



50 Tips
For
High Impact Trainers

By
R. Palan Ph. D

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Introduction



The increasing focus on lifelong learning requires trainers to sharpen their knowledge and skills to help people learn effectively. These 50 tips are designed to help a trainer reflect on key points that can lead to a great session.

Over the years, many people development professionals have asked me to write an easy to read book. This book written in response to those needs is based on a quote collection. Each quote has an explanation and a question for reflection.

Be prepared to reflect on the quotes and answer some questions in your training journey.

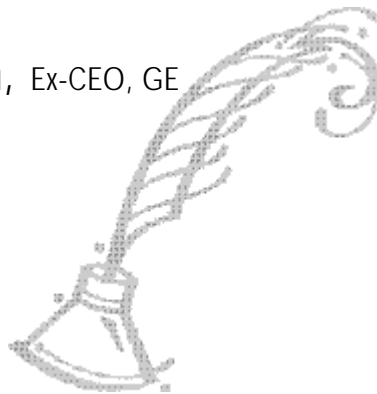
Good Luck in your efforts to help people learn more effectively.

R. Palan Ph.D.

1

"An organisation's ability to learn and translate that learning into action is the ultimate competitive advantage."

- Jack Welch, Ex-CEO, GE





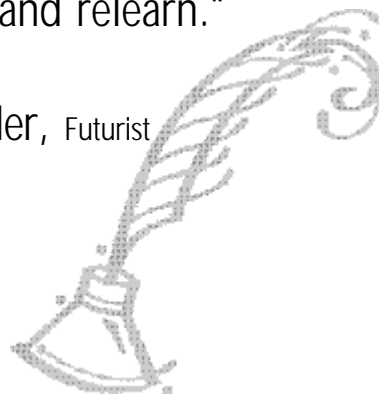
Organisations invest huge amounts of money to help people learn. That alone is insufficient. Learning must be translated into performance.

What do you do to ensure learning leads to performance?

2

"The illiterate of the future will not be the person who cannot read. It will be the person who does not know how to learn, unlearn and relearn."

-Alvin Toffler, Futurist





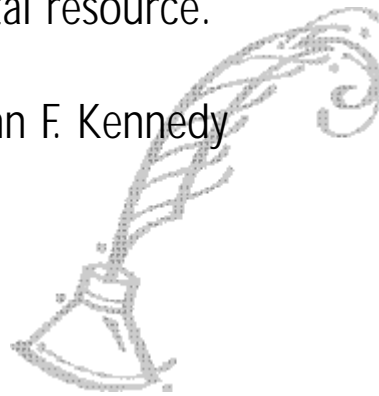
Lifelong learning is essential for everyone in today's continuously changing world.

How do you gain commitment for lifelong learning?

3

"Our progress as a nation
can be no swifter than
our progress in education.
The human mind is
our fundamental resource."

- President John F. Kennedy





There is a famous saying
that minds are
like parachutes:
They only function
when they are open.

What are you doing in your training
to create open minds?

4

"Experience is
a good school,
but the fees are high."

-Heinrich Heine, German Poet and Satirist





Learning through trial
and error is experience
alright, but it can be
a very expensive process.

Is your training systematic
and needs-based?

5

"It is not necessarily a lack of knowledge or skills as much as a lack of job aids that hinders performance."

- Tom Gilbert,
Father of Human Performance Technology





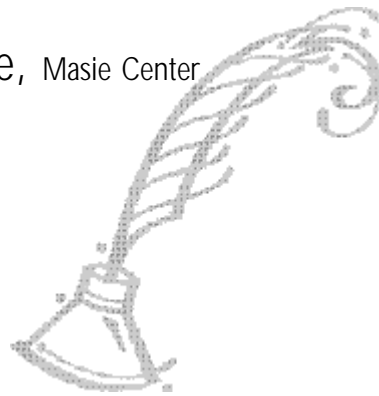
Training is not always the answer
to a performance problem.

