Post-Graduate Diploma in Training and Education

GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN

Professional Practice & Management

Training Programme Developed for

Private Sector Organisation

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Abstract

Creating professional and effective presentations and slideshows is an underestimated skill which should be addressed. Many organisations rely on presentations to gain new clients at conferences and meetings. Marketing departments use presentations to promote goods and services to new and existing clients nationally and internationally. A badly designed PowerPoint shows lack of attention to detail and can result in the loss of contracts to competitors. Senior managers must ultimately be responsible for the quality of slideshow presentations and should not rely on their secretaries or personal assistants to produce high quality output.

Introduction to My Organisation/Institution

Unico Computer College is a private educational institution based in Cork City. For over twenty years it has offered a wide range of popular full and part-time computer courses to a wide and varied range of students. Modules include typing, audio transcription, word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, databases, web design, as well as basic computer literacy. Classes range from transition year students, secretaries, mature students, corporate clients, and government bodies.

Unico Computer College prides itself in the delivery of comprehensive teaching standards at affordable prices. The College is an authorised ECDL Centre, and registered provider of MOS (Microsoft Office Specialist) programmes. Examinations are also accredited by Pitman's and City & Guilds, and a few courses are at FETAC levels.

Although limited to Cork, the institution is aiming to expand to the Dublin area. Traditional classroom learning has always been the strong point for our educational institution, but a range of online learning programmes are under construction, and more emphasis will be placed on blended learning i.e. a mix of online and classroom learning courses. Negotiations are underway to offer a range of practical courses for senior managers in SMEs (small to medium enterprises).

Current Trends in Adult Education

Ever since the Bologna Process in 1999 emphasised the need for a European Higher Education Area by 2010 this resulted in the Budapest-Vienna Declaration of March that year. Main objectives were to facilitate mobility of students and higher education staff, prepare and support students for future careers, and offer broader access to higher education for all. The Hunt Report (2010) outlined a strategy for higher education for the year 2030 undertaken by the Higher Education Authority in Ireland.

HETAC (Higher Education Training and Awards Council) was established in June 2001 as the qualifications awards body for higher education in Ireland. AONTAS is the National Adult Learning Organisation which promotes adult education through second level institutions, particularly the VEC (Vocational Education Committee).

The IDA (Industrial Development Authority) is responsible for attracting foreign investment to Ireland and maintains a strong influence on the Irish education system. Their publication 'Horizon 2020' outlines a strategy for future prosperity. Forfás is Ireland's policy advisory board for enterprise and science and it has produced a number of important documents including 'Key Skills to Trade Internationally'.

The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs emphasise the need to balance skills with demand. The National Skills Database developed by FÁS (Foras Áiseanna Saothair), the national training and employment authority, collates the supply and demand of skills in Ireland. From this the Springboard initiative in higher education has been developed and offers a number of new courses throughout the country.

To maintain a competitive advantage internationally Ireland has embraced changes in technology and education, with a view to the future.

Importance of Acting as a Business Partner/Change Agent

Business managers need to adapt to changes and they must manage change effectively. Change management can be applied from within an organisation, but it is often preferable to allow an outside observer to see business strategy from an unbiased perspective. A change agent needs to have many qualities and competencies – they need to wear many different hats (Kanter, 1999).

A change agent must be able to diagnose problems a business/organisation encounters with performance issues and therefore analyse how these impact on long and short term business results. They are capable of building relationships with their clients ensuring that a level of trust is maintained. Relationships with the employees are also vital to ensure the hopes and motivations of the workforce are realised.

Agendas must be adhered to not only by the senior management but also by the relevant executives within the business. The change agent must ensure that agendas are followed through and any intermittent problems dealt with efficiently. The change agent must be competent with achieving change goals and objectives.

The change agent's role can be defined in seven job descriptions. Firstly, as a detective looking for clues which are preventing change from happening, secondly as an advocate, ensuring momentum in introducing changes across all levels of management and workforce. Thirdly, the change agent has to act as a counsellor because some changes will personally affect people in a business, and so, fourthly, they must be a facilitator, designing systems and processes to enable people to make changes easily.

The fifth skill is the change agent acting as a mediator because certain changes may bring some of the employees into conflict with others. They must be allowed to find common ground and resolutions sought.

Number six is being an expert. The change agent must be knowledgeable not only of the business but of all the standard operating procedures and work practices. Not only does training give the change agent this skill, but also on-the-job experience.

