

BRIEF INTERVENTIONS

How to be more useful to patients

**A two day introductory course on
Solution Focused Practice
for
Exercise and Health Professionals**

COURSE EVALUATION REPORT

April 2008

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Background

Recent health policies have emphasised the need for health services that are 'personal and responsive' which genuinely focus on primary prevention, promote health and well-being and fully engages the individual in decisions about their health (Wanless, 2002; DoH 2006; Darzi, 2007). Faced with delivering this cultural change, professionals require expanded skills to ensure face-to-face interactions with clients are more client-centred.

In response to NICE (2006) Physical Activity Guidance on Brief Interventions and Exercise Referral, the BHF National Centre for Physical Activity and Health centre piloted a two day course on Solution Focused Practice. The course was designed for exercise and health professionals who work face-to-face with clients, to equip professionals with the skills to promote health and well-being.

Following the successful pilot the Regional Public Health Group and the East Midlands Physical Activity Network (EMPAN) commissioned: Garrath Ford (G Ford Consultancy) to deliver a course in each of the counties within the East Midland; and the BHF National Centre for Physical Activity and Health to evaluate the delivery of these courses.

Aims of the Course

- To introduce professionals to the principles of solution focused practice.
- To demonstrate how solution focused practice can help make face-to-face interactions with clients more effective and rewarding.
- To develop skills that will enable professionals to embed client-centred care into their interactions with clients.

Evaluation Process

The courses were delivered between October 2007 and January 2008, to approximately 50 health and/or exercise professionals from across the region. Upon completion of the two day training professionals were asked to, anonymously, complete an evaluation form about the organisation, content and delivery of the course, see appendix 1.

This evaluation report includes a summary of the collective feedback and a series of recommendations for the delivery of future courses. In addition, this report includes an evaluation summary for each of the county courses.

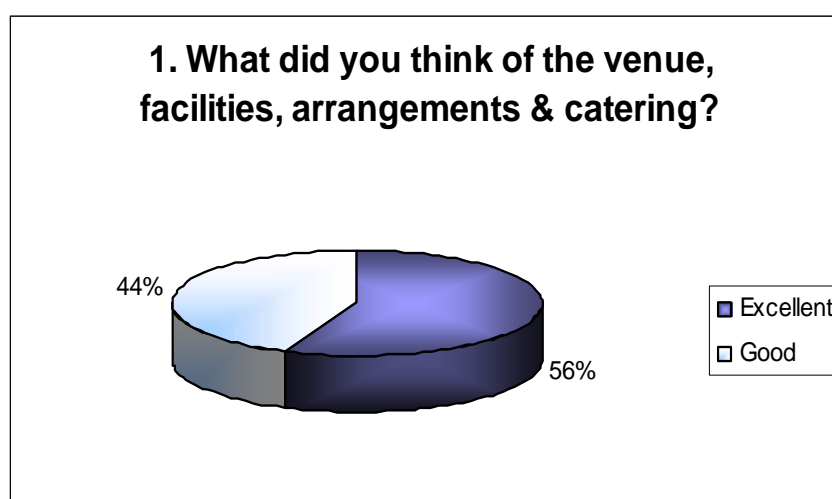
Précis

Overall feedback about the training was extremely positive; the majority of participants were very satisfied with the course and they felt the skills acquired during the training would be useful and improve the way they interact with clients.

1. Venue, facilities, arrangements and catering

Course participants were asked to indicate what they thought about the venue, facilities, arrangements and catering. The majority of participants were very satisfied with the venue, facilities, arrangements and catering, as can be seen from the pie chart below ratings ranged from 'good to excellent'.

