



“Blueprint for *Success!*”

6 Critical Elements to Designing
a Powerful Training Program

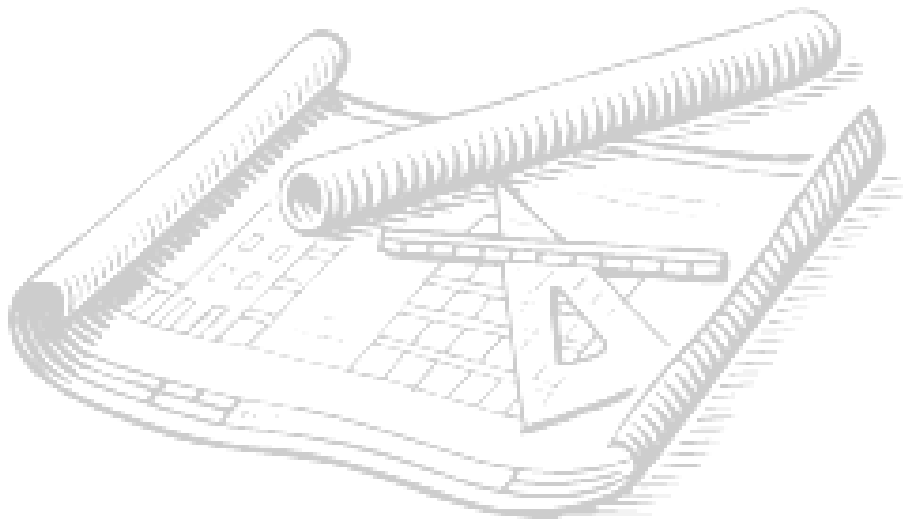
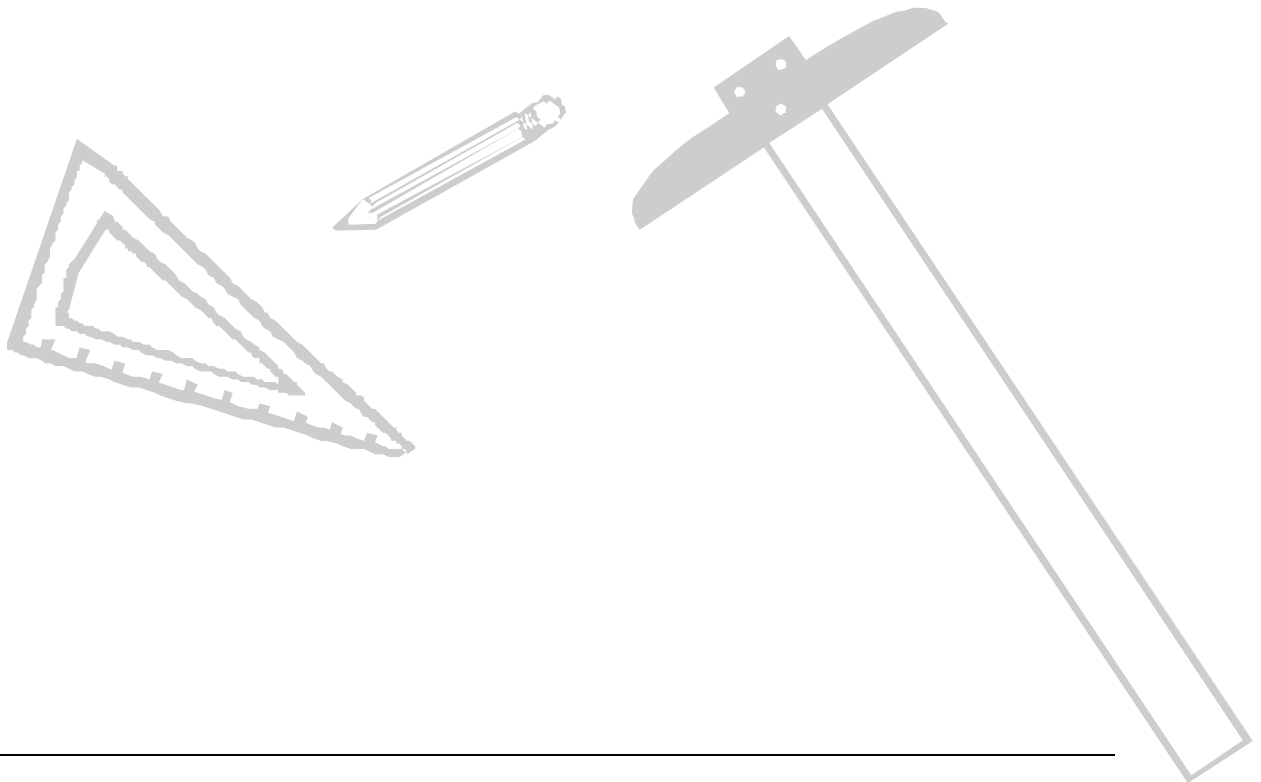




