

# **NDS Quality information pack**

**An NDS Quality Team Initiative**

**Training and development**



**National Disability Services**

Queensland

## A message from the NDS Queensland Quality Team

The National Disability Services (NDS) Queensland Quality Team is part of NDS's Industry Development and Support activities. It was set up to support disability organisations to implement the new Disability Sector Quality System. The purpose of this information pack written by the NDS Quality Team is to stimulate discussion and debate amongst stakeholders of disability services in the context of implementing the Disability Sector Quality System — it is not intended as a definitive reference on the topic.

For example, this material may be used as a basis for stakeholder workshops or staff meeting discussions. It may also be adapted freely to meet the needs of any intended audience. It is requested, however, that NDS Queensland be acknowledged as the source of the material and that any modifications do not change the intent or compromise the integrity of the original document.

Information packs are also available covering the following topics:

- reviewing and developing policies and procedures
- recruitment and selection
- induction
- networking, mentoring and peer support
- person-centred planning.

These can be downloaded from the NDS Quality website: [www.ndsqldquality.net](http://www.ndsqldquality.net) or you can contact NDS Queensland directly:

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### The information pack

This information pack is one in a series designed to help organisations review aspects of management as part of implementing a quality framework. The pack includes a series of information sheets, related questions and a facilitator's session plan that can be used by groups to review current practice and identify improvements. The information sheets are intended to stimulate discussion — they do not go into detail about the topic. There are numerous books, resources, courses, Internet sites and experts that can provide detailed information; some of these are listed in the resources section at the end of the pack. Accessing more detailed expertise will become more important as you move further into review or begin making improvements to practice.

For the facilitator it will be important to familiarise and tailor the workshop to the group and the organisation. Your organisation's policies, procedures and any other resources for each topic will be needed to supplement the information in this pack. Similarly if the organisation is using the disability service standards as part of this review each participant will need copies of the standards.

### About the topic

Organisations decide to provide training or development for staff members or volunteers for a range of reasons. Given the scarcity of resources, making decisions about who will be trained in what, and by whom, must be done carefully. Training and development opportunities are more than just attending a training session run by a facilitator — thinking creatively about how people learn best, leads to many alternative ways of setting up learning experiences for staff and volunteers.

Information about what training needs to happen comes from many sources:

- recruitment
- induction
- performance management
- training needs analysis
- organisational plans.

Analysing this type of information and taking time to set objectives or desired outcomes will increase the effectiveness of the organisation's resources spent on training and development.

There are many ways to support a person to apply what they have learnt during training and development. Working with individuals to help them do this will increase the likelihood of improvements in performance.

Evaluating training will help future decision-making about where best to spend the organisation's training resources.

## **The contents**

This resource will help you to review the way your organisation trains and develops staff members and help determine if there are any changes or improvements you can make. The pack contains information covering:

- benefits of training and development and some assumptions to challenge
- obligations
- what is training and development — what does it look like
- training and development in focus (discussion questions)
- sample workshop design and facilitator notes
- other resources.

The information in this pack can also be used to consider how best to train and develop volunteers — these processes are often the same as, or a simplified version of, those used for paid staff. If you do use it in relation to volunteers please substitute 'volunteers' when reading the word 'staff'.

# Benefits of training and development and some assumptions to challenge

Information sheet



This sheet lists some of the benefits of, and the assumptions about, training and development. Participants will probably be able to think of more of these.

## Benefits

Some of the key benefits of training and development include:

- staff members and volunteers have the skills and qualifications needed to fulfil their roles
- performance issues can be dealt with as soon as they arise
- staff members and volunteers are more effective in a shorter time frame
- helping to reduce turnover and staff turnover costs
- helping to reduce exposure to workers' compensation costs or legal expenses
- provides an opportunity to provide support and give feedback
- provides an opportunity to discuss problems and identify solutions
- ensures service user needs are being met
- provides an opportunity to devise plans to deal with the future
- provides an opportunity for staff to hear what is expected of them
- provides an opportunity to establish strengths and weaknesses
- provides an opportunity to acknowledge good practice and performance
- reduces errors and inefficiencies.

## Some assumptions to challenge

Common assumptions about training and development include:

- all training and development is good
- training and development is only about attending training sessions
- training and development of staff is entirely the responsibility of the organisation
- attending a training session will result in a person being able to apply a new skill or new information.
- having no training budget means that no development can occur.