Finally, the change agent must be the lawmaker. Goals and targets will have times and dates by which they must be achieved, and the change agent needs to hold the relevant people responsible for these objectives and deadlines.

Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

A shortage of skills or abilities needs to be addressed by training and development. Where employees of an organisation are limited in their competency to fulfil relevant tasks a gap exists which needs to be evaluated. Sufficient time and resources should be allocated to creating an effective training needs analysis (Drummond, 2007).

TNA involves the monitoring of current performance levels such as observation, interviews and questionnaires, as well as anticipating potential shortfalls or problems in the future. Predominantly it should identify the level and type of training needed and analysing how best to provide adequate improvements. Three types of training needs are those that can be anticipated, those that arise from monitoring, and those which result from unexpected problems (Bee and Bee, 2003).

Methods of TNA include survey questionnaires, focus groups, interviews with relevant personnel, review of existing documents and data, and possibly discussions with a steering group or official bodies such as chambers of commerce and trade associations.

Surveys can amass a large amount of data, but this depends on the design of the questionnaire. When there are a number of close-ended questions the responses can be formulated to provide useful primary data. Open-ended questions will allow scope for varied responses, and although this data may be difficult to tabulate, more feedback and innovative ideas are usually provided. Surveys can be in written form or by using an online survey website. Certainly a problem with the latter is that

response rates can be low. A well-designed questionnaire is always required, but willingness to complete it by the respondents is crucial.

Focus groups can be more productive especially when it involves the prospective trainees and management combined. It must be considered however that responses from employees might be biased when their managers are present in the focus group. A solution to this might be two separate focus groups with the assurance of complete anonymity in order to gain a true picture of training needs.

Individual interviews can glean pertinent data and provided there is a structure to each interview, information may come to light that would not show in a survey. A questionnaire can be used but it should only be used as a template for gathering data. The respondent is more likely to feel at ease if their responses are confidential.

Review of existing documentation is another important measure of training needs analysis and should never be underestimated, particularly in larger organisations where regional differences may be important.

Training Needs Analysis for PowerPoint Skills

In the context of TNA required for this proposal, a number of considerations are taken into account. The personnel involved in creating, editing and presenting PowerPoints may range from secretaries, marketing departments, company representatives and senior managers. It is envisaged that training is directed towards the latter group, since it is likely they are in most need of updating their PowerPoint skills. Even if a secretary has created a PowerPoint slideshow, the senior manager may want to make adjustments and enhancements to the final document.

However, anyone who is involved in creating presentations should be involved in the methods necessary for TNA. A questionnaire is to be compiled using a template, although a variation will be customised especially for senior management. Perhaps the senior managers are not as skilled as their secretaries in using the presentation software; this is what is to be expected in the results of the analysis. Once the survey has been completed, the data obtained will be tabulated to determine whether there is a skills deficiency in this area.

Individual interviews are extremely important as pertinent enquiries into skill levels across all levels of staff are necessary. As with a survey, a general questionnaire template will be compiled. As many open-ended questions as possible are desirable.

A focus group on secretaries and office administrators into presentation skills will be organised, and if necessary this can be held online via video-conferencing if everyone is unable to attend a particular venue at the same time. A brief focus group with

senior management could be conducted as part of a regional or annual general meeting.

Existing documents i.e. PowerPoint designs already in use will be vital to ascertain the level of creative professionalism. This is crucial to see if training is required.

Instructional Design Model

A training programme is best formulated using an instructional design model. There are four key components in this process: the learners (the people who will receive the training); the methods (how the training will be delivered); the objectives (what the purpose of the training hopes to achieve); and evaluation - measuring how successful, or not, the training has closed the skills gap after the training has been completed.

An important acronym in instructional design is ADDIE – Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation. There is a multitude of instructional design models but one particular model is best suited to the proposed training programme – the Kemp, Morrison and Ross Process *(Appendix One)*.

This model has several advantages especially in relation to flexibility (Kemp *et al*, 2004). It is not structured with preset steps unlike many other instructional design models, so the trainer can start anywhere within the process and move around to adapt to the learners' needs. Therefore it works well in a classroom environment. It also considers instruction from the learner's perspective as paramount, and there is no need to employ formative or summative assessment.