Have you rushed into training
without adequate analysis
of the performance problem?

6

"We need to bring
learning to people instead
of people to learning."

- Elliott Masie, Masie Center





Technology plays a big part
in our lives today.

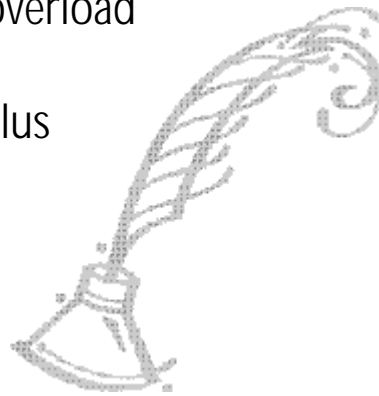
E-learning, teleseminars and
Webseminars ensure the trainer
is really ready
whenever people are ready.

Have you experienced another form of
learning other than on-site training?

7

Learners forget because of three reasons:

- Disuse of information
- Information overload
- Lack of stimulus





Retention is better when there is moderate content and the learners are able to:

- Use the information
- Apply the learning

What are your retention strategies?

8

"It's what we think
we know that
keeps us
from learning."

- Claude Bernard, French Physiologist





People sometimes are 'full';
it is our responsibility to lead
them on the journey of
self discovery.

What is your strategy
'to free up space' in people?

9

"Thought is action in rehearsal."

- US Scouting Service





"Reflect and then
respond," is often good advice
when communicating with others.

Do you reflect enough
before you act?

10

"Do you ACT
or REACT?"

- US Scouting Service





Proactive actions come
from clear thinking.
Reactions come from incoherence.

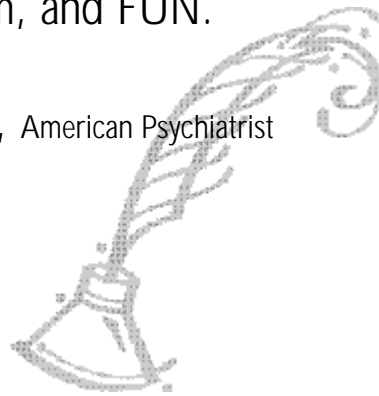
Are you proactive or reactive?

11

"We are all driven
by five genetic needs

- survival, love and belonging,
power, freedom, and FUN."

- William Glasser, American Psychiatrist





Like everyone else your learners
are motivated by the
hierarchy of needs.

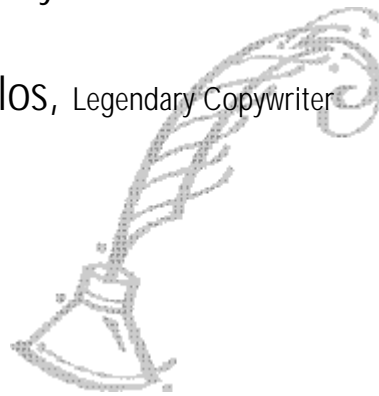
We need to care for them,
create bonding, give them the
choice and finally make learning FUN.

How do you motivate your learners?

12

"Advertising looks
FUN and easy to do.
So does playing the piano,
until you try it."

- Stavros Cosmopoulos, Legendary Copywriter





You only learn when you 'try it.'

Observing another or just trying something once does not make you competent.

Are you giving adequate time for skills practice in your training?

13

"If I had more competence in
what I am attempting,
I wouldn't need so much courage."

- Ashleigh Brilliant, American Artist & Author





Self-confidence comes
from knowledge and skills

What are you doing to upgrade
your competence?

14

"My play was a
complete success,
the audience was a failure."

- Ashleigh Brilliant





The Learner/Audience is the most important element of a training session.

It would be foolish to say we have a great training programme but a wrong audience.

Learners are the VIP of your training.

Do you believe so?

15

"The only mistake
is the one from
which we learn nothing."

- John Powell, American Geologist





Mistakes are stepping stones
to success.

