

The Design and Delivery of Seminars

Since adult learners are not blank slates and accept, or reject, new information based on their experience, bias, and tendency to rule out irrelevant information, seminar content and delivery must be crafted to respond to this level of receptiveness. Experienced knowledge expert or corporate trainers have the expertise to design an effective seminar addressing these elements, which includes the following attributes: *Based on research conducted by Malcolm Knowles.*

1. The facilitator is responsible for supporting not only the learning of new content, but its application to the work context.
2. Learning objectives must be clearly defined and achievable and take into account learner attitudes and prior experiences. The presenter must be conscious of the specific learning objectives as well as the meta-objectives, e.g., to change approach, attitude, use of method. The seminar design must support the objectives.
3. There is a difference among data, information, and knowledge. Each has an appropriate function. Knowledge is the application of information within a context. Ensure that each learner obtains 'value added' knowledge.
4. Effective seminar design engages the audience at their level of expertise and builds upon their prior knowledge. When introducing new information, link the new to the old.
5. Offer the learners opportunities to learn for themselves. In other words, design a variety of exercises that engage them in analysis and problem solving. In this way, they can see what they know and what they need to know in order to use the information. Designers should use a variety of exercise types, from cognitive to experiential, in order to engage the different types of learners in their audience.
6. An instructor who is teaching a skill or imparting usable information needs to be a learning facilitator, not a lecturer. This means that the instructor should speak no more than 50% of the time.
7. An effective seminar depends more on the design than the delivery. Mail delivery is important, one of the basic rules is-Don't Tell, Ask. People learn better when their brains are engaged. Passive listening results in poor retention.