**Twelve Steps for Preparing to Train**

Have you received a training assignment and a folder full of materials? Follow the steps below to master the material and fully prepare yourself to deliver an excellent training session.

**What’s a module?**

A training module is one stand-alone lesson designed to teach a new concept. Most training events consist of multiple modules strung together for a session lasting anywhere from 3 hours to a full day.

Any time you are asked to train on a module for OFA, you will be provided with the following:

* **Annotated agenda**: This will tell you the following:
  + Amount of time needed for this module
  + Materials needed for this module
  + Goals of the module
  + Agenda for the module (with specific amounts of time dedicated to each section)
  + Trainer’s notes (the annotated agenda is written sort of like a script, with directions for the facilitator in [brackets]. You should not recite straight from these notes, but use them to get to know the information you’ll be imparting to others.)
* **PowerPoint slide deck**: Each slide has a “notes” section, where the relevant section of the annotated agenda for that slide will appear.
* **Any handouts or worksheets needed to effectively facilitate the module:** Not every module requires handouts or worksheets, but for those that do, they will be provided

**I have my assignment and I have the module. Now what?**

It’s time to prepare! Before you dive into your preparations, the first thing you should do is simply confirm you understand your assignment.

Ask the training organizer the following questions to make sure you’re on the right page:

* Do I need to prepare to train on this module as-is, or do I need to make some edits/customizations?
* Where and when is the training event where I will be training on this module?
* Do you need me there for the whole training, or just the time it takes to train on this module?
* Do I need to attend a practice session or dry run?
* Are there other responsibilities you need me to fulfill either before or during the training?

Once you’ve made sure you understand your responsibilities and deliverables, it’s time to dive into the curriculum. Follow the checklist below to make sure you’re ready to train like a pro!

**One Week Out (or more):**

* Step 1: Read the annotated agenda and the PowerPoint, and write down any questions that come up in your mind.
* Step 2: Ask your point of contact for clarification on your questions.
* Step 3: Figure out how you will tell your personal story in a way that relates to the content of the module (we ask all trainers to do this when they start their sessions).

**4 Days Out (or more):**

* Step 4: By yourself, try reading the annotated agenda aloud while clicking through the PowerPoint. If any word or phrase feels unnatural, try using words and phrases of your own to get the point across. Edit your annotated agenda accordingly.
* Step 5: Once you’ve edited your annotated agenda, try reading it aloud one more time while clicking through the PowerPoint. This helps you feel comfortable saying the material, and also starts the process of committing more of it to memory.

**3 Days Out (or more):**

* Step 6: Using a print-out of your personalized annotated agenda as a guide, try facilitating the session for a friend or colleague. Use all the visual aids and any handouts or worksheets, and ask your colleague for feedback.
  + Ask your friend to write down feedback on your session so they don’t forget any important feedback that could help you.
  + Tip: To help your friend organize her/his thoughts, we recommend they split up a sheet of paper into three columns: “Keep doing,” where they can note the things you’re doing well; “Stop Doing,” where they can note the things you may be doing that detract from the session; and “Start Doing,” where they can note some techniques you might use that you aren’t currently using.
* Step 7: Take some time to click through the PowerPoint and try to recall your remarks for each slide by memory. For any slide, if you can’t remember what you’re supposed to say, look at the annotated agenda, and then write down some bullet-pointed notes you can use to remember what you’re supposed to cover on that slide. We recommend writing such bullet points for every PowerPoint slide in the module, either on note cards, or in the notes section of the PowerPoint slides (either above or replacing the text already contained there). These notes should be used as training wheels - you should train from memory, but if you get stuck, you can take a quick peek at them to get back on track.

**2 Days Out (or more):**

* Step 8: Do a dress rehearsal of your session in front of a few participants, with no notes. Ask them to give you feedback as well. Take note of the sections that were most difficult for you to deliver, so that you can focus on them in your final two practice sessions.
* Step 9: By yourself, do a rehearsal of your session with your notes nearby, but only look at them if needed. Spend extra time on the most challenging parts.

**1 Day Out (or more):**

* Step 10: Complete the final dress rehearsal of your session in front of a few participants (this will likely happen as part of a dry run with the other trainers who will be facilitating sessions at your training event.
* Step 11: Practice any remaining challenging sections before you go to bed.
* Step 12: Get a good night’s sleep!

*Congratulations! Because of your hard work, you are now ready to train on this module with confidence! Remember that practice makes perfect, and there is no such thing as preparing too much. Feel free to reach out to your OFA point of contact for assistance with your preparations. Good luck!*