

Handout # 7: Examples of Enhanced Learning Methods¹

1. **Problem-Solving Exercise** – At the start of a training program put people in teams. Give them a problem to solve relative to the learning material. Ask them to use any resource they can imagine inside and outside the classroom for solving it.
2. **Collaborative Pre-Test** – Give people “the final exam” right at the start of a program. Ask them to collaborate with each other to see how much they already know or can figure out using the available reference material.
3. **Scavenger Hunt** – Put people in teams. Give each team the same list of 10 or 20 items of information to gather in a set amount of time using resources both inside and outside of the classroom.
4. **Research Teams** – At the start of a program, have teams fan out into the organization (for 20-30 minutes or so) and interview employees to gain information relative to certain questions or concerns of the course. Then have them report their findings to the class.
5. **Real-World Observations** – Have teams or partnerships leave the classroom and observe how something is done or how some skill is being exercised. Then have them talk about their observations: what was good and why, what was not good and why, and what could they do to improve things. Have them report their findings to the class.
6. **Articulation** – Stop a presentation periodically and have the partners talk with each other about what was just presented, what it means to them, and how they can apply it in their life and work.
7. **Stump Your Buddy** – Ask partners to ask each other five questions about what was just presented.
8. **Peer Teaching and Review** – When teaching computers or a hands-on process, put people in pairs, one partner being “A”, the other “B”. Ask “A” to perform a process just learned for “B”, as if “B” never heard it before and is sight impaired, so “A” has to talk out loud in great detail about every step of the process while doing it.
9. **Peer Testing** – Before a presentation, put people in pairs. Ask everyone to prepare a 20-question oral (or written) examination for their partners based on what they are about to hear. At the end of the presentation, have partners administer their tests.

¹ Derived from various published training guides and tips

10. **Question/Answer Exercise** – After or during a presentation, have each person write down three or more questions they have about what was just covered. Then have them get up, wander around the room, and ask each other their questions until they find the answers. Then debrief.
11. **Musical Questions** – Give learners each a blank index card. Ask them to print on the card a question they have about the material just covered and to not sign their name. While music plays, ask them to keep passing the question cards to the right until the music stops. Then give them a set amount of time to research the question card they are holding at that point, using any person or document in the room as a resource. Then debrief.
12. **Hangman** – Give each partnership a deck of cards with questions on one side and answers on the other. Then have them take turns in answering the questions as they play hangman.
13. **Error Recovery** – When teaching people how to use computers of physical equipment, put learner in pairs. Have one partner put an error into the system. The other partner then has to recover from the error explaining what is to be learned by this. Then reverse roles.
14. **Concentration** - Put people in pairs. Give each pair a deck of cards, half of which contain terms and half of which contain associated definitions of those terms. Have the partners shuffle the deck, place the cards face down in a matrix, and play *Concentration*. The partner with the most matching pairs “wins”.
15. **Collaborative Role Play** – When teaching communication, supervisory, or sales skills, have two or more people play the role of one person (with one of the members being “the mouth”). The facilitator takes the role of the other person in the exchange. Each time there is an exchange, the multi-person has 15 seconds or so to confer among its members before responding.
16. **Manipulatives** – Ask people in partners or small teams to reconstruct a model of a system or process while talking out loud about what they are doing, why and how everything works. (A facilitator could keep asking questions to draw them out while this is going on.) Components of the system could be magnetic-backed on a whiteboard, velcro-backed on fabric, flat on a tabletop or floor, or 3-dimensional on a table top.
17. **Acting out a System** – Assign people roles to play in a system or process and have them act the whole process out. This can be useful for teaching people telephony concepts, manufacturing processes, computer concepts, and all manners of work procedures.
18. **Art Contest** – Have partners or teams create works of art to review learning material: colorful pictogram murals, 3-dimensional displays, skits, whatever.

19. **Materials Creation** – Have learners in teams create learning materials for each other. This could include job aids, review games, learning exercises, cam-corded infomercials, models to manipulate, research projects, problem solving exercises, and so forth.
20. **Alternate Presentation Methods** – Cast a presentation into the form of a talk show, a news program, a press conference (with learners “planted” with questions), a story hour, a Bingo game (with learners having to complete information on Bingo cards as new learning material is presented), a demonstration with people as props (taking the roles of components of a system or process), or a one-person skit with the presenter dressed like (and taking the role of) a system or process and describing herself/himself in the first person.