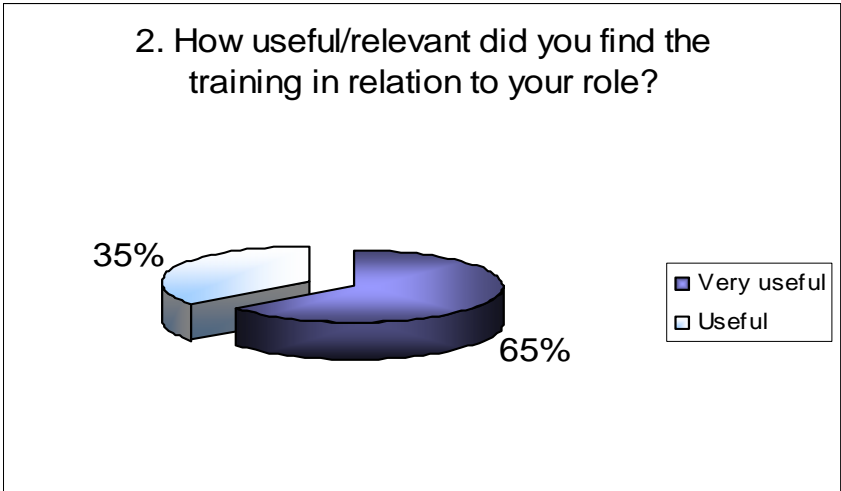
Figure 1: Quality of Training Venue



2. Usefulness of the training

Course participants were asked to rate how useful they found the training in relation to their current role and responsibilities. The comments revealed unanimous positive feedback: 65% indicated that the training had been 'very useful' to their role and the remaining 35% reported it had been 'useful' (see figure 2). No comments were received to suggest the training course was of little or no use to the respondents work.

Figure 2: Usefulness of Training

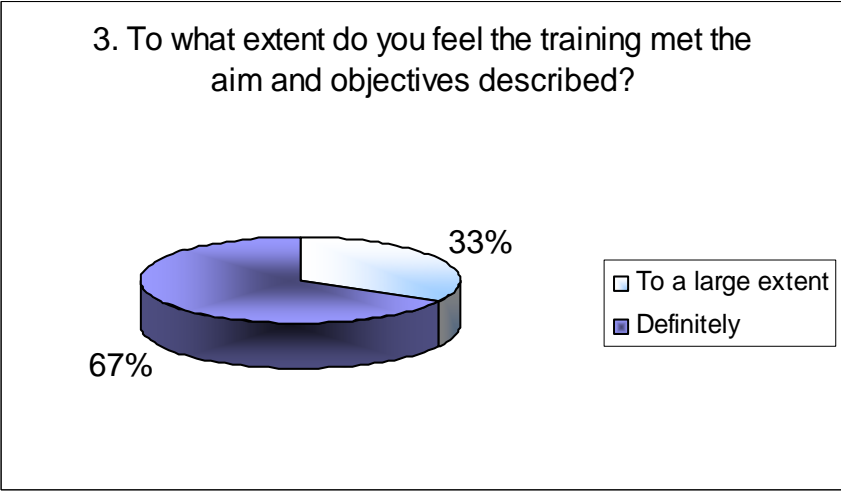


Additional comments served to reinforce feedback about the usefulness of the course, with participants remarking that the course complemented their existing role and could be easily adapted and applied to a range of areas within which they work.

3. Aims and Objectives

Participants were asked to what extent they felt the training met the aims and objectives described in the publicity material. As can be seen from the pie chart below, two-thirds of participants reported that the aims and objectives had ‘definitely’ been achieved and the remaining third indicated the training had met the learning outcomes ‘to a large extent’. Participants also commented that they course had ‘*successfully*’ achieved the aims and objectives.

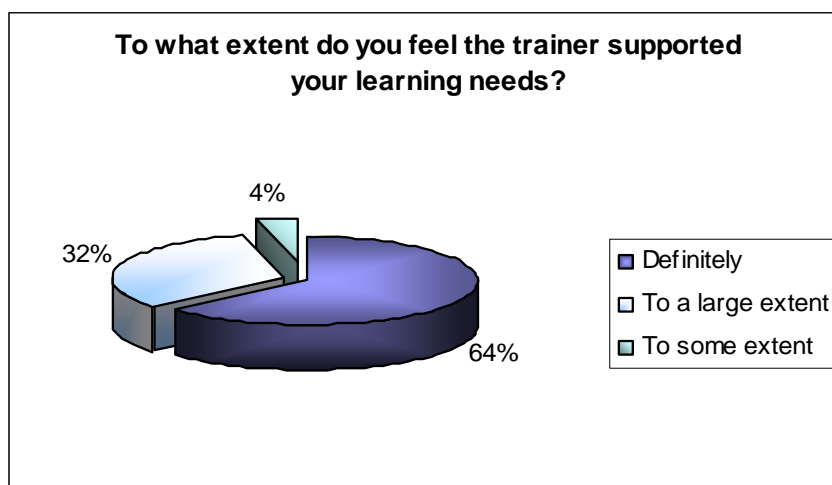
Figure 3: Aims and Objectives



4. Supportive Tutor

Participants were asked to rate to what extent they felt the trainer had supported their learning needs. As can be seen in figure 4, the overall response to this question was positive with 64% of respondents indicating the tutor had ‘definitely’ supported their learning needs. A further 32% thought the course tutor had ‘to a large extent’ supported their learning needs. A small number of participants (4%) felt the tutor had supported their learning needs ‘to some extent.’