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Introduction - Building in Vain

Imagine for a moment that you are about to build a house. Not just any house, but your dream house.

You have chosen the ideal piece of land upon which to build it, and finally the day has come for you to make it all happen.

Behind you rest all the materials you will need to complete the house – wood, nails, bricks, windows, insulation, drywall, doors, carpet, etc. You have everything you need, even enough labor to get the house built in a matter of weeks instead of months. You have also been given every conceivable tool that may be required for construction – shovels, hammers, saws, even a tractor to dig out the ground for the foundation.

Stated simply, there isn't a single piece of equipment or material that isn't at your immediate disposal. All that's left for you to do is get busy building that house. And as you grab your hammer and a fist full of nails a thought enters your mind. What am I building? What does this house look like? Where do I even begin?

At this point, what do you do? Do you ignore the fact that you have no plan to follow, hoping instead that somewhere along the way it will all just sort of work its way out? And even if you decide to follow this approach, how many missteps do you think you will likely make during the house's construction? And then it dawns on you how much easier this whole process would be if you just had a design, a blueprint, to reference and follow upfront.

In that moment you make an important decision. With a wave of your hand you stop all action, send the laborers home, put down your nails, and unplug your saw. You head off the construction site, hop into your car, and speed away.

You will return at some point in the future to begin constructing your home, but not until you first draw up a blueprint.



The Need for Design

Obviously, before a house can be built, it must first have a blueprint. There must be some sort of initial idea around how the house is supposed to look and function before it's ever brought into existence. The same is true for a workshop. It must be designed first if we want it to be useful and effective. A workshop needs to have its own blueprint – that includes many multi-level details surrounding the learner, the learning process, and of course, content.

Remember, the success of any learning is often determined long before the first participant ever sets foot in the training room, and this fact should alarm you. If true learning doesn't happen then all the effort put into hosting your workshop and getting 'butts in seats' can be considered a total waste of time.

So first and foremost your primary aim will be to design effective and efficient instruction that produces desired results in the people that will be attending your workshop. Learning should never be seen as something that's bland or dreary; after all, people are built to learn. It is only the use of poor learning strategies, or having no design behind learning, that makes the experience of learning so painful.

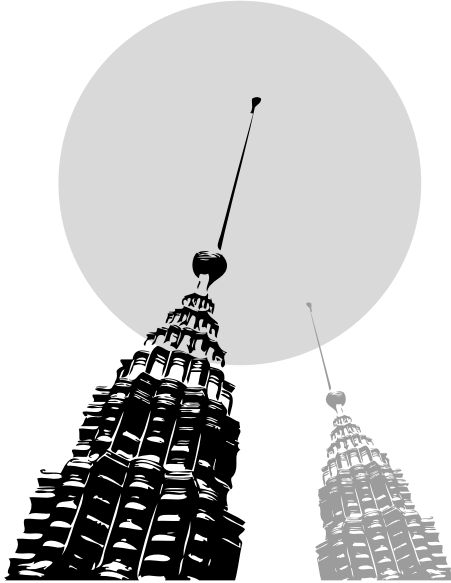
In this short but powerful report, we will cover the 6 critical success factors (CSFs) for drawing up the best and most effective learning blueprint for your workshop. Just follow these steps, and before you know it, you will have a set of detailed plans for a workshop that delivers on its unspoken promise of improving the lives of all its participants.

