



Trainer’s attitude

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PARTICIPANTS HAND-OUT

0 Goals of the session

By the end of the session, participants are expected:

- to infer the role of a trainer in an organization
- to provide a framework that helps build trainers' attitude
- to engage in a self-development path from a trainer's perspective

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2 Trainer's characteristics

When you ask someone who the best trainer is, answers will be very diverse. Someone will mention charisma, someone will mention interactivity, someone a good sense of humour. There are many elements to what makes a good trainer.

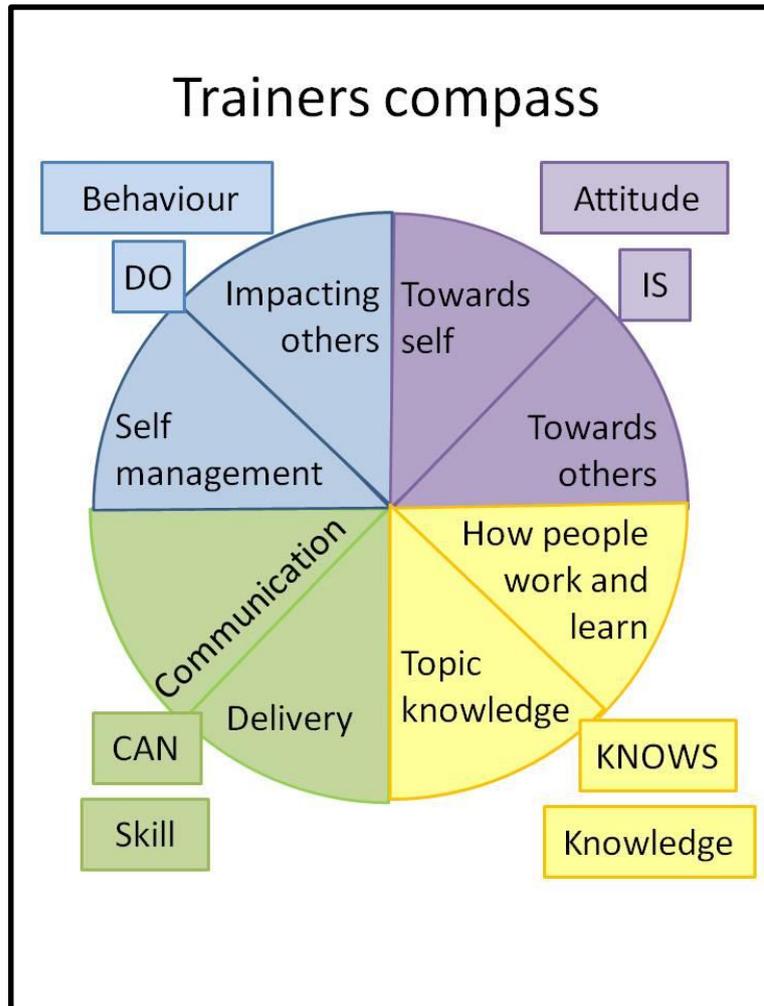
To provide it a structured way of exploring those elements, we decided to use trainer's compass.

3 Trainer's compass

Trainer's compass has been created to provide structure and help facilitate the understanding of trainer's attributes.

Compass has been divided in 4 main areas, each divided in two more areas:

1. **Attitude**
 - a. Towards self
 - b. Towards others (acceptance)
2. **Knowledge**
 - a. How people work and learn
 - b. Topic knowledge
3. **Skill**
 - a. Communication
 - b. Delivery
4. **Behaviour**
 - a. Self management
 - b. Impacting others
 - i. Act (using own knowledge)



What we describe is a super trainer, no one has those attributes and capabilities developed to full extent. What we should strive is to be as complete as possible. It is a **lifelong learning process**, one that never ends and one that you should enjoy for that very reason.



3.1 Attitude (what one IS)

If we were to imagine a trainer as a building, trainer's attitude is the bottom floor of the building, holding the structure for building knowledge, skill, and behaviour. It is the core of the trainer, the first and most important thing the trainees will see, feel and connect to, **the basis for charisma**. When questioning people about the great trainers they worked with, their core is what people remember. Of course, knowledge, skills and behaviour are important and count, but will count much more if the strong core is there. Things that make up the core are sometimes hard to describe, hard to point finger at, but people will feel, recognize and respond to this foundation and trainer's genuine intention.

We can divide attitude section of compass in two parts.

