

Characteristics of Effective Trainers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know their subject matter. 	They have researched their topic and are well informed; learners perceive them as credible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the time to get to know their audience. 	They demonstrate respect for, and listen to, the learners. They call learners by name, if possible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are nonjudgmental 	They validate everyone's experiences and their right to their own perspective.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They respect differences of opinion and life choices. 	They know that key learning can take place when people express different viewpoints and bring their own perspectives into the adult learning classroom.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are culturally sensitive. 	They are aware that their cultural background shapes their views and beliefs, just as the perspectives of learners are shaped by their own culture and life experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are self-aware. 	They recognize their own biases and act in a professional manner when their "hot buttons" are pushed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are inclusive. 	They encourage all learners to share their experiences and contribute to the group-learning process in their unique ways.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are lively, enthusiastic and original. 	They use humor, contrasts, metaphors and suspense. They keep their listeners interested and challenge their thinking.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of vocal qualities 	They vary their pitch, speaking rate, and volume. They avoid speaking in monotones.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use "body language" effectively. 	Their body posture, gestures, and facial expressions are natural and meaningful, reinforcing their subject matter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make their remarks clear and easy to remember. 	They present one idea at a time and show relationships between ideas. They summarize when necessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrate their points. 	They use examples, charts, and visual and audio aids to illustrate subject matter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand group dynamics and are comfortable managing groups. 	They are comfortable with conflict resolution and know how to facilitate an inclusive course or workshop, where everyone's participation is encouraged.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are flexible. 	They read and interpret learners' responses—verbal and nonverbal—and adapt training plans to meet their needs. They are "in charge" without being overly controlling.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are open to new ideas and perspectives. 	They are aware that they do not know all the answers. They recognize that as well as offering their audience new knowledge or perspectives; they can also learn from course participants.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are compassionate. 	They understand that the topics addressed during training may have an emotional impact on learners. They are empathetic and understanding about learners' emotional reactions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are receptive to feedback. 	They encourage co-trainers and learners to give them feedback, both informally and through formal evaluation. When they receive negative feedback about their performance, they critically analyze this feedback instead of becoming defensive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously work to improve their teaching and training. 	Even the most experienced trainers can improve their training skills. Effective trainers seek out opportunities to learn new skills and use negative feedback as an opportunity to improve.

This handout was created with the help of material from JHPIEGO's *Training Works!*, 2003 (<http://www.reproline.jhu.edu/english/6read/6training/Tngworks/>), and K. Lawson's *The Trainer's Handbook*, 1998, Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.