Enjoy the process!





CSF #1 - Establish a Workshop Goal



Just like a foundation is needed to support a skyscraper, your workshop must have a solid foundation before it can stand on its own and be successful. In other words, you must know what your workshop is being built upon.

Establishing this foundation is the first and most important step in designing a successful workshop. This foundation is often referred to as establishing the workshop's goal, the bedrock beneath your learning program.

A goal may be defined as a general statement identifying a desired accomplishment. This is where you start to develop the blueprint for your workshop. The workshop goal speaks to the general learning aim of the workshop and will ultimately drive the rest of its design.

With a clear idea of your desired end, of the key message you want to make, you can then build a learning program that, like a skyscraper, can stand out on a solid base of important ideals, creativity, and imagination.

// You must know
what your **WORKSHOP**
is being **built** upon //



Why are You Doing Your Workshop?

“You have something of value to share.”

You begin the workshop design process by focusing on its end – why the workshop is being offered and what participants will gain from attending it.

At a fundamental level your reason for doing your workshop does not refer to the fact that you want to make money, or want to gain more exposure, or generate more clients for your business. All that may be true from a marketing perspective, but from a learning perspective, there must be a deeper reason why you are wanting to conduct a workshop for others.

Establishing a workshop goal means that there is a message you are wanting to convey to others. So what message do you passionately believe in so much that you are going to put yourself through a lot of effort and trouble in order to create a platform for its delivery? What message do you feel that people must know in order to better their current lives? It is this message that will become the foundation for your workshop and its design.

This is what is meant by having a goal for your workshop. It is important for you to know what this message is because everything you put in your workshop (content, activities, etc.) is there to support it; is there to provide examples of it; and is there to allow people to work with and understand the truth of it.

Your workshop goal will function as a core reference point, an anchor that keeps the boat from drifting; the underlying theme that reoccurs throughout the events of a story and unifies all the seemingly dissimilar elements within it. This is the lesson you want your participants to take with them after the workshop is over. This is the dominant idea that's most important to convey, or the lesson the author wants the reader to take with them after reading their book.

If you establish this clear, concise message of why you are doing your workshop you will be able to know what behaviors participants must demonstrate during it and take away from it. You will be able to better identify

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what activities need to be a part of your workshop. And most important, when you add the focus that a goal provides to the design of your learning program, you know what content needs to be in your workshop and what content, no matter how important it may seem, should not be included.

Simply put, what content belongs in your workshop is there because it supports this key message you have identified. So immediately having a workshop goal will help you whittle down content that, without this design step, can overwhelm your workshop, not to mention your participants.

The reality is that your big, underlying message, as identified in your workshop goal, becomes the layer of bedrock upon which your workshop will be built.



CSF #2 - Establish Learning/Behavioral Outcomes

Establishing learning or behavioral outcomes for your

workshop helps you identify the desired behaviors that must be encouraged and demonstrated by participants during the workshop.

Before you can encourage participants to behave in ways that will enhance their personal lives, you must first know what those behaviors are, and this is why establishing learning or behavioral outcomes is so important to the design of your workshop.

“Identify the **DESIRED** behaviors
that must be encouraged
and **demonstrated**”

The best learning or behavioral outcomes will be stated in ways that are specific, measurable, and most important, observable. Of course, what are observable are people's behaviors. This is what you can see. If you want to know whether or not people are actually learning something in your workshop you have to be able to see them demonstrate that learning.

So it's very important that your workshop has identified upfront what behaviors participants need to demonstrate. These are the outcomes that at the end of the workshop we want to say, yes, that is exactly what happened. One of the beautiful things about establishing behavioral or learning outcomes is that they are written with an action verb, and that action verb is the thing you want to see participants do. A behavioral or learning outcome, for example,



starts out like this: “By the end of this training, participants will be able to do... what?” What behavior will they be able to show as a result of what they have learned in the workshop? This allows you to check off and make sure that the workshop is truly helping people to learn what they need to learn.