This information sheet is not meant to be a definitive list of the legislative or organisational obligations relating to training and development. It is meant to highlight that there are some responsibilities that organisations must address. If there are queries or concerns you can get more information directly from the legislation, standard or relevant governing body — it is important to be fully and accurately informed.

## The disability service standards

In order to demonstrate that the organisation meets *Standard 10: Staff recruitment, employment and development*, you must be able to show that you have a clear approach to training and development and that you implement this in a consistent and transparent manner.

## Other legislation

There are other pieces of legislation that influence training and development decisions.

- **Workplace health and safety (WH&S) legislation:** one of the ways of meeting the obligations of employers in the WH&S legislation is to ensure that staff members have the information, knowledge and skills to fulfil their role safely at all times.
- **Anti-discrimination legislation:** as an employer there are obligations under the various discrimination acts to ensure staff have an understanding of appropriate workplace behaviours at all times.

These require organisations to ensure that training and development is provided on an ongoing basis and that staff members can demonstrate their understanding at any point in time.

## Reducing exposure to risk

Good training and development is frequently used as a method for reducing exposure to risks such as:

- staff turnover and associated costs
- workers' compensation costs.

# What is training and development — what does it look like?

Information sheet



## What is training and development?

Training and development is not just about sitting in a classroom or a training room and being taught a new skill. It can include:

- attending formal training courses
- attending a conference, seminar or information session
- on-the-job training
- self-paced training
- job shadowing or buddying
- mentoring
- coaching
- job swapping, relieving other staff or acting in other positions
- project work
- networking.

It is about creating an experience where a person can learn a new skill, gain some knowledge or view something from a new perspective. Good training and development will have an objective and the success can be measured at the end of the training or development.

## Why train and develop staff?

Organisations decide to provide training or development for staff members or volunteers for a range of reasons. Some of these include:

- introducing a staff member or volunteer to a new role
- improving performance of an individual, team or organisation
- preparing for changes in the role or in technology
- preparing for a promotion or role change
- meeting legislative obligations.

## What are some of the processes that organisations have in place to address training and development?

There are a number of processes that organisations use to address training and development. Some common processes are explored below.

### Induction

When a staff member or volunteer begins with an organisation the first step in their training and development is induction. For more information on induction refer to the *NDS Quality Team Induction information package*.



## Performance management

An important part of staff development is ongoing performance management. Good performance management is about regular conversations between a manager and staff member about their expectations of each other and about performance. It also ensures the staff member has the skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of the role. Usually this conversation covers topics such as:

- plans and objectives
- work performance
- career aspirations
- training/development/support needs.

As a result of these conversations there will be a plan documenting that verbal agreement and highlighting any actions around development or support that need to happen. By having regular conversations issues can be dealt with as early as possible and any training or development needs can be identified and acted upon.

## Specific individual training and development

Individual training and development needs can arise from:

- **Recruitment:** a candidate may have been recruited knowing that there was some training needed to fulfil the job requirements.
- **Induction:** as the new staff member learns about their role and the manager is observing their performance, training or development needs can be identified.
- **Performance management:** during the conversations discussed above some specific training needs may be discovered.
- **Job changes or career aspirations:** where a role changes or a staff member takes up a different role there may be training or development needs as part of this change.

## Service-wide or organisational-wide training and development

There will also be training and development needs at a service or organisational level. These may arise from events such as:

- **Organisational planning:** determining the future of the organisation may require changes to the skills and abilities of the organisation's staff or volunteer group over the period of the plan. As part of the organisational planning process there may be a need to articulate what additional skills or knowledge will be required to achieve the plan. This is then reviewed when the organisational plan is reviewed.
- **Changes to legislation:** changes in legislation often require organisations to update staff knowledge on different areas (e.g. WH&S, discrimination etc.).



- **Changes within the organisation's environment:** often changes like this will occur with little time or resources to adjust and require staff members to learn new skills (e.g. a change to funding requirements or changes in technology etc.).

## **What does the training and development process involve?**

Training and development can be described as a three-phase process: diagnosis, delivery and evaluation.

### **Phase 1 — diagnosis**

This usually involves gathering information about training needs, analysing it and then determining the objectives to meet the required training and development.

