

Tools and Strategies for Increasing Laboratory Learner Engagement

Webinar Discussion Responses

The following responses were shared by laboratory professionals participating in the “Tools and Strategies for Increasing Laboratory Learner Engagement” webinar on August 28, 2024, and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Benefits of learner engagement

- Improves retention of laboratory staff
- Increases understanding of the content
- Ensures training is successful
- Supports continuous improvement
- Motivates attendees to learn
- Measures effectiveness of training
- Decreases laboratory errors
- Increases laboratory quality
- Maximizes training time and efforts
- Helps contextualize examples
- Increases learner confidence
- Increases job satisfaction
- Creates good rapport between the trainer and learner
- Creates a sense of feeling seen and heard throughout the training
- Increases the likelihood of trainees feeling welcome in the laboratory
- Instills a commitment to the profession and facility
- Increases likelihood of continuing training and taking on new roles

Skills needed to increase learner engagement

- Assessment of learners
- Delivery of feedback
- Proper questioning skills
- Knowledge of the subject
- Patience
- Job-specific examples
- Knowledge of the audience
- Openness and approachability
- Creativity
- Setting clear expectations
- Emotional intelligence
- Sensitivity
- Humor
- Humbleness and kindness
- Enthusiasm
- Audience connection
- Encouragement
- Ease in presenting
- Accommodation of different learning styles
- Open communication
- Active listening
- Adaptability
- Learner interaction
- Empathy
- Respect

Learner engagement strategies before training

- Materials delivered ahead of training
- Learning roadmap/overview provided
- Homework: Reflections on learner goals
- Review assigned: What learners took away from the previous training
- Learning preparation assigned (e.g., read procedure/policies, take eLearning courses)
- Training checklist provided
- Pretest assigned, with a due date
- Discussion Board activity provided

Learner engagement strategies during training

- Attention-getting introduction
- Discussion of the “why”
- Feedback
- Hands-on activity
- Quizzes
- Group huddles
- Incentives
- Division of content into digestible pieces
- Introduction of real-life scenarios
- Brainstorming activity
- Drill or exercise
- Open-ended question

Learner engagement strategies after training

- Posttest
- Follow-up meetings
- Webinars
- Tip sheets
- Open office hours
- Q&A's
- Provide contact information
- Post-training activity
- Check-ins
- Delivery of training materials (e.g., slide deck, handouts)
- Teach/train the next trainee with support
- Follow-up evaluation
- Competency assessment
- Provide post-training resources, including additional opportunities for learning
- Discussion Board activity

Practices to assess training needs

- Pretest/quiz
- Survey
- Questions round during introductions
- Questions about the learner’s experience and what type of learner they are
- Visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic (VARK) assessments
- Review of employee's job descriptions
- Poll to assess experience with the instrument
- Application of customer feedback

Benefits of setting and communicating clear laboratory training expectations

- Ensures the trainer and learners are on the same page
- Sets measurable goals
- Sets standards
- Allows learners to stay focused
- Avoids ambiguities
- Ensures the training is successful
- Helps trainers stick to the script
- Lets learners know what they will take away from the training
- Avoids confusion
- Ensures the learner feels confident in what they are aiming for

Opportunities for learner-to-learner interactions

- Email
- Group projects
- Reviewable participant list
- Post-learning collaborative tools
- Recurring team huddles
- Discussion groups
- Lunch and recap
- Job shadowing
- Online learning platforms
- Group chat/social media (e.g., GroupMe, Slack)
- Networking events

Importance of training evaluation

- Allows for continuous improvement of training
- Shows the effectiveness of training
- Shows learners that trainers are open to learning and improvement
- Assesses gaps in the training
- Ensures that the learner feels heard
- Helps learners reflect
- Helps trainers know the learners' perceptions
- Assesses the impact of training

Learning management systems used by laboratory trainers

- Canvas
- Blackboard
- Media Lab
- D2L
- Moodle
- MasterControl
- Relias

This resource is intended for informational purposes only and should not replace laboratory-specific procedures. References to non-CDC resources do not constitute or imply endorsement by CDC or U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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