Just as the goal provides you with some real focus on what your workshop is all about, the behavioral or learning outcomes you identify will help you to determine exactly what to measure the success of your workshop against. Identifying behavioral or learning outcomes also indicates for you what content will need to be in the workshop in order to support these desired behaviors.

So as you think about the behavioral or learning outcomes for your workshop think about those behaviors that your participants could realistically demonstrate within the actual constraints of the workshop. What are the desired skills that you want to see people perform? What are the behaviors that, if practiced, would make a difference in your participant’s lives? Here are a few examples of what a completed learning/behavioral outcome might look like. Note the action verbs in bold print. The emphasis is placed on these action verbs. These verbs are at the heart of the behavior you will be able to see participants demonstrate during the workshop.

“Only what’s
DONE by the learner
is **learned**”



Examples:

- By the end of this training, participants will be able to (start with an action verb)...

...**Recognize** the four most common communication styles used in everyday life.

...**Create** a vision around what they want for their lives in the future and **translate** that vision into a manageable, measurable action plan.

...**Express** the difference between passive and aggressive communication, **dramatize** their difference, and **practice** how to be assertive in their communication instead.



CSF #3 - Identify Essential Content

When thinking about effectively designing a workshop, we must recognize that the number one mistake people make when designing a workshop is putting way too much content into it.

Unknowingly, those that are comfortable and familiar with a subject tend to overwhelm those who are less familiar. As a result, we inadvertently disengage participants by burdening them with too much information.

When designing a workshop, we must determine early on what content is most essential and only present that information. If we want participants to perform the desired behaviors we identified in the last step, what information, facts, or concepts might they need to know? This content, and only this content, should be in the workshop.

“The number **ONE
MISTAKE people make
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is putting way **too much**
CONTENT into it”**



What is Meant by ‘Essential?’

**“You have a mountain of information,
but all you need is a mole hill.”**

The term ‘essential’ refers to the content that will create value for participants since it is the only content that they must possess from the workshop and nothing more.

When we think about identifying essential content, we also need to notice that this is not the first step in the design of the workshop. This is actually the third step. Only after completing steps 1 and 2, can you accurately determine the content that will be needed in order for your participants to perform in desirable ways. Essential content is also the content that’s needed to support that big, important key message you want participants to take away from your workshop. Any other content, no matter how interesting or intriguing, is simply not necessary.

Identifying essential content is probably the biggest challenge people face when putting together a workshop, but by not identifying essential content, we risk our workshops becoming unwieldy. This happens because most people who are delivering workshops are subject matter experts. A subject matter expert knows a great deal of content. Unfortunately, as subject matter experts, we tend to look at everything we know and come to the conclusion that everyone else has to know it, too. But the truth of the matter is that they don’t need to know it. Participants are limited, really, in what information they can process and take away from any training.

When thinking about essential content it helps to remember the motto ‘less is more,’ meaning have fewer pieces of content in your workshop and instead allow participants to work with those fewer pieces but really get to know them. This is a much more successful blueprint than giving participants gobs and gobs of information.

If we give people fewer pieces of information and allow them to work with those pieces, there’s more likelihood that they will retain it versus giving