Figure 4. Trainer - learning needs



Participants were invited to provide additional comments about the extent to which the trainer had supported their learning needs, comments indicated the trainer provided good explanations, encouragement and was responsive and sensitive to questions.

5. Aspects of the training most liked

All participants made at least one comment about what they most liked about the training. Forty percent of participants stated that they found the video clips and ‘real’ life examples very useful as these helped to explain the theory discussed in each section and enabled participants to visualise how to put theory into practice. Other feedback emphasised that the course was well designed, making good use of different teaching methods, lecturing, videos and practical interactive sessions. Participants also remarked that they liked how the training had introduced them to a positive approach to working with clients.

6. Aspects of the training least liked

Participants were invited to comment on what they least liked about the training: 27% of participants stated 'nothing', 54% made a comment about what they least liked and the remaining 19% left this question blank. Of the 54% who made a comment about the aspects of the training they least liked: 42% stated there was a lot of paired exercises and possibly too much role play; 31% felt the day was either too long and/or too much time was spent sitting; 8% commented that it was sometimes difficult to see how solution focused practice would relate to their role and/or how it could be used; the remaining comments were recommendations for future training rather than remarks about what was least liked.

7. Practical Application of Solution Focused Practice

Participants were asked to indicate how they might use solution focused practice in their workplace. *Several participants provided more than one response to this question; percentages presented in this section are based on the number of similar responses to the question using the total number of respondents.*

Eighty-eight percent of participants stated they would use solution focused practice in planned sessions with clients and/or opportunistically. Almost a fifth of participants said they would specifically use a solution focused approach to establish clients' best hopes. A further 10% stated they would look for clients' strengths and be more positive about what they are currently doing. Just over 10% of participants commented that they would start using this approach gradually and as they developed experience they would integrate it more into their consultations. Finally around 1 in 10 people indicated they would use solution focused practice in conversations with friends, family and colleagues.

8. Further Comments

Participants were invited to provide additional comments about the course and/or their experience, two thirds offered additional comments. These comments included expressions of gratitude towards the trainer and further positive feedback about the structure and delivery of the training. The majority of participants found the course enjoyable, very useful and felt the course would improve the way they

interact with clients. Table 1 includes a number of additional comments that highlight participants' thoughts about the course.

Table 1 – Participants' additional comments

"I think it is an approach all health professionals can take something from, even the most old fashioned and stubborn practitioners."

"Like how it protects you from becoming too involved with the person and their problems"

"It fuelled my passion and made me feel more positive"

"Learned a lot about different approaches to working with patients and how to help them move on without them feeling that being discharged is the end of their journey, rather than the start of them owning it."

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on participants' feedback about what they liked most and what they liked least about the training. Responses to these two questions were mixed; some participants 'most liked' some aspects of the training which other participants 'least liked'. There were also some comments that seemed equivocal, for example, a couple of participants had commented they would like to see more reference to the exercise environment and how this approach could be applied in this setting, whereas another participant had commented that the video of the personal trainer was good at it allowed participants to see how the intervention could be used in the exercise field and another said they would recommend the course to other exercise professionals.

While every effort has been made to base these recommendations on recurrent comments these need to be considered carefully, particularly in relation to the comments about the use of role play and paired work. This course aims to develop professionals' skills in solution focused practice and while it is accepted that practical exercises can be hard work and slightly uncomfortable these exercises are essential to develop practical skills.