Peter Drucker once remarked:
"Mistakes occur, but never
let them recur."

Are you analysing your mistakes
and learning from them so
that they do not get repeated?

16

"Live as if you were
to die tomorrow,
learn as if you
were to live forever."

- Mahatma Gandhi, Indian Leader





Take action - implement what
needs to be done now.

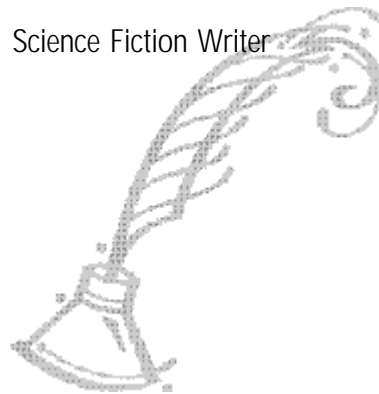
Ensure you learn for the future too.
That is the only way to stay relevant
in a 'changing' world.

Have you written down your
'Life Plan' and 'Learning Plan'?

17

"Belief gets in the way
of learning."

-Robert Heinlein, Science Fiction Writer





Beliefs influence who you are.

Have you done a self-awareness
check on yourself?

18

"Learning is finding
out what
you already know."

-Richard Bach, American Author





Learning is never complete.

It always starts with self-awareness.

Are you open to learning about
things you think you know?

19

"Do what you can
with what you have
where you are."

- President Theodore Roosevelt





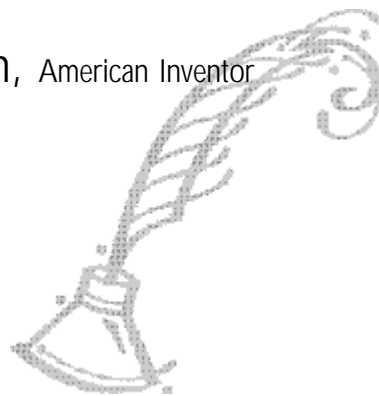
Trainers must be adaptable.
You need to do your best with the
resources available.

Are you always complaining about
lack of support from others?

20

"I never worked
a day in my life
- it was all fun."

- Thomas Edison, American Inventor





A passion for helping people learn sets good trainers apart from ineffective ones.

How would you rate your passion for helping people learn on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest?

21

"Do not try to
prove you are right;
get the learners
to prove themselves
that they are wrong."

- Moshe Rubenstein, Professor, UCLA





It is pointless to convince
people they are wrong.
It just leads to defensiveness.

How do you influence your learners?

22

"Nothing great was
ever achieved
without enthusiasm."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson, American Writer





Energy, Enthusiasm and Execution are essential for success in training.

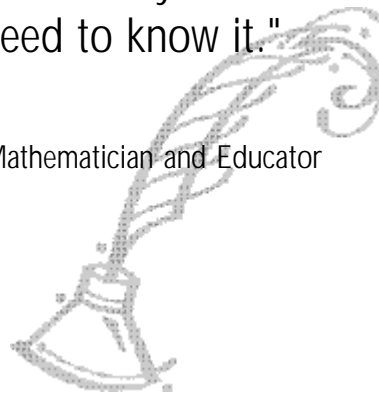
Are you enthusiastic about your training?

23

"You can't teach people everything
they need to know.

The best you can do is position them
where they can find what they need to
know when they need to know it."

- Seymour Papert, Mathematician and Educator





Guided learning is often a good strategy to help people learn.

How do you 'guide' learners to learn?

24

"Laughter is the
shortest distance
between two people."

- US Scouting Service





Laughter connects people:
it removes inhibition and fear.
It is a symbol of happiness.

What are we doing to generate
laughter?

25

"The crucial variable
in the process of
turning knowledge
into value is creativity."

- John Kao, Entrepreneur, Author & Speaker





Knowledge is a scarce resource today.