Training Programme Plan

Aims and Objectives

Aims are defined as long-term goals to which a particular course is directed. They set out a determined course in order to reach a set target. Objectives are more specific and relate to required learning outcomes that will be achieved during a particular module or course.

In the context of this programme, one aim is to ensure the learner becomes proficient in creating professional and effective presentations. Specific objectives however, would include learning outcomes such as how to rehearse timings for a slideshow or saving a presentation into various file formats.

Lesson Plan Overview

Professional training requires that each learning objective is outlined in a lesson plan. Not only that, a lesson plan provides a detailed framework that guides the instruction to the learners and includes a number of important elements.

Apart from a title for the lesson plan including class details and level, an estimated time for each learning objective should be included preceding the respective learning outcome. This should be followed by the activities of the trainer and the task the

learners are to complete. Any resources such as manuals, handouts, and equipment necessary can be included in the lesson plan.

Any assessment or evaluation of the learning objectives needs to be emphasised. Many lesson plans follow the guidelines of Madeline Hunter and this structure is an excellent format to follow (Hunter, M, 1994).

Sample Programme Lesson Plan

Class: Advanced PowerPoint

Time: 1 Hour

Timing	Learning Outcome	Trainer Activities	Resources	Assessment
00:15	Insert a hyperlink onto a slide	Demonstrate how to copy a URL (web address) and insert a hyperlink in PowerPoint	Computers OHP PowerPoint Internet Browser	Allow the learners to repeat the task by themselves.
00:25	Format a hyperlink	Create new hyperlink. Include elements to the hyperlink such as a screen tip.	As above	Learners create a second hyperlink and test it to ensure it opens correctly.
00:20	Create a hyperlink to a separate file	Demonstrate how a hyperlink can direct to a file instead of a URL e.g. PDF document	As above including a PDF file	Give students formative assessment to create predetermined hyperlinks to URLs and PDFs.

Method of Delivery

Training for computer applications such as PowerPoint essentially comes in three forms: online, classroom, and a combination of both (blended learning). Online teaching can either be delivered by way of pre-recorded tutorials or by live virtual learning environments. The advantage of the former is that the trainee learns at their own speed and can move through different levels at their own pace. However, this may not be conducive if time constraints or learning disabilities are factors. Virtual learning using web-conferencing and desktop sharing is preferable, although in a group situation technical problems might hinder progress.

Classroom teaching is most effective because it is 'hands-on'. The trainer is physically there to instruct and guide the trainee through the learning outcomes. Depending on the size of the class, slower learners will dominate the pace of the lesson in hand, although a good trainer compensates for this by maintaining equilibrium in teaching style (Burke *et al*, 2004).

Manuals, whether hard or soft copy, are an important requisite to both online and classroom training. For the purposes of learning PowerPoint, both an ECDL and a MOS manual would be required.

Classroom teaching can accommodate a large number of students, although this method should also include one-to-one tuition, which is extremely productive as the learner has the full attention of the trainer.

For the purpose of training senior managers the PowerPoint software, the programme design starts with basic functions on one or two slides, and then working to build up a compilation of different slides to create a fully-functional presentation and slideshow. The advanced level of PowerPoint can only be accomplished when the learners are familiar with all aspects of slideshow design.

Accreditation

The NFQ (National Framework of Qualifications) consists of 10 levels which are standardised across Europe. The 'Fan Diagram' shows the different levels of qualifications *(Appendix Two)*. A number of awarding bodies including HETAC, now known as QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland), and eight universities are permitted to award qualifications from Levels 6 to 10. The length of time required to gain accreditation for a training programme is under review at this time, and the QQI intend to develop and finalise draft policies by September 2013.

In the case of the Advanced PowerPoint for Senior Managers program it is uncertain this will qualify for the NFQ unless it is a module within a larger course. The program would certainly fall into the category of a Level 6 award as the knowledge breadth is specialised. For it to be accredited to Level 7 it would have to be amalgamated with other modules.

There would be a possibility of accreditation as a Special Purpose Award and further enquiries in this direction would be advantageous. It should be noted that many

graduates of Level 6 and beyond lack computer proficiency to a high standard. Many courses underestimate the importance of expertise with word processing, spreadsheets and presentations.