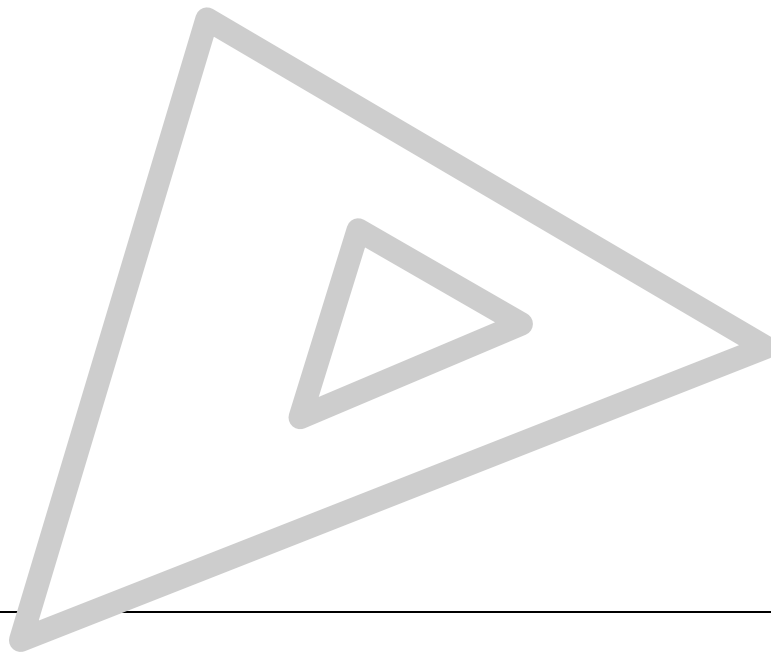


participants tons and tons of information and no opportunity to work with it, thus, remember it.

When determining your essential content, ask yourself these questions:

- Certainly no workshop could ever possibly present the entire breath of knowledge available on a subject. What matters most?
- What content is absolutely necessary for participants to learn?

It can be difficult paring down your own expertise. No expert wants to leave out what they believe to be helpful or useful. Take a leap here and trust that 'less' can be better than 'more' when it comes to learning





CSF #4 - Have Plenty of Main Activities

When we think about participants coming to our workshop, do we consider what experiences they will have during their training? Will they encounter something special, unique, and memorable? Or will they simply bide their time, bored by a lack of stuff to do and hope to “get this training over with” as quickly as possible?

The most effective workshops have lots and lots of activities to keep their participants busy. Let’s face it, the best learning comes when we do the work of learning for ourselves. Workshops that recognize this important truth and build a variety of learner-centered activities into their designs will meet with far more success.

Not a Spectator Sport

The experiences we have in life that are most memorable are often those that engaged us through all our senses. When did it ever become acceptable for a learning program to be any different than life itself? No, learning is not a spectator sport, but a highly participatory one. When designing a workshop, we must be like cruise ships and provide a lively context within which participants can create their own meaningful experiences.



Powerful workshops do not just present information to their passive participants. Instead, they help participants get actively involved, which means they are given a chance to practice and interact with that information.



Up to this point in our workshop design we have established a goal. We know the key message that we want participants to take away. We also know the desired behaviors, the learning outcomes that we need to see demonstrated. In the last step, we talked about identifying only the essential content that's necessary, and we looked at the concept of essential as being only what participants absolutely, positively need to know in order to perform in desired ways and to understand more fully the workshop's key message. We are now ready for the design step where it's time to establish the main activities that will be in the workshop.

We need to create learning activities, hence experiences, which will help participants grasp the essential content identified. As previously stated, the best learning comes from participants doing the work of learning for themselves. The best workshop designs are almost always learner-centered. As you think about the possible activities for your workshop, consider what kinds of activities will help participants do the work or simulate the work in the most real-world way possible?

So think, "What will engage learners thoroughly?" When we talk about engaging learners we need to remember that we are trying to engage a learner's mind *and* their body. That's what it means to engage learners. We want the whole person involved in learning.

We can also think, "What activities will invite participants to assign their own personal meaning to what is being learned?" Or, "What activities will best replicate the participant's real-world?" This is what we want to do when we establish a workshop's main activities.

**"The BEST learning comes
when we do the work
of learning for ourselves"**



70/30 Rule

A great way to ensure that your workshop builds learner-centered activities into it is to remember the “70/30 Rule,” which states that no more than 30% of the workshop’s time should be allocated to presenting new information, and that at a minimum, 70% of the workshop’s time should be allocated to practicing with that new information.

Remember, a swimmer learns best when swimming. Experience is the best teacher. You want to get participants as physically active in learning as possible. You want to incorporate their senses into each activity, and you want to get their whole mind and body involved in learning. Let participants navigate in and around the content and explore it in ways that work for them. And go beyond just working with words and include images and sensations, not to mention fun.



CSF #5 - Have an Introductory Activity



Like readying the ground for construction so that something important can be built, an icebreaker or introductory activity prepares participants for learning, remove the mental resistance they may be harboring, and get them ready to interact with the

workshop's subject matter. Used at the beginning of a workshop, they reduce tension and anxiety, as well as immediately involve participants into the learning program.

