

Why do language training programs fail?

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By Gordon Graham

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If you want to make your training program succeed, you have to look beyond the class and at the company itself. As a trainer you have a shared responsibility, along with the company, of ensuring that what's learned in the classroom is transferred over to the day-to-day activities of the company. It is only when this transfer occurs, that the program can be seen as effective. The following tips are designed to help you make informed decisions when planning a course, and also help make your courses more effective.

We hope you find the tips helpful:

Make adequate pre-course preparation. Never accept "We want the class to start tonight" from the person responsible for arranging the class. On many occasions, this member of staff is in such a rush to get the assigned task "out of the way," that essential steps are ignored. If you want the class to work, take your time and follow the tips below.

Listen to what the company are saying to you. Get a feel for the company culture, try to envision what the class will be like. Remember that you are interviewing the company as much as they are interviewing you. Some classes can be more trouble than they are worth if you suspect that this is the case, use your judgement to decide whether it's worth working with this particular company.

Try and find out as much as you can about what the company does, what the class members actually do at the company, and the English skills they need to do the job effectively.

Find out who made the decision to learn English and for what purpose. On many occasions the decision comes not from the students but management. Sometimes training is viewed as a perk, or as some solution to the company's inability to compete in its market. Situations like these can create motivational problems with the group something the trainer has to deal with.

A trainer cannot change a company's culture, however, he can create a positive classroom environment. We suggest that you try and achieve the following to keep the students motivated in your

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classes:

Strive to make the energy in your classes high with clear transitions from each stage of the lesson.

Try to connect with your students by showing interest in their work, learning experiences, private lives etc.

Show the group that the course will help them advance their careers. Staff should know that if their current employer doesn't let them apply their new skills, there are many other companies that will.

Be clear about what you are actually teaching if you don't know, how will the trainees know?

Carry out a placement test so you know the level of the students (notice how this suggestion lies near the bottom of this list). Insist that the class members have similar English levels. This will make both your life and the students' lives much easier once the class starts.

Carry out a needs analysis so that you have a clear idea of what the company hopes to achieve. Be specific about the objectives of the course: "We want the group to just practice conversation" is too vague an objective, and is a complete waste of time. An objective such as: "We want to be able to describe the features of our products in correct English" is much better because it is specific, relevant to the job and achievable.

Appoint a class representative who can communicate directly with you in an open and frank way. Listen to feedback, and act on it even if it may seem ridiculous to you.

Make sure you negotiate a clear cancellation policy. If you don't establish this at the start, the company will be cancelling on you whenever they feel like it.

We hope you found these useful, and don't forget that the success of a class is dependent on active involvement from you, the trainees and management.

Gordon Graham is a site developer at Orxil.com, an online classified ads site for businesses and trainers in Asia. Gordon has spent 10 years training in the Middle East, Asia and Australia. He has post graduate qualifications in TESOL and is currently completing an MSc in International Marketing at Strathclyde University, Glasgow, United Kingdom.

Linguaphone Language Learning Solutions

By Madhur Bajaj

Language Training is integral to success in the International setting. It is increasingly recognized as a key element in assignment success.

The ability to communicate in the local language of International colleagues and clients facilitates relationship building and fosters an atmosphere of credibility and trust.

Why do language training programs fail?

Knowledge of the local language gives international assignees a more thorough understanding of the host country's culture. Attaining a high level of linguistic proficiency can mean the difference between the success and failure of an International assignment. Increasingly, there is need for highly specialized training such as accent reduction, business writing in the target language, contract negotiation and skills to deliver presentations or conduct interviews.

Having linguistically proficient personnel is often the best way to build and maintain relationships with local nationals. As users confidence in the target language increases, so does their ability to identify opportunities and broaden business capabilities.

It is recommended to have Language Learning Programs which creates success & confidence in all paths of life by solving the problem of international communication skills in any international language with effective language learning solutions.

Madhur Bajaj
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