Costing/Venue

A number of possible variations to the delivery of the programme make costing difficult to quantify. Much depends on whether all the senior managers i.e. trainees are available for classes at the same time. It may be necessary to accommodate those not based at head office by way of video-conferencing. It is also necessary to establish if the organisation has a room with enough computers to deliver classes, otherwise an additional cost will be the hire of a computer lab at another location. For the sake of simplicity it will be assumed that classes can be delivered in-house and therefore no cost is associated with the venue.

It should also be assumed that since the organisation requires training on PowerPoint which is used extensively, there would be no cost for software licences since these are already covered with Microsoft Office. Manuals will be required either in hard or soft copy. Hard copy manuals are expensive, but costs may be reduced by using soft copies instead. Handouts will also be available at no extra cost.

It is expected that each day's training will last approximately six hours, excluding lunch and 15-minute breaks twice a day. The cost of the trainer would be in the

region of €200-250 per day. Additional expenses such as hotel and travel costs would also be in the cost benefit analysis *(Appendix Three).*

The organisation itself would have to allow for salary and benefits in lieu while the participants are in training. Obviously while they are in training they are unable to carry out their regular tasks and engagements. Other costs such as electricity, cleaning and security are assumed to be static and so are not factored into the final accounts. A checklist should be available for health and safety purposes *(Appendix Four).*

Evaluation

Strategic learning is incomplete without methods of evaluation. Any organisation intent on improving work practices and improving productivity needs to ensure that there is a return on investment (ROI). Benefits of training require measurement in some form, even if these are difficult to evaluate. In the context of creating professional PowerPoint presentations, the likely outcome will be to increase turnover from new and existing clients, and to give the organisation competitive edge.

A popular model for the evaluation of training is the Kirkpatrick/Phillips Model *(Appendix Five)* because this can be utilised to forecast the ROI before any expenditure on training is approved. The formula for ROI is **Total Program Benefits** minus **Total Program Costs** divided by **Total Program Costs** multiplied by **100%**.

The initial Kirkpatrick Model (updated later by Phillips) quantifies training through five different levels. A chain of impact should occur through each of these levels starting with the planned action to undertake training through to the return on investment.

Level 1 – Reaction, Satisfaction and Planned Action attempts to measure the trainees' satisfaction with a program along with their expectations and plans as how to use what they have learnt from the training. This level however does not guarantee the trainees have actually acquired new skills or will use them in their work tasks.

Level 2 – Learning is measured by assessments, simulations, group evaluations and skills practice. At this level a clearer idea of how the trainees have gained new skills is obtained, although this still does not guarantee they will use the acquired knowledge in a work scenario.

Level 3 – Behaviour, Application and Implementation; much greater measurement can be obtained as to how the trainees use the new skills and knowledge in the day-to-day work environment. By this level a clearer idea of the success of training is observed, although it still does not guarantee that business outcomes will be positive.

Level 4 – Business Impact; an improved measurement of training, showing the extent work practices and efficiency have changed. By this level factors such as quality, output, savings in time and cost, can be evaluated. Although providing a clearer idea of the benefits of training, it still does not ensure that the program's costs are a worthwhile investment.

Level 5 – Return on Investment. This is crucial for management to establish whether the training has any financial benefit. Sometimes the costs of training fail to provide sufficient improvements in work practices and funding would be better allocated in other investments. To ensure a reasonable ROI, this level must establish whether or not the training is beneficial to the organisation.

The Phillips model goes beyond the Kirkpatrick model by the technique of 'isolation'. Other factors which determine the success of training are taken into account, such as the competitive environment, seasonal effects, interest rate changes, marketing promotions, employee incentives, and other temporary factors which add to business improvements. Intangibles are also covered by the Phillips model, which is vitally important because some factors are difficult to quantify as a return on investment (Creelman and Ulrich, 2006). Such aspects as customer and employee satisfaction cannot reliably be quantified in monetary values. For example, how many more new clients an organisation will gain by upskilling work practices is often an unknown quantity.

The ROI process will also evaluate whether the quality of training programs is sufficient and if training meets its objectives. Any potential strengths or weakness can be identified with the ROI evaluation process.

Two critical stages in the Phillips ROI Model are data collection and data analysis. Evaluation of outcomes can take many forms and the most appropriate methods will vary between organisations and the type of training programme.

Tests and assessments quantify how much can be learnt by the trainees. Interviews are useful to establish reaction to new work practices, and focus groups also provide important feedback as to the potential success for training in the future, or the success of previous training programs. Follow-up surveys and questionnaires provide an excellent method of data collection, provided the right questions are asked. On-the-job observation is also an effective method of training evaluation.