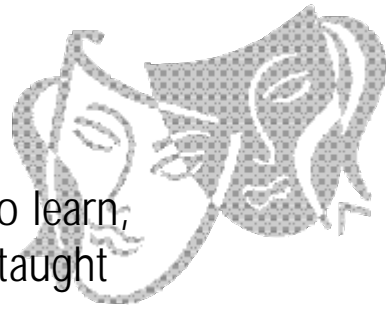
However it only turns into value
for organisations
when creativity is infused
into the process.

How are you using creativity to turn
knowledge into value?

26

Learning 'how to learn' is life's most important skill.





We are often told to learn,
but rarely are we taught
'how' to learn.

If we use the right tools to learn,
learning becomes enjoyable
and far more effective.

Are you helping your learners learn
'how' to learn?

27

"Silence is one of the
hardest arguments
to refute."

- Josh Billings, American Humourist





Silence is a powerful facilitation tool.

It gives you an opportunity
to reflect and then respond.

How do you deal with silence?

28

"Creativity is piercing the
mundane
to find the marvellous."

- Bill Moyers, American Journalist





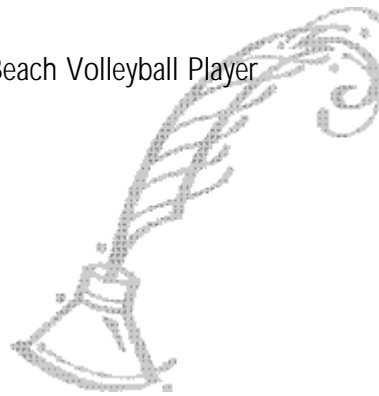
Creative Training differentiates
exciting from boring training.

What creative training tools
are you using now?

29

"It was FUN
because it's normally something
that we wouldn't do."

- Misty May, US Beach Volleyball Player





FUN Learning simply means enjoying the learning experience. It is a purposeful activity designed specifically to generate learning.

Adults love FUN learning simply because it is not really part of their daily lives.

What are you doing to make your training FUN?

30

"Example isn't another way to teach,
it is the only way to teach."

- Albert Einstein, Scientist





There is no such thing as
too many examples.

I have always found that 'associating'
day to day experiences
with learning concepts works as a
powerful learning accelerator.

Do you consciously use
examples in your training?

31

"I never teach my students,
I only attempt to provide
the conditions in which
they can learn."

- Albert Einstein, Scientist





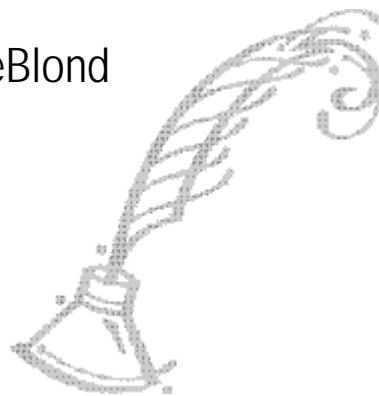
The environment needs to be conducive to motivate learners to learn.

What are you doing to create a positive learning culture?

32

"You learn something
every day if you
pay attention."

- Ray LeBlond





Attention is an essential
pre-requisite for learning.

What are you doing to gain
the attention of your learners?

33

"He who asks a question may be
a fool for five minutes.
But he who never asks a question
remains a fool forever."

- Tom J. Connelly





Ask as many questions
as possible when learning.
If you are shy about asking them in
public, do ask them privately.

Have you not asked a question and
yet remained unsure of what it
was all about? Ask another question.

34

"The real object of education is to have a man in the condition of continually asking questions."

- Bishop Creighton, English Ecclesiastic





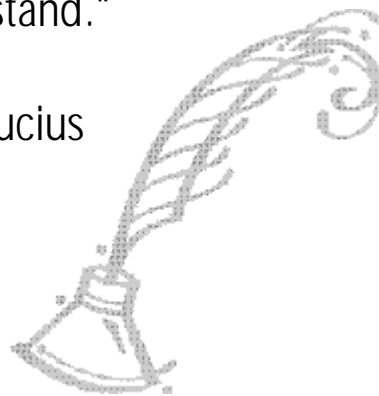
Create a non-threatening environment
for participants to ask questions.

