

# THE LEARNING NEEDS ANALYSIS POCKETBOOK

By Paul Donovan and John Townsend

*Drawings by Phil Hailstone*

“Concise yet comprehensive, a handy and valuable resource for training professionals.”  
**Justin Kinnear, Education & Training Manager, IBM Sales & Marketing Centre EMEA**

“Paul and John have once again provided a really practical set of tools in a well-structured and accessible format. The six windows will certainly help readers focus quickly on what matters.”

**David Backhouse, Head of Learning & Development, Thames Valley Police**

“Accurate, precise, thorough and an invaluable tool for anyone involved in identifying training and development needs.”

**Brian Kirwan, Human Resources Director, Irish Blood Transfusion Service**

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## ▶ THE SIX WINDOWS

Look through any window,  
1. Compliance needs,  
2. Human resource planning,  
3. Succession planning,  
4. Critical incidents,  
5. Management information systems,  
6. Performance appraisal

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## ▶ TOOL BOX

Force field analysis, competencies, identifying competency gaps, focus groups, writing learning objectives, the learning transfer bridge (8Ps), the four levels of evaluation, further browsing

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## THE TEN POINT TRAINING PLAN

### DESCRIPTION



The **ten point training plan** is a document that will help you to record the results of your learning needs analysis and how you intend to put into practice the learning objectives you identified.

The plan could take the form of a report, a spreadsheet or even a wall chart.

In total the ten elements of a good training plan are:

- ➔ **1** Vision/mission/strategy
- ➔ **2** Performance issue being addressed
- ➔ **3** Specific learning objectives
- ➔ **4** Participant categories
- ➔ **5** Methods of participant selection
- ➔ **6** Outline of training solution (course(s))
- ➔ **7** Who will deliver the training?
- ➔ **8** Training delivery standards
- ➔ **9** Roles and responsibilities
- ➔ **10** Evaluation criteria

## THE TEN POINT TRAINING PLAN



### WHAT TO INCLUDE

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#### VISION/ MISSION/ STRATEGY

Assuming that your organisation has a published vision/mission/strategy statement you need first to find an extract from it which endorses, justifies and validates the need for the kind of training you are planning to develop, and then include it at the beginning of your ten point plan.

If your organisation does not have a written vision, mission and strategy then it's useful to try to elicit what they are – they do exist, you know! You can find out by asking a few questions and by seeking some documents that should be available within your organisation.

The organisation's **vision** can be identified by interviewing the CEO and by trying to find out how he/she **sees** the firm now and into the future. What is their **picture** of the firm? Ask them to describe it in vivid terms. If a vision has not been drawn up for your organisation, the answers that you get may well be vague and unspecific. Don't give up. Keep asking, 'Why this?', 'Why that?' Ask your CEO to explain to you what purpose, apart from making money or providing such and such services, the organisation fulfils. The more you persist the more clear it will become.

## THE TEN POINT TRAINING PLAN



### WHAT TO INCLUDE

#### 1 → VISION/ MISSION/ STRATEGY

Establishing an organisation's **mission and strategy** is really about asking five questions. These are:

1. What products and/or services does the organisation provide? What market or public sector is it in?
2. How does it provide those services? In what way does it position itself in this market? What beliefs and values drive the way it conducts its activities?
3. Who does it provide these benefits for? Who are the customers and consumers?
4. Who does it use to provide them? Who are its allies and strategic collaborators including its own suppliers?
5. Why does it supply these benefits? What is its overall purpose?

## THE TEN POINT TRAINING PLAN

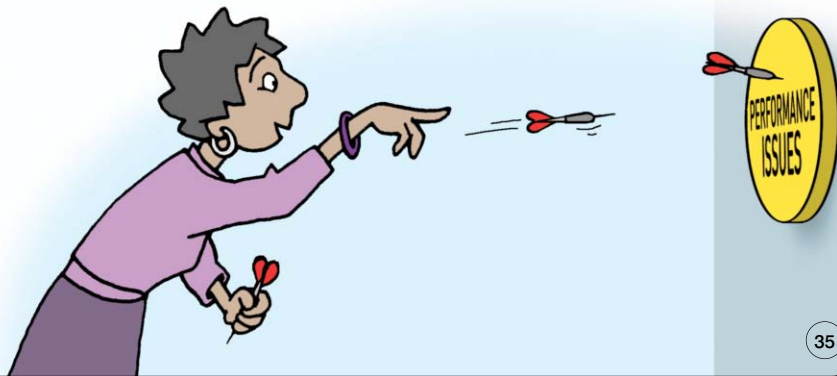


### WHAT TO INCLUDE

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#### PERFORMANCE ISSUE BEING ADDRESSED

One way of making sure that your training solution hits the mark is to remind yourself constantly of the performance issues the training is trying to deal with (see previous chapter). This is, if you will, the 'title' section for each planned course or intervention.



## THE TEN POINT TRAINING PLAN



### WHAT TO INCLUDE

#### 3 SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Specific learning objectives are the key to the success of any training intervention and it's important to keep them in the front of your mind and in the front of the training plan. Always remember that many training initiatives come to naught because no real learning objectives have been agreed with the line managers who have only identified **overall** learning needs.

Questions which will help elicit learning objectives from line managers might include:

- What, specifically, will people be able to do differently when the training is over?
- What competencies will they be able to display?
- What will you accept as evidence that the learning has been successful?

To learn how to write **learning objectives** see pages [77-78](#).

For tips on writing **competencies** see pages [49-53](#).

Other methods for quantifying learning needs include using **focus groups** – see pages [75-76](#) – and **stakeholder analysis** – see pages [68-69](#).

## THE TEN POINT TRAINING PLAN



### WHAT TO INCLUDE

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#### PARTICIPANT CATEGORIES

This section of your training plan covers the types/ groups of employees who will be targeted for this training. It will also detail categories that may be excluded from the training.

You'll obviously get this information from your learning needs analysis notes.





## About the Authors

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John has built a reputation internationally as a leading trainer of trainers. He is founder of the highly-regarded Master Trainer Institute, a total learning facility located just outside Geneva which draws trainers and facilitators from around the world. He set up the Institute after 30 years' experience in international consulting and human resources management positions in the UK, France, the United States and Switzerland – notably as a European Director of Executive development with GTE in Geneva where he had training responsibility for over 800 managers in 15 countries.

During his long career as a trainer of trainers he has not only helped to spread the unique Master Trainer Institute philosophy across the world via his conferences, seminars and bestselling training videos, but also written a number of widely translated management and professional guides.

