

# **REVIEW TECHNIQUES**

## **“Popcorn” Review**

Setting up your review sessions *before* a course begins is a great way to keep energy levels up and avoid the trap of announcing, “Let’s review.” Done well, this technique may not even be recognized by participants as a review tool:

As attendees enter the classroom, pass out (or let trainees choose from) a series of index cards. Some of the cards are blank, but seven others have a single letter that, together, spell the word “popcorn.”

When it’s time to review, ask those participants with the lettered cards to “pop up” in sequence and state one key learning point. Keep the pace of the review going fast - like kernels of corn popping - for as long as the seven trainees can keep it up. Then redistribute the cards to get a fresh set of participants for the next review session.

Note: There are two “p” cards and two “o” cards. The trainer can either place small numbers in the corners of each- 1 and 2 - to indicate the order those people should stand, or you can let the confusion exist, the better to imitate the “popcorn” effect.

## **Balls Put Bounce into Review**

As a quick and simple review technique, use two dozen fluorescent “super balls,” the supercharged variety that can easily bounce to the ceiling.

At the end of class, ask participants to share their biggest “aha” from the training curriculum - the learning point that had the most meaning to them and from which they’ll get the greatest return. Toss each participant a super ball as they recite their

point.

## **More Attention, Please**

Because of previous poor experiences, you can have a number of participants who admit to being intimidated by coming to a training. To review content in a nonthreatening fashion, use this approach for reviewing content:

Create cards that are red on one side and green on the other. (Laminating together two pieces of colored construction paper works well.) Develop overhead transparencies with true/false statements.

Then during reviews, display the statements one at a time and ask participants to hold up the green side of their cards if they think it is true, the red side if it is false. The trainer can then quickly scan the room for visual clues about the level of class comprehension. If there are many wrong answers, the trainer can clear up the confusion on the spot. It helps people who are wrong see that they’re not alone.

## **Music and Movement in Review**

Ask each participant to think of the most powerful ideas drawn from the course, write them on separate sheets of paper, and tape them to the walls throughout the room. Then turn on some music and have trainees play a modified version of musical chairs, called “musical review.” Let the music play while participants walk around the room in a clockwise direction to build up some energy.

When the music is stopped, have participants read the nearest idea sheet to the others. Participants remove those ideas from the wall and repeat the exercise until

all the ideas have been read - and all but one

### **Make a Game of Reviewing Terms**

Almost anything is more fun to learn if you make a game of it. Combine two familiar games - Tic Tac Toe and Bingo - to test the memories of trainees.

Prepare a list of terms and their definitions, culled from the course material. At the end of the session, give each trainee a list of terms numbered 1-10 and a sheet with a Tic Tac Toe grid printed on it. Then have attendees write a number from 1-10 randomly in each square of the grid.

Next, recite or use an overhead to randomly show one definition at a time. Trainees must match the definition to the numbered term on their lists, so the corresponding number can be crossed off the Tic Tac Toe grid. When three numbers in a straight or diagonal line are crossed off, the trainee can call out "Bingo!"

In order to win a prize, the trainee must also correctly recite the definition to each of the winning terms. An incorrect match of definition and term means the game continues. A variation is to use 20 terms and two boards and have trainees fill in all the squares on both grids.

### **"Three-Minute" Exercise**

This "three-minute" exercise is an effective review tool that keeps trainees from suffering from information overload.

Split the group into two teams. Post flip charts, each labeled with the name of a department or function, around the classroom. Each team is then given a stack of Post-it Notes with statements pertaining to the different departments/functions they have learned about.

The goal is for the teams to place as many statements as they can on the

trainee has lost their "sheet" and sat down.

appropriate flip charts within three minutes.

### **Mystery Index Cards**

Write words or concepts you will cover during class on colorful 3x5 index cards. As participants return from lunch, or as they arrive in the morning for half-day sessions, greet them at the door and have each person pick an index card. Hold the cards fanned out, face down.

At the end of class, explain the "mystery" of the cards. Whoever holds the card with the word or concept that completes a phrase or definition you read aloud (or write on an overhead) should hold that card up and read it aloud. When participants give the correct response, throw them a small "goodie," which usually is anything from candy wrapped in colorful cloth and tied with ribbon to colorful Post-it note pads.

### **"Constant Reminder" Paper Wads**

A wad of paper can be an effective motivator to apply learning points back on the job. At the close of a session, have participants tear a 3x5 card in half and briefly write a goal or idea they want to apply back on the job. Have them wad the card up into a small ball with the writing on the inside and put it in a pocket or purse where they keep their change.

Then ask the trainees to keep the wad with them for 2-3 days, transferring it to their new pair of pants or purse each day. Challenge the trainees to open it at the end of that time and see if they can still read it, or see if they even need to read it, since undoubtedly they'll think about their goal every time they touch the pieces of paper in their pockets.

### **“Trial by Fire” Tests Memory**

“Don’t get burned by not knowing your materials!” literally - by using this risky technique for reviewing materials that involve memorization of steps, points, or lists.

Give each participant a wooden match - which varies in length dependent on the complexity of the list - and a matchbook to strike it on. For a five-step list, cut the matches to one inch in length. For a list of 25 points, use full-length fireplace matches.

The class is given three minutes to study their materials at the start of the exercise. Then, on the trainer’s cue, everyone is told to strike their matches and begin reciting the list aloud. The goal is for each person to finish before the flame burns his or her fingers. Upon completing the list (or upon losing one’s nerve as the flame draws near) participants may blow out their matches.

Prizes may be awarded to everyone who completed the list and has more than a certain amount of unburned match remaining. One way of handling that is to have a treat bowl near the door at the next break time. Anyone with a match longer than the one displayed there by the instructor may select a prize.

### **Don’t “Leave” With Questions Unanswered**

Use a “review tree” to ensure you address all pertinent questions before class ends - particularly questions of trainees reluctant to speak up for fear of asking “silly” questions.

Draw a tree with multiple branches on a sheet of flipchart paper. The session’s main topic forms the “trunk” of the tree, and

individual categories of the topic make up the branches. The branches - which remain covered by slips of paper until the category is addressed in class - are drawn without leaves.

During breaks or after a session, ask trainees with questions that haven’t yet been answered to write the question on a large Post-it Note, then stick the note/leaf on the branch subject it best fits. (Ask them to post it even if the same question has already been posted, to help gauge how much more review is needed.) This is also an effective way for shy or reluctant participants to get questions answered.

Questions that don’t fit categories are placed on the “ground” (the bottom of the page) as fallen leaves, and are also addressed.

### **Easter Eggs Anytime**

Plastic, colored Easter eggs are useful to make review more fun. Ask each participant, near the end of the session, to make a list of 4-5 questions and answers related to the course material, using notes or other resources.

Insert slips of paper numbered according to class size (for example 1-15 in a class of 15) inside the eggs, and give one to each student. Have an equal number of small prizes, numbered correspondingly.

Ask all participants to sit in a circle. One person begins the review by tossing an egg to someone else. The person who throws the egg then asks a question. If the recipient answers correctly, he or she keeps the egg that was thrown, tosses the other to another person, and asks a different question. If, however, a participant fails to answer correctly, the egg is tossed back to its

original owner, who throws it to someone else and asks the same question.

When everyone - time permitting - has had a chance to participate, stop the game and have students open their eggs, and give them the numbered prizes that match the numbers they find in the eggs. Students benefit from formulating their own questions. The instructor gets a chance to observe rather than facilitate.

# Baseball Review