What tools do you use to encourage
learners to ask questions?

35

"I hear
and I forget.
I see and I remember.
I do and
I understand."

- Confucius





Getting learners to 'try out' what they have learned during the session is a good strategy.

Are you providing enough time for 'skills practice' in the training session?

36

"Respond intelligently
even to
unintelligent treatment."

- Lao Tze





Some participants may treat you
inappropriately.

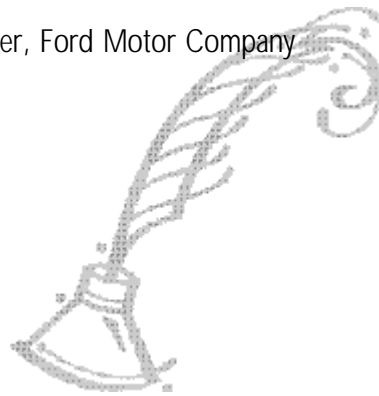
Don't take it personally. You may not
be the reason for their behaviour.

Do you get upset when treated
inappropriately by learners?

37

"Don't find fault,
find a remedy."

- Henry Ford, Founder, Ford Motor Company





Don't blame learners for mistakes,
ensure they learn from the mistakes.

Are you playing the 'blame' game?

38

"Trainers, when they become storytellers, add value to their training."

- Ed Scannell,
Author - *Games Trainers Play Series*





Time flies and learners come alive
when you tell stories.

Are your stories adding value or
are they a distraction?

39

"Try and notice
the difference
between timely
and timeless stories."

- Steve Hanamura, Author and Consultant





Some stories are relevant all the time.
Stories created from your
own experiences make a
huge impact on your learners.

Have you looked at sources such as
religious texts and Aesop's Fables
for your stories?

Are you documenting your stories?

40

"Be a life observer
and then ask how you can teach
what you have observed."

- Suzanne Gardner, Spiritual Artist





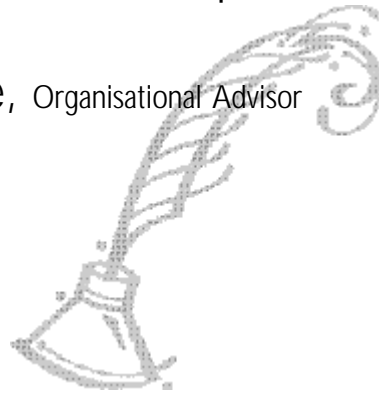
Observe what happens in life.
Extract your learning from it.
Then, share it.
Are you observant of people
and society?

Can you share life experiences
in your training?

41

"Stories ground people
to think differently
- to be able to listen and hear things
they haven't been able to in the past."

- Paula Bartholome, Organisational Advisor





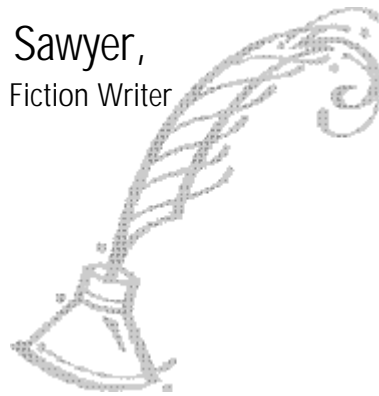
Story telling is a time-tested tool.
It moves people to learn willingly.

Are you incorporating stories in
your training?

42

"Learning to ignore things
is one of the great paths
to inner peace."

- Robert J. Sawyer,
Canadian Science Fiction Writer





You will encounter challenging learners. You will have to deal with some; some you need to ignore.

Are you able to ignore learner challenges when it is appropriate to do so, without feeling frustrated?

43

"Humour is by far
the most significant behaviour
of the human brain."

