## Characteristics of Effective Trainers

- **Know their subject matter.** They have researched their topic and are well informed; learners perceive them as credible.

- **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.

- **Are nonjudgmental** They validate everyone’s experiences and their right to their own perspective.

- **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.

- **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.

- **Are self-aware.** They recognize their own biases and act in a professional manner when their “hot buttons” are pushed.

- **Are inclusive.** They encourage all learners to share their experiences and contribute to the group-learning process in their unique ways.

- **Are lively, enthusiastic and original.** They use humor, contrasts, metaphors and suspense. They keep their listeners interested and challenge their thinking.

- **Use a variety of vocal qualities** They vary their pitch, speaking rate, and volume. They avoid speaking in monotonies.

- **Use “body language” effectively.** Their body posture, gestures, and facial expressions are natural and meaningful, reinforcing their subject matter.

- **Make their remarks clear and easy to remember.** They present one idea at a time and show relationships between ideas. They summarize when necessary.

- **Illustrate their points.** They use examples, charts, and visual and audio aids to illustrate subject matter.

- **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.

- **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.

- **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.

- **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.

- **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.

- **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.

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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.