Data analysis refers to methods of evaluating all factors associated with new training programs, especially adding in isolation strategies. Control groups are effective in isolating the impact of training, where the outcomes of a pilot group of trainees are compared to the outcomes of employees who did not undergo the same training program. Trend lines can also be used in data analysis to determine whether anticipated improvements match benefits to outcomes.

Critical Evaluation of Teaching Practice

My teaching style tends towards a hands-on approach. Rather than stand up in front of a class operating the overhead projector via one computer, I prefer to go around to each learner and guide them through each learning outcome. I can only teach as fast as my slowest student so I tend to concentrate on bringing everyone up to speed.

Behaviourism (Pavlov, Skinner) would not be my teaching style, although I may use positive reinforcement at times. The behaviourist theory defines learning as a change in behaviour in the learner, and personally I do not believe this necessarily applies to teaching computer software.

Cognitivism (Gagne) is more appropriate to my learning style because knowledge is measured based on personal experience and hypotheses of the environment. The mental processes involved with working with computer software are cognisant within this paradigm.

Constructivism (Bruner, Vygotsky) however is the closest alignment to my teaching style, where I allow the learner to build on their previous knowledge of computer applications. Each learner will have a different interpretation on their own style of creating presentations and slideshows, and therefore they will construct new knowledge whichever way they are taught.

From a personality test recently completed my results were not surprising. I am in the green zone of the Insights Wheel and tend to be a 'helper' *(Appendix Five)*. My teaching philosophy is enhanced by my view of the learner wanting to acquire new knowledge and skills.