Other SLEs to Get People Actively Involved in Learning²

Knowledge is not something a learner absorbs; knowledge is something a learner creates. Therefore, a facilitator’s main role is not to disseminate information, but to provide an environment in which learners can create their own knowledge.

A facilitator who is forever the center of the stage and who is constantly spoon-feeding learners is a menace to the learning process. *The facilitator’s role is to initiate the learning process and then get out of the way.* Put another way, the facilitator’s job is to get the ball in the learner’s court as often and for as long as possible, because that is where the learning happens. Here are some ways of doing this.

1. **Flashcards** - Put people in pairs. Give each pair a deck of cards, each card containing a symbol or term on one side and its definition on the other. Let each partner test the other. Cards that are identified correctly are put aside. Cards that are missed are placed in the bottom of the deck. Cards that are missed twice are given to the learner for overnight study. The partners can then run through the same exercise the next morning.
2. **Matching Game** – Place symbols or terms around the room or on a large table top or on the floor. Prepare a deck of cards defining these symbols or terms. See how quickly teams of two can match the definition cards with the symbols or terms.
3. **Tabletop Model** – Provide small teams with materials and have them build a model of a process or system on a table top, on a magnetic board, or on the floor. Then have them present and explain their model to the whole group.

² Ibid.

4. **Deconstruct/Reconstruct** – Construct a model of a flow or process on a table top of magnetic board. Then take it apart and have learners in partnerships or small teams reconstruct it while they explain out loud to the whole class how everything works. Ask questions. Draw learners out.
5. **Have Learners Build a Huge Visual Aid** – Have learners build a huge mock-up of a system or part of a system on a sidewalk or asphalt parking lot outside the classroom using duct tape, sidewalk chalk, and other appropriate materials. Then have them act out the process using members of the class as elements that are being processed through the system.
6. **Stick the Label on the Component** – Give small teams large Post-It notes containing the names of components of a system. Then have them stick the labels on the right component of the actual machine or system they are studying, earning one point for every correct match. Debrief as necessary.
Diagnose This – When teaching people to diagnose problems in a system or piece of equipment, use a game show format called “*This is the Symptom. What’s the Problem?*” Have a partnered team pick a card out of a hat containing a customer’s complaint about a problem they’re having with a system or piece of equipment. Then give the team a minute or two, using all the documentation they care to, to come up with the steps they would take to diagnose and correct the problem(s). The rest of the class could be given poker chips to place bets on whether or not the diagnosis and the diagnostic process that the team came up with is the best, fastest, or most appropriate one.
7. **Diagnose This in Reverse** – To turn Idea #7 around, play “*This is the Problem. What’s the Symptom?*” Have a partnered team pick a card out of a hat containing a description of a malfunction in a system or piece of equipment. Then give them a minute or two to come up with what the customer complaint might be based on this malfunction. The rest of the class can be given poker chips and can place their bets based on whether they agree or disagree with the team’s conclusion.
8. **Student Presentation** – Give each team of learners a subset of the learning material to master. Then have them teach that to the rest of the class using any method (traditional or non-traditional) they think would be most effective. Give them craft materials and anything else they might need to make props, presentations, and graphics. Ask them to teach it in a way that gets everyone involved. Remind them to give time for learners to process the presentation afterwards by talking about what they learned with a partner or demonstrating their learning in some way so that it integrates and sticks. (As a visual aid, the team could create a model on the wall, the magnetic board, a table top, or the floor – or they could use people as props.)
9. **Collaborative Pre-Test** – Right at the beginning of a training program, give learners the final test (or a condensed version of it) and ask them to collaborate on it to see how many of the questions they can answer. Encourage learners to “cheat” and to use each other and any

reference material in the room as resources. (This will get people used to working together from the start, raise their curiosity and interest, and give the facilitator a feeling for what the group already knows.)