“Open up to learning.”

An icebreaker or introductory activity is a stimulating or thought provoking activity that educates and entertains with the intent of getting participants involved in the learning process by easing initial tension, restraint, or awkwardness about being in the workshop.

First and foremost these activities must be engaging. A favorite quote goes like this: "The mind can only absorb what the butt can endure."

An icebreaker or introductory activity can get your participants immediately active in the workshop and their attention focused on the learning that's about to happen. An effective icebreaker or introductory activity will also promote interaction and social contact between participants.

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These activities are a powerful way to engage participants and to help them open up to learning while also focusing on the topic. The best icebreaker or introductory activities relate directly to the workshop topic – an introduction to what?

The ‘what’ is the focus of the workshop.

So think...

- What will help prepare participants for the workshop and at the same time introduce the topic to them?
- What opening action can I include that will ease tension and relieve uncertainty?

As you narrow down and flesh out the best of the ideas generated, remember to keep the activity brief. It cannot take up too much of the workshop’s time and risk making the workshop feel top heavy.

“PREPARE participants
for learning”



CSF #6 - Have an Application Activity

As your workshop concludes and your participants are feeling full and satisfied, you must provide an opportunity for your participants to reflect back on all that's been experienced and learned. This can be easily accomplished by having an application activity at the end of your workshop that will give participants the chance to think back over what's been learned during their time there and to determine how to take their new-found knowledge and apply it back in their lives.

To 'apply' means to put into action. It also means to make relevant. Both meanings indicate how a workshop needs to end; namely, with a call to take what has been learned in the workshop and do something with it that will make a difference in participants' lives.



Success is in the follow through, and participants need to be encouraged to create some sort of structure around what they have learned so that it can be successfully applied to circumstances outside the classroom. Only what is immediately applied will likely stick for participants, and therefore, be effective in making a sustained difference for them.



Applying what's been learned in a workshop to the real world allows participants to reflect on and identify what in the workshop offered them value. In thinking about ways for your participants to apply the new knowledge they have gained, think of the ways that you can extend the learning beyond the workshop and have participants make their real lives another classroom where further experiences and practice will turn their new knowledge into new behaviors that will enhance the lives they are living.

As you determine what ideas might work best, remember to keep the final activity brief. It cannot take up too much of the workshop's time and risk making the workshop feel needlessly long on the back end.

“Only what is
immediately applied
will likely **STICK** for participants”



Congratulations!

You've always had the knowledge and experience worth sharing with others. You know your stuff, and there are others that want to know it. You have spent a great deal of time gathering the experience unique to your discipline. And with a blueprint for your workshop, it's time for you to share what you have to offer with the world - to share it with others through a well-designed workshop.

What you know and what you can share is of value to others. What makes the experience for them the best it can be is the attention to the details you give to your workshop during these design steps.

Just as a great house starts with a set of blueprints, so does your workshop. A blueprint helps you stay focused on building the best possible product. It helps transform dreams into real success.

In the end, we occupy our dreams; a blueprint just helps us get there.





About Ready2Go Training Solutions

Ready2Go Training Solutions provides education, training and resources for personal development professionals who want to create, market and facilitate their own training programs. We also create training programs for busy professionals who don't have time or expertise to do it themselves. We do the work for you.

Who We Are



Kim Clausen is a Professionally Trained Coach who has more than 20 years of marketing and business development experience. She has worked in several industries and various sized companies developing and implementing strategic marketing programs. She has also founded several businesses and has developed a successful coaching practice of her own. Kim is a successful author, public speaker and teacher, and dedicated single mom. **Kim can help you develop your very own multi touch marketing strategy that best suits your business needs.**



Jonathan Tessier is a successful training manager, professional coach, and award-winning instructional designer. His interactive and creative training programs have taught a wide-range of managerial and operational professionals in both the United States and Europe. Jonathan holds a Master's Degree in Education, and a Bachelor's Degree in Film & Communications. He also has two professional coaching certifications, which he currently uses to promote positive employee performance and success. **Jonathan is available to serve you with any of your facilitation and workshop preparation needs.**