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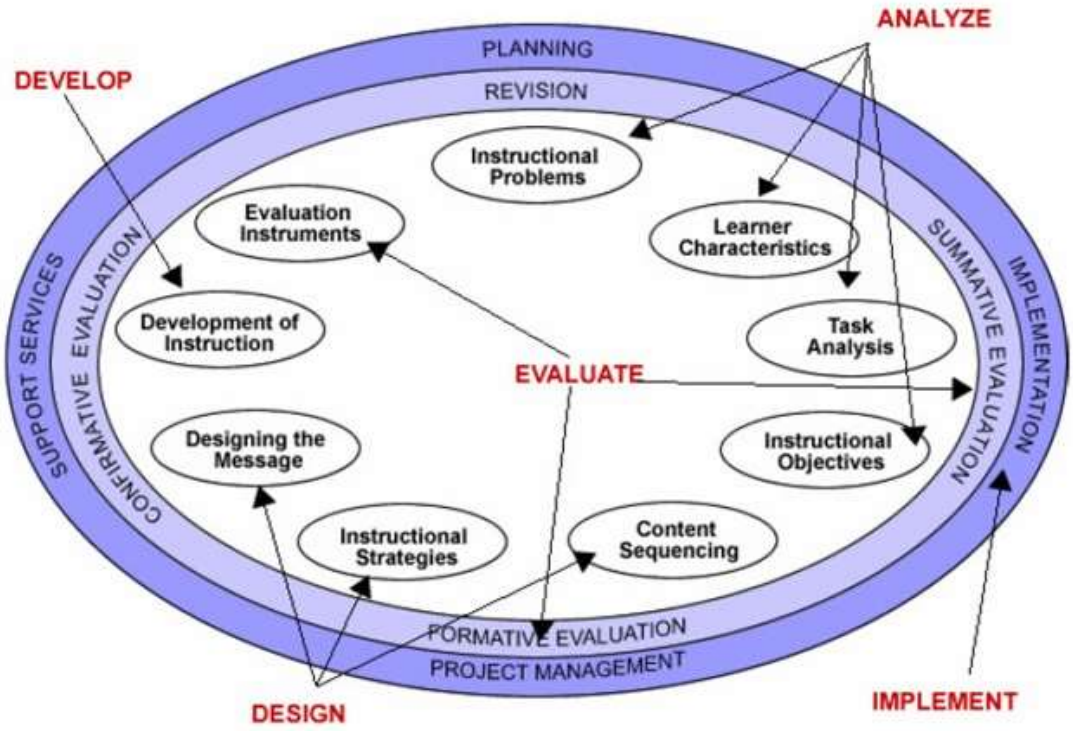
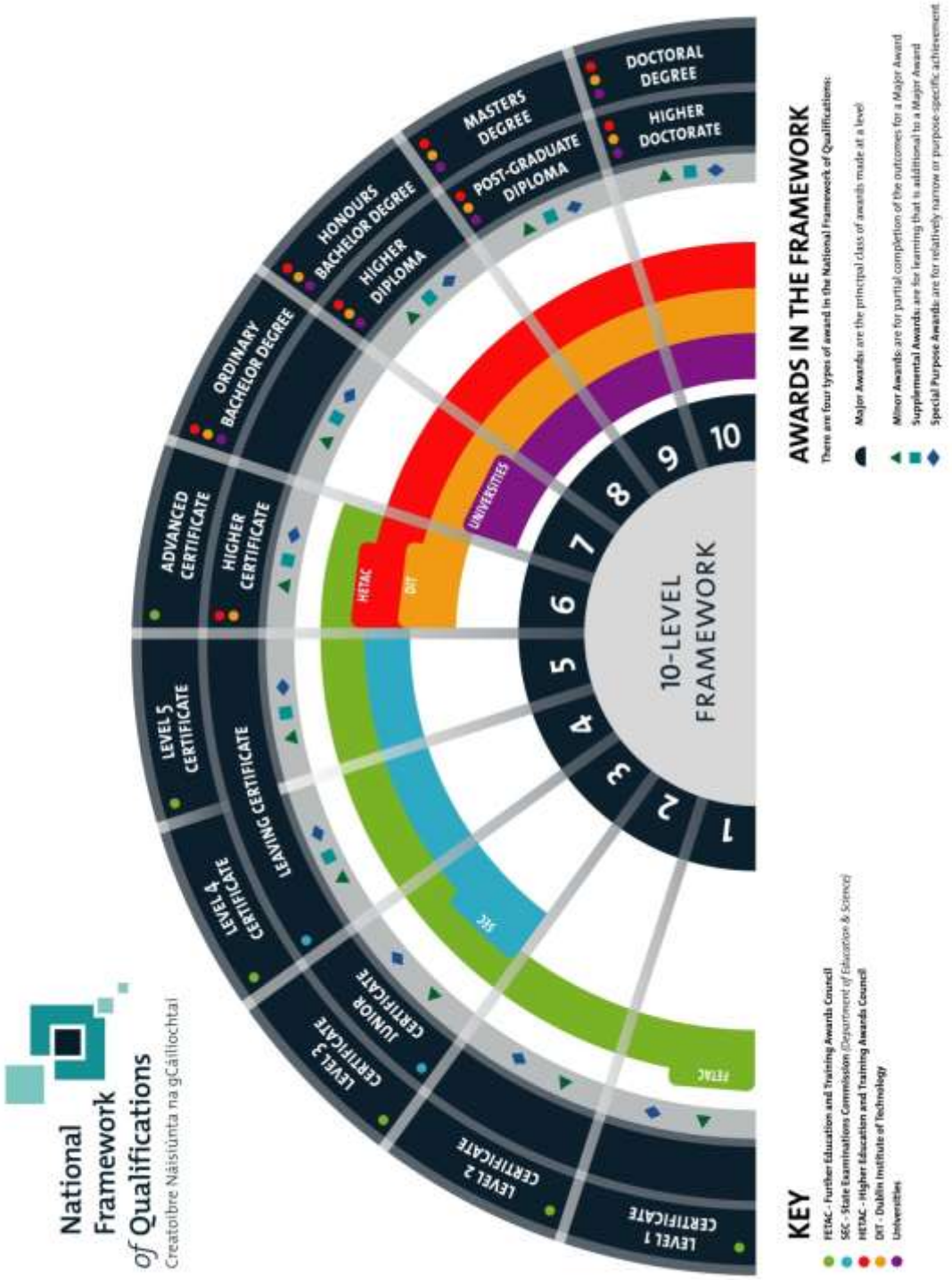
Appendix One

Morrison, Ross, Kemp Instructional Design Model



Appendix Two

NFQ Fan Diagram



Appendix Three

Return on Investment Calculations

	Inhouse programme	
		€
1	Programme design costs	1,000
2	Programme Materials	200
3	Tutor / facilitator costs	1,200
4	Venue costs	
5	Travel & Subsistence	100
6	Salaries & overhead charges of participants	
7	Admin & overhead costs of training function	
8	Cost of replacement staff	
9	Refreshments	50
10	Venue costs	
	total	2,550

