

EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

E-Mail Evaluations

Sending needs assessment surveys by e-mail rather than using traditional pen-and-paper surveys can improve the rate of returns.

It is quicker and more convenient for those answering the survey. And it's more convenient for you to forward the data to upper management, or to print it out without first having to enter it into the computer.

Review for Tests with Humor

This humorous story serves as a good reminder for trainers to create well-designed tests for training materials, and to prepare participants thoroughly in review sessions.

The story: A man was taking a class on birds. He had learned a lot of different things about birds, and now it was the day of the big exam. He went in and sat down to begin the test. He looked at the page and to his surprise it was full of bird legs, and *only* bird legs. The test was to identify birds by their legs!

He sat there, and sat there, staring at the test. He had learned a lot about birds, but had been in no way prepared to identify them by their legs. Disgusted, he got up and marched to the front of the room where the instructor was located. He said to the instructor, "This test is ridiculous and unfair. How are we supposed to identify these birds by their legs? We didn't learn this. This is bogus."

The instructor, startled by the man, sat there dumbfounded for a moment and then became angry. "I don't appreciate this outburst," he said. "Exactly who are you?"

The man then put his foot on the table, pulled up his pant leg and said, "You tell me!" **Incentives Encourages Retention**

Using incentives sent to attendees after training courses helps increase retention and improve the training department's image within the organization.

Every week after the training, mail past attendees review information related to a subject covered in class and a 10-question quiz on the former material. Trainees mail back the quizzes and if they get 100% correct, mail them a small prize. After about eight weeks, mail the quizzes only every two weeks. Attendees who prefer to be dropped off the mailing list may call and request it.

The quizzes keep the "rust out of the old wheels" by keeping trainees in practice and give participants a feeling of a "personal touch" by the trainer. In addition, the quizzes make students more willing to contact the training department for help in the future.

"Stand Up" Evaluation

Use this interactive way of assessing the pre- and post-training knowledge level of participants:

Place the numbers 1-10 (each written boldly on a sheet of colored construction paper) on the floor around the room's perimeter, and ask participants to stand near the number that represents their current knowledge of the topic.

Record those numbers. Repeat the exercise at the course's conclusion to get a reading on how much participants feel

they've learned, and to give participants feedback and reinforcement for their learning efforts.

Evaluation - Fun?

Getting attendees to fill out full-page course evaluations can be difficult. But by using a simple grid with columns for rating coverage of each course topic encourages 100% participation.

Provide colored dot stickers to participants, who may place the dots in any of the five rating areas or on the lines between. The forms serve as participants' "ticket out of class." It's so quick it can be done daily during a multi-day session, or even multiple times during the same day or at break times during a shorter session.

Hand out bull's-eye targets with three "rings" including the bull's-eye, and a set of stickers. arrow-shaped stickers are ideal, but not essential. Each sticker is labeled with a topic from the session, or some other criteria such as "visibility of visual aids." Participants place the stickers on the appropriate part of the target.

Color-coding the stickers makes for quicker identification of recurring strengths and weaknesses. If most of the red stickers, denoting a certain course segment are near the target's outer ring, that is readily apparent upon flipping through the completed forms.

Figure 1:

Figure 2.