3.1.1 Attitude towards self

Self-confidence – truly believing you can reach the goals you have set for yourself, believing you can get your trainees to listen, hear and change, believing you can handle any situation that may arise during the training.

Self awareness– being aware of one's true motivation (why am I a trainer), of one's strengths and weaknesses, aware of one's blind spots at least to some extent, being aware of the real and objective quality of all the areas of compass (what I know, what I do, how I behave),

Own learning – having a deep dedication towards learning and re-adjusting attitudes towards self, others and knowledge

Questioning and critical thinking – constantly questioning attitudes, knowledge, techniques, ways things are done

Openness to learning – being constantly hungry for knowledge

3.1.2 Attitude towards others

Accepting – being aware and accepting the fact people are different, have different attitudes, different ways of learning, different motivation and different perception of world and of you as a trainer. Accepting you can influence and motivate them to the point, but also being aware they have to do their part too. Accepting that some of them will take a lot from the training and accepting the possibility some of the participants may not want or be able to fully accept the knowledge and experience. Drawing the line between accepting and trying to change things can be hard, it is sometimes wide, but good trainer has to be aware of it. Accepting also implies giving equal chance and treating all participants the same.

Adapting – being capable of adapting to any situation that may arise.



3.2 Knowledge (what one knows)

Knowledge a good trainer needs can be divided to knowledge regarding how people work and learn and knowledge related to topic of training being delivered.

3.2.1 How people work and learn

Communication with individuals and groups, knowledge and mastery of all its aspects is crucial for being a great trainer.

Managing individuals - trainer should know about and use individual personality types (using any of the models measuring various personality dimensions like Insights, DISC, MBTI...), how to communicate messages to different people and what to expect from people with different communication and personality types.

Managing groups - trainer should have knowledge and deep understanding of group dynamics. Knowledge of facilitating and managing group to get the whole group to achieve goals set for them before the session.

Facilitating learning – trainer should know how the process of learning works, know different learning styles of participants and use all that during training design and training delivery.

3.2.2 Topic knowledge

Trainer should have an in-depth **knowledge** and **understanding** of the training's topic. Also, real world experience is necessary to be able to transfer the knowledge and teach a skill on an appropriate level.

3.3 Skills (What one CAN do)

Once a trainer has a knowledge....(s)he also needs some well developed skills of transferring and using that knowledge. When we speak of skills that trainer needs, we can split them in two broad categories:

3.3.1 Communication

In the end, training is all about **transferring the knowledge**, transferring the message. And same as in everyday life, to transfer a message successfully within training, one needs to be a skilful communicator. There are many elements of being a great communicator – from ability to build rapport and understand other's needs and ways of thinking, to flexibility to adapt to other person and to context, through ability to control own expressions (in words, body language etc.), to the fact that our message must be clear to ourselves before we can successfully transfer it to others. Great trainer is a great communicator.



3.3.2 Delivering skills

Presentation skills. Ability to adapt to the audience. Ability to explain things in a flexible and various ways. Visualization. Attention-catching techniques.

3.4 Behaviour (what one DOES)

But all the things that one CAN and KNOWS are not worth much if one doesn't DO something with those skills and knowledge. Our impact is only as far reaching as are our actions and behaviour that we exhibit. When we speak of behaviour, it really shows up in two very related levels:

3.4.1 Self-management

Self-management is all about using **the strengths that one has**. It builds on top of self-awareness, and it is implementing in behaviour what one knows about his/hers own style, strengths, unique experiences etc. – as well as finding a way to compensate for any weaknesses and avoid potential pitfalls. Self-management is about control of own cognitive processes and emotions and about knowing, understanding and controlling own style.

3.4.2 Impacting others

Next to knowing own style, a great trainer must also **understand** well other people's styles (as mentioned in part about knowledge). But, (s)he must also use that knowledge and understanding to **build bridges** towards others and to help them understand and learn. To provide impact means to understand others and how to work and communicate towards them, but also to take responsibility for any outcome that we want to reach and take active role in things.

4 Conclusion

All that has been mentioned is something that is achieved through years of work and hundreds of training hours. What is important is that every trainer should have a clear vision of his/hers future trainer self and invest energy in change.





5 Further readings

If you want to develop your knowledge from this document, here are some references that were used when designing this training session:

5.1 References

- Training for Dummies, Elain Biech
- Trainers' Attitude Hand-out, Mirna Smidt

5.2 Web links

- [The role of a trainer](#)
- [Modern trainers roles and responsibilities](#)

5.3 Books

- The training design manual by Tony Bray
- Training for dummies by Elaine Biech