ROI $\frac{\text{Net Programme Benefit}}{\text{Programme Costs}} \times 100$

The monetary benefit to the organisation is	€12,000
The cost of training for one participant	€2,550
	4.71
X	100
ROI	471%
Cost Benefit	€12,000
Divided by	€2,550
	€4.71

for every €1 spent on training
Benefit €4.71

Appendix Four

VENUE CHECKLIST

Location Details	
Venue Name	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
eMail	
Website Address	
Manager/Principal Name	

Procedure

Unico Computer College will conduct a feasibility audit of the training venue facilities prior to commencement of courses to ensure there is free access to both staff and learners.

Checklist

Yes ☐ No ☐	Does the facility have a Health and Safety Certificate? If yes, then obtain copies for records
Yes ☐ No ☐	Does the centre have a Health and Safety Policy If yes, then obtain copies for records
Yes ☐ No ☐	Does the facility have wheelchair access if required
Yes ☐ No ☐	Does the facility have wheelchair access to a rest room
Yes ☐ No ☐	Does the facility have wheelchair access to a rest room
Yes ☐ No ☐	Is the proposed training facility accessible to a wheelchair
Yes ☐ No ☐	Is the facility safe, hygienic and comfortable
Yes ☐ No ☐	Des the facility have a designated person with responsibility for facilitating the course?
Yes ☐ No ☐	Can the facility provide all the required training room equipment to facilitate a successful delivery of the course
Yes ☐ No ☐	Is the training room removed from noise and external distractions
Yes ☐ No ☐	Can the facility provide facilities to facilitate breakout group work sessions
Yes ☐ No ☐	Can it provide for tea/coffee/lunch breaks
Yes ☐ No ☐	Is the facility Adult in layout and furnishings
Yes ☐ No ☐	Is there assessable parking in the facility or nearby