1. Where catering is being provided by the host organisation, provide fruit during refreshment breaks.
2. Provide client scenario sheets for people to use during paired exercises/role play.
3. Consider whether the length of the day could be reduced, particularly day 1.
4. Provide an example of when it might be considered appropriate/useful for a health practitioner to include information giving when using this approach.
5. Consider whether more attention could be given to applying sfp in the exercise and fitness context.
6. Explore possibilities to have training accredited by relevant sector skills councils.
7. Offer follow-on courses which would provide opportunities to further develop technique/skills.
8. Given consideration to using sfp with different ages groups, for example children.
9. Consider ways to make more use of the video-clips – specifically consider analysing the video-clips in more depth.
10. Consider including some alternative practical examples rather than role play.

Nottingham - Course Evaluation

There were 8 delegates on the course who completed the evaluation form at the end of day 2 (appendix 1).

Summary:

On the whole participants appeared to have been very satisfied with the training course.

Venue, facilities, arrangements and catering

All participants were happy with the venue, facilities and catering with 80% of participants rating these as excellent and the remaining 20% describing them as good. The issue of traffic and car parking was raised by 2 of the participants who were unhappy with the cost of parking and the amount of traffic but this is always difficult to escape from in a city centre location.

Training in relation to job role

Results were very positive for this question with 7 out of the 8 participants answering that they had found the training 'very useful' in relation to their role, with the remaining participant also agreeing that they had found it useful. Participants were pleased with how the training related well to exercise referral and complimented their existing role, providing them with more tools to deliver a structured consultation in a short amount of time.

Aims and Objectives

With the exception on one participant, participants agreed that the training had 'definitely' met the aims and objectives described, the remaining participant indicated they were confident that they were met 'to a large extent'.

Supportive tutor

Feedback was extremely positive for the trainer, with all participants agreeing that the trainer had 'definitely' supported their learning needs, or at least 'to a large extent'. The strength of the tutors approach was reflected in the additional comments section for this answer which described Garrath as an excellent, supportive and patient tutor, whose delivery was both informative and interesting.

What did you like the most?

Participants enjoyed a fresh 'new' approach which was delivered at a good pace with well structured exercises. The use of video clips and role plays in a relaxed and supportive environment allowed the participants to gain the confidence needed to go out into their workplace and put into practice what they had learnt.

What did you like the least?

Only 3 participants responded to this question. The majority of participants left this question blank, potentially implying that there wasn't really anything that the participants did not like. One comment was made about feeling tired after both days, after processing everything that they had learned, but they still remarked that they had enjoyed everything. Another also agreed that the days were very long and it had been difficult to take everything in. The remaining comment was from a participant who had hearing difficulties and had struggled with understanding some of the video clips, however the participant added that overall the video clips were excellent

Use of training in workplace

All participants identified ways in which they would make use of the training in their workplace. Answers were varied and included consultations with clients, training, managing staff in meetings, initial conversations with clients prior to exercise to increase motivation, and to evaluate the clients goals.

Further comments and suggestions

Additional comments about the training course were very positive. The participants expressed their enjoyment, praising the tutor for his sensitivity to the group and for his help.

Further suggestions included the possibility of a follow on course that looked to develop the technique further, and one participant questioned whether this type of training fits into any accredited course.

Derbyshire - Course Evaluation

There were 16 participants on the Derbyshire course; all participants completed the evaluation form at the end of day two.

Summary

On the whole participants were very satisfied with the training course.

Venue, facilities, arrangements and catering

The majority of people were satisfied with the venue and facilities provided for the training course, with all participants rating the venue as 'good' or 'excellent'.

Training in relation to job role

Twelve participants described the training as 'very useful' to their existing role, the remaining four indicated that it was 'useful'. Participants enjoyed learning new skills, although the application of the model to children would have been useful to one participant and may be an area to consider for the future.

Aims and Objectives

The majority of the participants (75%) agreed that the training had 'definitely' met with its aims and objectives, the remaining 25% indicated that it had met them 'to a large extent'.

Supportive tutor

Feedback was very positive for the trainer - 13 of the 16 participants felt the trainer had 'definitely' supported their learning needs, with good explanations and offering of support. The remaining 3 participants all indicated that the tutor supported their learning needs 'to a large extent.'

What did you like the most?

The expanded answers section provided a range of positive comments. With regards to what they liked most, answers tended to focus on the interactive nature of the sessions. Participants enjoyed the variety of teaching methods, in particular the video examples, as one participant explained, "it was helpful to see solution focused practice in situations'.

Participants commented on the benefits of gaining a new perspective, and the tutors knowledge and enthusiasm for this approach was well received.

