



The CPD Standards Office
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4.17 PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION

Practical demonstrations offer a valuable tool in adult training by bringing concepts and skills to life through real-world applications. This hands-on approach caters to adult learners who prefer visual and kinesthetic learning styles, fostering deeper understanding and retention of knowledge.

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What is a Practical Demonstration in Adult Training?

A practical demonstration involves a trainer showcasing a specific skill or process step-by-step. This can be done live, using physical materials or software, or through pre-recorded video demonstrations. Following the demonstration, learners get a chance to practice the skill themselves, solidifying their understanding.




Advantages of Practical Demonstration in Adult Training:

-  **Visual and Kinesthetic Learning:** Practical demonstrations cater to learners who benefit from seeing and doing rather than just listening.
 -  **Enhanced Understanding:** By seeing the application of a concept in action, learners gain a clearer understanding of its practical use.
 -  **Improved Retention:** Hands-on practice helps learners retain information more effectively compared to passive learning methods.
 -  **Increased Confidence:** Successfully performing a task after a demonstration builds confidence and encourages self-efficacy.
 -  **Identification of Challenges:** While practising, learners can identify areas where they need further clarification or support.
 -  **Engagement:** Learners actively participate by observing and asking questions during the demonstration.
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Disadvantages of Practical Demonstrations in Adult Training:

-  **Time Consuming:** Practical demonstrations can be time-intensive, requiring careful planning and allocation of training time.
-  **Resource Requirements:** Some demonstrations may need specific equipment or materials, which can be a cost consideration.






-  **Limited Scope:** Not all skills or concepts are well-suited for practical demonstrations.
-  **Individual Learning Pace:** The pace of the demonstration might not be ideal for all learners, requiring flexibility and additional support for some.
-  **Space Limitations:** Practical demonstrations might require adequate space for all participants to practice comfortably.



When to Use Practical Demonstrations in Adult Training:

-  **Introducing New Skills:** Practical demonstrations are ideal for introducing new skills or procedures, providing a clear visual roadmap for learners.
-  **Complex Tasks:** For complex processes with multiple steps, demonstrations can break down the steps and showcase them in action.
-  **Software Applications:** Demonstrating the use of software applications allows learners to visualise functionalities and navigation tools.
-  **Problem-solving Techniques:** Trainers can showcase problem-solving techniques through scenarios, demonstrating different approaches.
-  **Hands-on Skills Development:** Practical demonstrations are essential for training that involves hands-on skills like equipment operation or repair.






How to Use Practical Demonstrations Effectively in Adult Training:

-  **Clearly Define Learning Objectives:** Outline what skills or knowledge learners should gain from the demonstration.
-  **Plan the Demonstration:** Break down the process into clear steps, prepare necessary materials, and consider using visual aids.
-  **Explain Clearly as You Demonstrate:** Narrate your actions while performing the demonstration, explaining the rationale behind each step.



-  **Encourage Active Participation:** Invite learners to ask questions throughout the demonstration and clarify any doubts.
-  **Provide Hands-on Practice:** Allocate time for learners to practice the skill themselves, offering support and addressing any challenges.

Effective Tips for Practical Demonstrations:

-  **Vary Demonstration Styles:** Consider using a combination of live demonstrations, pre-recorded videos, or simulations to cater to different learning styles.
-  **Encourage Learner Participation:** Involve learners in the demonstration by asking them to predict certain outcomes or participate in mock scenarios.
-  **Provide Clear Instructions:** Ensure your instructions are concise, easy to understand, and tailored to the learners' level of experience.
-  **Offer Multiple Practice Opportunities:** Allow learners to practice the skill repeatedly until they feel comfortable and confident.
-  **Provide Feedback and Guidance:** Offer constructive feedback and individual support during the practice session.



Example: Practical Demonstration in Software Training

Imagine a software training session on a new customer relationship management (CRM) system...

- The trainer provides a live demonstration, showcasing how to navigate the interface, create customer profiles, and manage leads.
- As the trainer demonstrates each step, they explain the purpose and functionality of each tool.
- After the demonstration, learners have time to log in to the CRM system and practice the skills they just observed.
- The trainer provides individual support and addresses any difficulties learners encounter while practising.

By incorporating practical demonstrations thoughtfully into adult training programs, trainers can create a more engaging and effective learning experience. This engaging approach caters to diverse learning styles, strengthens knowledge retention, and equips learners with the necessary skills to excel in their roles.