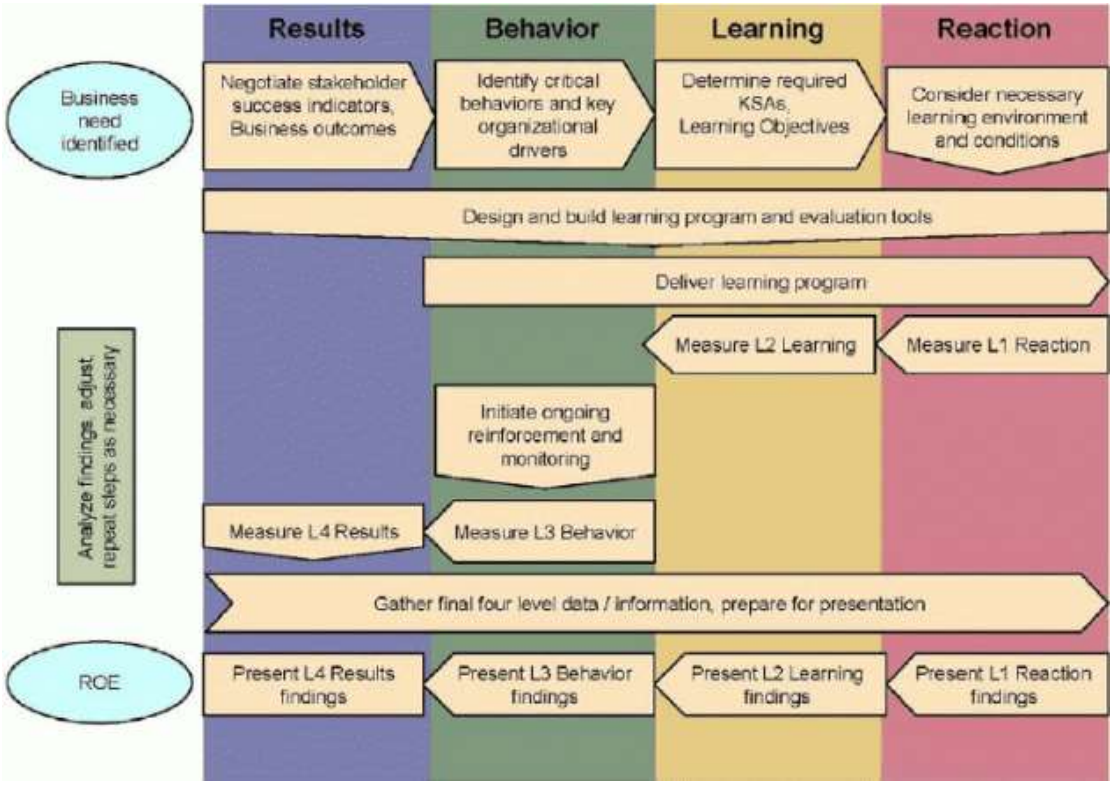
Comments

All issues have been addressed and the facility is acceptable for delivery of the course.	
Signed: **(Location Co-ordinator)**	
Print Name	
Date	
Signed: **(Facility representative)**	
Print Name	
Date	

Note: If a trainer identifies any equality related issues during the pursuance of the training programme, such issue will be documented and raised with the Programme Director for immediate action.

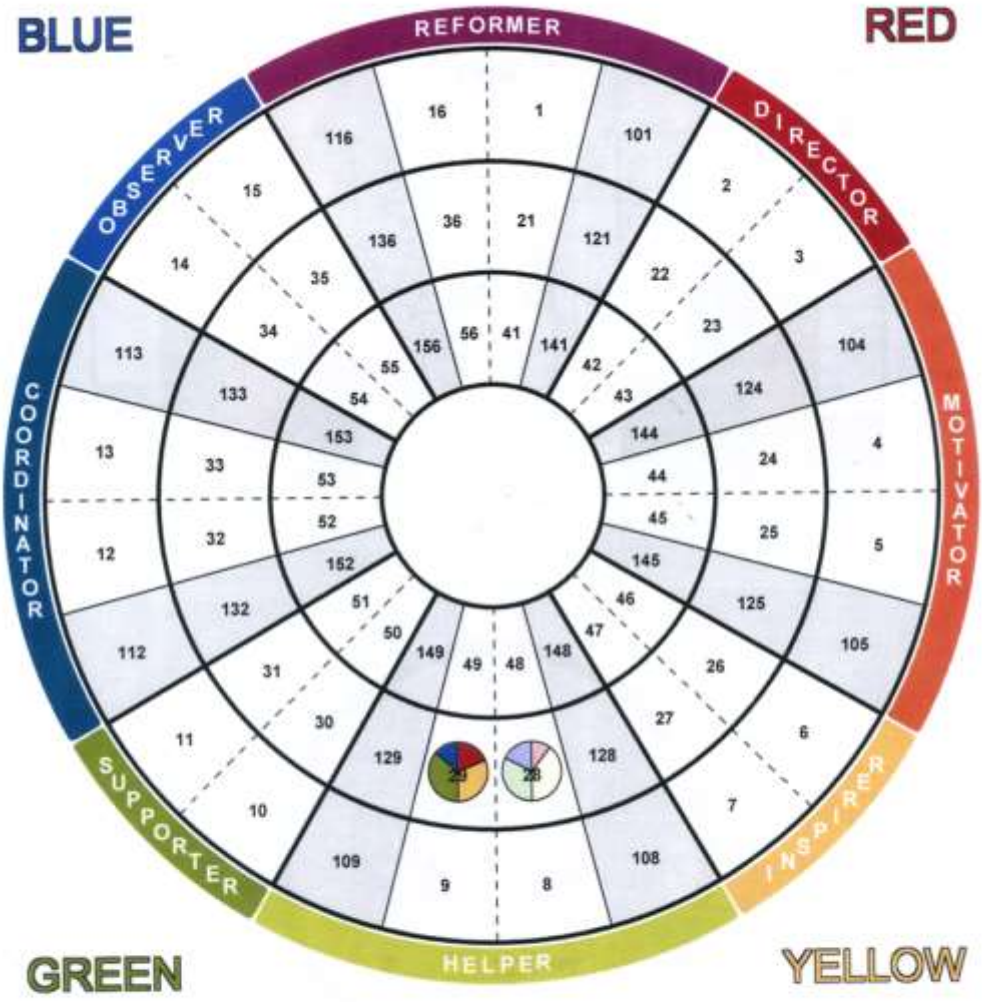
Appendix Five

Kirkpatrick Return on Expectations



Appendix Six

Insights Wheel



Conscious Wheel Position
29: Supporting Helper (Classic)

Personal (Less Conscious) Wheel Position
28: Inspiring Helper (Classic)