What did you like the least?

Only 7 (44%) participants responded to this question. When asked what they liked least about the training, answers related mainly to the length of day and the amount of pair work. Participants disliked the late finish, and it was suggested that the time spent on the practical sessions could be reduced.

Use of training in workplace

Responses to this question were very positive with all participants confident that they would use the training in their workplace in one form or another. The most common situation in which it was stated that the training would take place was one to one sessions and consultations with clients. Participants seemed very keen to integrate this new approach on a daily basis, using it to increase their understanding of people and hopefully help them to help themselves.

Further comments and suggestions

Additional comments about the training course were very positive with the majority of answers expressing their thanks and enjoyment. Emphasis was placed upon the tutors excellent presentation and delivery. Suggestions for future work included the possibility of gearing the training more towards fitness and exercise, and the application of the practice to working with children. One participant suggested that this course should replace the Motivational Interviewing training planned for the lifestyle referral scheme.

Northamptonshire –Course Evaluation

Eight people were enrolled on the Northamptonshire course; all participants completed the evaluation form at the end of the course.

Summary

On the whole participants appeared to have been very satisfied with the training course.

Venue, facilities, arrangements and catering

The majority of people appear very satisfied with the venue and facilities provided for the training course, with all participants rating the venue as 'good' or 'excellent'.

Training in relation to job role

Eighty percent of the participants described the training as 'very useful' to their existing role, the remaining twenty percent rated the training as 'useful' to their existing role. Participants liked the fact that this approach could be easily adapted and applied to a range of areas.

Aims and Objectives

Seven participants felt the training had 'definitely' met its aims and objectives, the remaining participant felt it had met them 'at least to some extent'.

Supportive tutor

On the whole, feedback for the trainer was positive, with almost two thirds of the participants (63%) agreeing that the trainer had 'definitely' supported their learning needs. The remaining participants felt the trainer had supported their learning needs 'at least to some extent.' Participants commented that the content of the course was good and they appreciated the tutor providing his contact details. Additional comments by two of the participants highlighted the need for a perhaps more variable learning style to be employed during the two days, as they felt that there was too much role play and pair work.

What did you like the most?

The expanded answers section provided an array of positive comments. When asked about what they liked most about the training, the most popular responses were associated with the visual aspect of the tasks. The videos clips were described as 'really emphasising the theory work discussed in each section' and helped participants to 'visualise putting the theory into practice.' Participants also expressed their enjoyment at being involved in well designed practical sessions in a relaxed environment with people they network with.

What did you like the least?

When asked what they liked least about the training, answers were directed mainly at the repetitive nature of the learning style. It was felt that there were too many role plays and participants began to struggle with inventing their own scenarios. It was suggested that a client scenario sheet for people to act out would make this part of the training easier.

Use of training in workplace

All participants were confident that they would use the training in their workplace in one form or another, with the aim of gaining a better understanding of their clients through a more effective and less traditional way, allowing the clients to formulate their own solutions.

Further comments and suggestions

Additional comments about the training course were very positive with the majority of answers expressing their thanks and enjoyment of an approach that all health professionals can gain something from.

Lincolnshire –Course Evaluation

There were 6 participants on this course; upon completion of the course everyone completed the evaluation form (appendix 1).

Summary

Generally feedback about the content and delivery of the course was very positive, with the majority of participants being satisfied with the training

Venue, facilities, arrangements and catering

Fifty percent of participants rated the venue, facilities, arrangements and catering as 'excellent', the other fifty percent rated the venue etc as 'good'. There were some very positive remarks about the comfort and accessibility of the university facilities. Some participants expressed a wish to have more sweet things/ fruit during refreshment breaks and others would have liked to be provided with parking.

Training in relation to job role

Two thirds of participants felt the course would be 'very useful' to their existing role, the remaining participants stated the training would be 'useful'. The majority felt the solution focused model could be easily applied to current roles.

Aims and Objectives

Overall the participants felt the training had successfully met the aims and objects described, fifty percent indicated it had 'definitely' met its aims and objectives and the other fifty percent indicated it had met its aims and objectives 'to a large extent'. One participant stated that "the course was more than they expected to a certain extent and was a little more generic than anticipated".