- Edward De Bono, Physician and Psychologist





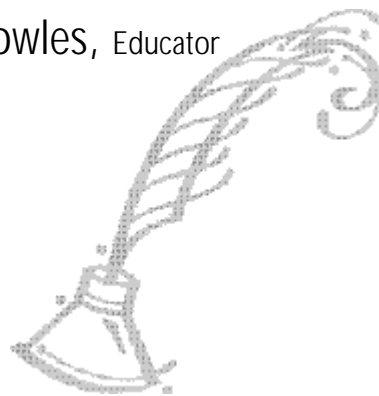
Humour makes people relax.
It gets learners' attention.

Are you using humour
in your training?

44

"Children learn from experience;
adults are a result of experience."

- Malcolm Knowles, Educator





When we are helping adults learn,
we must consider their prior
experience.

Are you collecting enough data
about people's experiences?

45

"I love learning
but
I detest being taught."

- Winston Churchill





Adults like to learn when it is by
personal choice;
they hate being taught as adults see
it as an imposition of some
sort on them.

Are you helping people learn or
teaching them?

46

"FUN is an
incredible vehicle
to deliver content."

- Palan





FUN is a facilitating tool
to deliver content.
Don't abuse it; don't misuse it.

Are you using FUN to deliver content
or just being funny without a purpose?

47

"If you dump too much content, your learners will dump the content."

- Palan





Moderate content is a useful guide for effective training.

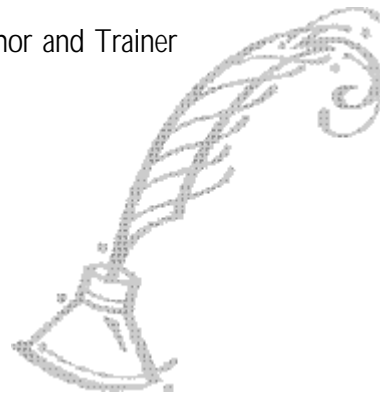
Are you saying, "I have no time to deliver all my content?"

You need to pause, take time out to evaluate your instructional strategy.

48

"You only learn when you process the experience."

- Thiagi, Author and Trainer





An experiential activity
is a great experience.

To ensure it is purposeful,
we need to focus on learners
processing the experience.

Are you allocating enough time for
processing learners' experience after the
activity?

49

"Adults are babies
with big bodies."

- Robert W. Pike, Author and Trainer





Adults are in many ways like children;
they like to go back
to relive their childhood.
They want training to be
high energy and FUN.

Is your training learner-centred,
FUN and exciting?

50

"Make your training
PIE based
- practical, interesting
and enjoyable."

- Don Kirkpatrick





Adult learners pay more attention when they can use the learning.

They concentrate when content is presented in an interesting and enjoyable manner.

Is your training PIE based?

R. Palan Ph.D.

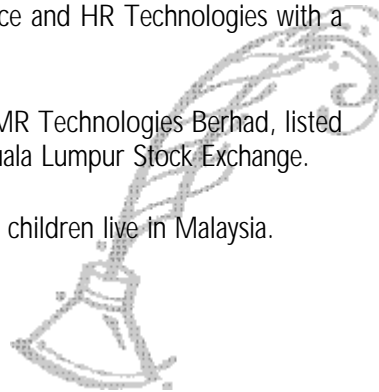
Palan's passion to help people learn and perform over the last 25 years has resulted in a life long quest to learn more about helping people learn effectively. His experiences gained internationally have led him to publish several books including *The Magic of Making Training FUN*; *Competency Management: a practitioners guide* and *Performance Management and Measurement: the Asian context*.

He continues to write, train and deliver keynotes internationally on a selective basis. His current interests are focussed on Competency, Learning, Performance and HR Technologies with a distinctively Asian focus.

He is currently the Chairman of SMR Technologies Berhad, listed on the MESDAQ market of the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange.

Dr Palan, his wife Kamu and three children live in Malaysia.

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