weekly goals and note down what they have done each day to move towards achieving the goals, and where they can write a review of what they have done.

You can also use a phone to record voice or actions if there work is generally spoken. Finally should search for and use an online channel through which people can update their goals and achievements and share them with their group. This is important to maintain activity and to compare what the participants are doing each week.

Logical Communication weekly check sheet

Use this document to log your goals for the week and to count how many times you have used the skill. Remember that you should aim to use a specific skill as many times as possible this week. As well as using the skill you noted here, you should continue to use the skill you noted last week and any weeks before that (if this isn't your first practice week).

Name the skill you will use in your actual work this week	
Mark how many times you use the skill each day	Daily total
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Note every new situation you used the skill (a meeting, a telephone call etc.)	
Note any positive outcomes you experienced this week using your new skill	
Note any additional information or insights you'd like to share at the end of the week	



Summary

Clear structure and instructions are key to getting people to maintain the practice of developing habit.

In order to make sure that your participants turn practice into habituated skill sets follow these four guidelines.

One, make sure that the manager is involved early. Even though the manager doesn't have a lot of work to do in solutions like this he or she will be responsible for helping the participant choose appropriate work to improve, and for clearing the way for practice to take place.

Two, participants should have real work they want to improve. This kind of learning is not vocational and should lead to visible and clear changes to the way people do things almost immediately. So, have participants submit real work they want to improve.

Three, make sure that the training events are set up purely for practice and review. There shouldn't be any knowledge input due the learning sessions. Instead follow the pattern of demonstrate-practice-review, and remember to justify all the practice in the sessions.

Four, have a very clear structure for practicing skills. The elements should be:

- Demonstration tools
- Templates for recording goals, activity and review
- A variety of activities
- Use of technology to record activity
- Social or online services to share and compare activities done

If all these elements are set up well the chances that people will habituate skills will increase.