Supportive tutor

Overall, feedback about the tutor was positive: participants seemed very happy with the tutor, also commenting on the quality and use of additional materials. One person commented that it would have been beneficial to have some physical activity videos demonstrating how the model works in relation to their area of work.

What did you like the most?

The comments frequently indicated that participants liked the variety of activities, and felt it provided a balance to the training. There were several references to the successful way in which information was organised and presented, which people felt made the course easy to understand and digest.

What did you like the least?

There was a mixture of responses to this question, some participants indicated it had been a challenge to sit down for so long; others felt that it was sometimes difficult to relate the training to their discipline. Several comments were made about the use of pair work, several participants felt there was too much time spent on group work.

Use of the training in the workplace

Participants responded enthusiastically to the idea of using the principles from the training with clients and colleagues. Participants felt that the training would enable them to: connect more with clients, be more positive and use best hopes rather than goal setting. There were references to using the ideas in one-to-one sessions and in GP Referral consultations. One participant indicated they would be able to use the training 'every day'. In interactions with family, friends, colleagues and clients. Another participant indicated that it might be difficult to find the time and place to put the training into practice under current circumstances.

Further comments and suggestions

Additional open comments were generally positive, mainly offering thanks for the training and recommending it for 'other exercise professionals'. One participant felt that more use could be made of the video clips by analysing them more closely.

Leicestershire –Course Evaluation

There were 10 participants on the course from a range of disciplines; all completed the evaluation form at the end of day two.

Summary

Overall feedback indicated that participants had been very satisfied with the training course

Venue, facilities, arrangements and catering

On the whole participants were satisfied with the venue, facilities, organisation and catering, 80% rated the venue, facilities, arrangements and catering as 'excellent' and the remaining 20% rated it as 'good'.

Training in relation to job role

Participants were asked to rate to how useful the course was in relation to their role: 20% indicated the training was 'very useful' to their existing role and 80% of participants considered it would be 'useful'. One participant felt the solution focused approach fits well with their 'client-centred approach'.

Aims and Objectives

The majority of participants felt the training had 'definitely' or 'to a large extent' met the aim and objectives described.

Supportive tutor

The majority of participants (70%) felt the trainer had 'definitely' supported their learning needs, and there were some positive comments referring to the trainer's engaging approach and sense of commitment to the methods discussed. The remaining participants felt their learning needs had been supported by the trainer 'to a large extent' or 'to some extent'. A comment was made suggesting the need for some physical activity examples/ scenarios besides those catered for in role-play.

What did you like the most?

These comments focused positively on the variety of activities utilised in the training, with participants generally indicating that this provided a good balance to the training. Several positive comments were made about the way in which information was organised and presented, which people felt made the course easy to understand.

What did you like the least?

A mixture of responses were given to this question: some participants felt it had been a challenge to sit down for so long; others felt that it was sometimes difficult to relate the training to their discipline. One participant commented they couldn't think of anything to add to this question as they thought it was an excellent course.

Use of training in workplace

Participants responded enthusiastically to using the principles of solution focused practice in their workplace. A range of responses were received here, participants commented they would use the principles of the training;

- Everyday with people who ask for help;
- In a variety of capacities when working with colleagues and clients;
- During GP referral consultations; &
- To be more positive about what clients are already doing and use best hopes more rather than goal setting.

Further comments and suggestions

Additional comments were generally positive – several comments indicated that it was an enjoyable and informative course and one respondent said they “would recommend the course to other professionals”. Finally, another participant felt that more use could be made of the video clips by analysing them more closely.

APPENDIX 1: Evaluation Form

Please tick the relevant response

1. What did you think of the venue, facilities, arrangements and catering?

Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any comments?

.....

2. How useful/relevant did you find the training in relation to your role?

Very useful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Useful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not very useful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all useful	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any comments?

.....

3. To what extent do you feel the training met the aim and objectives described?

Definitely	<input type="checkbox"/>	To a large extent	<input type="checkbox"/>
To some extent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any comments?

.....

4. To what extent do you feel the trainer supported your learning needs?

Definitely	<input type="checkbox"/>	To a large extent	<input type="checkbox"/>
To some extent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any comments?

.....

P.T.O.

5. What did you like most about the training?

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6. What did you like least about the training?

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7. How do you think you will use the training in your workplace

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8. Please give any additional comments about the sessions which you feel will be useful?

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**Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation
HAVE A SAFE JOURNEY HOME**