10. **Learner Created Training Video** – Provide a camcorder to a team of learners and ask them to create a 10-minute training video on some aspect of the subject matter showing how a problem can be diagnosed and corrected or a procedure applied. Show the video to the whole class and debrief.
11. **Facilitator Takes the Role of a Component or System** - As a facilitator, don a flipchat page (like sandwich board) that has on it an image of a system, a procedure, or a piece of equipment people are learning about and describe yourself in the first person as if you were that system, procedure, or piece of equipment. You can then field questions from the audience as if you were being interviewed in a press conference. You can even plant questions with people in the audience prior to the press conference if you like.
12. **Learners Take the Role of Components** – Assign learners the roles of various components in a system. Give each of them an appropriate “costume” or label to wear. Interview them and have them describe their unique function to the group. Then have them interact with each other as they act out various real-world processes.
13. **Problem Solving Teams** – After a brief presentation, put people in teams. Give them a problem to solve relative to the presentation. Ask them to stand up and move around while they solve the problem (Note: The brain cells used for problem solving are interconnected in the brain with the brain cells involved with bodily movement).
14. **Fill in the Picture** – Give people a pictogram or diagram with missing information. Ask them to “complete the picture” with information from your presentation, from reading material, or from a computer tutorial.
15. **Story Telling** – Cast a process or procedure in the form of a human interest story, telling the learners in detail how so-and-so applied the process or procedure to a real-life situation. You could include in the story common goofs that so-and-so made, what the results were, and how the goof was corrected.
16. **Job Aid Creation** – Put people in pairs or small teams. Ask each team to come up with a job aid for one of the processes or procedures they’re learning about. Ask each team to provide a copy of their job aid for everyone in the class. Make available to them a computer and colored printer they can use if they care to.
17. **Doctor, Doctor** – Take the role of a component of a system that is malfunctioning. Describe one or more symptoms of your illness to the class as if they, as a group, were your physician.

Then ask the class to diagnose your illness and prescribe a remedy. After someone responds you could ask for a second opinion.

18. **Peer Review** – After a presentation put people in pairs. Have each pair designate one of their members as “A”, the other as “B”. Flip a coin. Heads “A”, tails “B”. The person winning the flip has to explain what was covered in the presentation to his partner as if his partner missed the presentation and knew nothing about it. Ask people to stand while doing this and to use a flipchart or white board for creating visual aids if they care to.
19. **Mix and Match** – prepare two decks of large cards. One deck can contain various customer complaints. The other deck can contain various malfunctions in a system, process, piece of equipment, or solutions to the customer complaints. Put people in pairs or small teams and see how quickly they can match the complaints with the malfunctions/solutions. Later, individuals can do the matching by themselves if they care to. You could even have a contest to see who could do it the fastest. Or you could pair people up and play Concentration with the complaints/malfunctions.
20. **Learners Invent Mnemonic Devices** – Model the use of mnemonic (memory) devices to remember a term or concept, or the sequence of a process or procedure. Then ask learners in small teams to come up with similar ways of remembering other terms, processes, and procedures. Then have them share the mnemonic devices with the class.
21. **Jeopardy Quiz Show Game** – Put people in teams and have them face off against each other in a Jeopardy-type game. Allow each team time to prepare before the game by studying and reviewing the subject matter that will be involved. Then play. The team with the most \$ point at the end wins a bag of snacks.
22. **“Name That...” Games** – You can create other team-based competitive games such as “Name That Part”, “Name That Symbol”, “Name that Solution”, and so forth. Just use your imagination. Get people to stand up during these games whenever you can to relieve the torpor that comes from sitting too much.
23. **Question Basketball** – Allow teams to take turns answering questions or solving problems relative to the subject matter at hand. A correct answer or solution gives a team the chance to shoot a ball in a junior hoop from a set distance or toss a bean bag into a bucket. Award a point for each basket. The team with the highest score at the end wins. You can award the winning team a bag of snacks or something if you think it’s appropriate.
24. **Learners as Teachers** – Assign learners in pairs different subsets of the learning material. Give each pair time to prepare a short presentation to the whole class. Ask them to make it almost completely hands on for the learners as if the learners could only learn by physically doing something and not by sitting and listening. Provide them with materials for making props.

- 25. Information Accessing Skills** – Equip each learner or pair of learners with the necessary reference material. Then ask a series of questions that can only be answered by accessing the reference material. The person or pair that finds the answer first wins a point. The person or pair can then tell the group where they found the answer and what process they went through to locate the information quickly.

This sampling of ideas has been taken from *The Accelerated Learning CourseBuilder*, a collection of nearly 450 tips and techniques for innovative trainers.