Careful identification of training needs is important for ensuring effective resource allocation. Training needs can be identified by:

- the individual
- the manager
- individual planning process
- viewing service appraisals, performance information or quality audits
- listening to service users and their family members
- reviewing complaints or grievances
- organisational planning.

Training needs analysis often refers to an organisation-wide process of identifying training needs required in the workforce to improve performance. It determines who needs to be involved, who can deliver the training and development needed and what outcomes are required. A training needs analysis can be as simple as asking people what needs to happen or it can be a process of objective assessment against a set of competencies or standards.

Invariably there will be more training and development needed than the organisation has the capacity to deliver. You will often have to prioritise and allocate resources based on the information gathered in the training needs analysis. Often organisations choose to develop a multiple-year training plan in order to address all of the training and development identified.

It is important to set out the expected outcomes of training or development. This may be in the form of performance improvement, skill acquisition and application, or knowledge gained.

### **Phase 2 — delivery**

Delivery is about:

- sourcing, designing or setting up the training and development
- delivering and applying the learning in the workplace.



If your organisation decides formal training is the best method, you can access this through a number of places including:

- group training organisations
- traineeships
- TAFE
- private registered training organisations
- universities
- industry bodies.

If informal training will best meet your needs this can be as simple as developing a learning goal and outlining a series of events or steps for the learning to take place. There are a large number of resources available especially for generic skill groups such as management, communication, computer skills etc.

Financial resources play a significant role during this phase and can influence what training you can deliver. While training and development is about investing in people to meet the organisation's objectives, finding the financial resources is often one of the major hurdles. There are ways to reduce the investment required, for example:

- carefully planning and prioritising training needs can help to optimise training expenditure
- grouping with other organisations within the sector; training needs can be very similar and working with other organisations may reduce the resources required
- funding is available for organisations under traineeships and the Disability Sector Training Fund
- use the skills of the organisation's staff and volunteers — often the work experience and skills of these individuals can be surprisingly useful
- increase value for investment by giving staff members who have been trained the opportunity to share their learning and ensure that there are people available to reinforce and support the application of that skill.

Training and development is a lot more effective when a manager is aware of the learning goal and supports individuals to apply this learning in the workplace. It is easy to be enthusiastic at a training course and ready to try it all out in the workplace only to get waylaid in the day-to-day requirements. By having the support of a manager, the staff member is better placed to apply learning in the workplace.

It is important to keep records of training for future reference, evaluation and budgeting purposes. It can also demonstrate the process of training and development during an evaluation or even during any legal processes. Records can also help to assess career progression of staff.



### **Phase 3 — evaluation**

Evaluation is an important step in determining if the investment has been effective and the training and development goals have been achieved. An evaluation can be as simple as asking the participant and their manager to evaluate the on-the-job response, conducting surveys or compiling a cost-benefit analysis.

These questions aim to help you understand how training and development works in your organisation and what might need to change. To get the most out of these questions locate a copy of the organisation's training and development policy/procedure (if one exists) and read the '*What is training and development — what does it look like?*' information sheet before answering them.

### How it happens now...

- Describe how training and development happens here.

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- What works really well about the way it happens here?

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### How it relates to what we want to achieve...

- How does this relate to what is written in our policy and procedure documents or, if none exist, what we want to achieve?

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- How does this reinforce our vision, mission and values?

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- In what ways does this not reinforce our vision, mission and values?

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### How can we better align 'how it happens now' to 'what we want to achieve'...

- What could we do to improve the way it works here?

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- What could we do to better align the way it happens here with our vision, mission and values?

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## Sample workshop outline


Information for facilitators


This section of the information pack provides a sample workshop that can be used to explore and plan for improving training and development practices within your organisation. For more information on how to conduct the workshop refer to the *Tips for facilitators* information sheet.

To prepare for the workshop make sure all participants have access to at least the *Training and development in focus* discussion questions and the information sheet on *What is training and development — what does it look like?*

You may wish to include training and development of volunteers in your review. With a few alterations this session can include both staff and volunteers or you can run separate workshops using this sample outline.

Time	Suggested questions & prompts	Actions	
	<p><b>Welcome and introductions</b></p> <p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>Ask participants to introduce themselves and talk about the newest skill they have and how did they learn it?</p> <p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>To review the effectiveness of the way we train and develop staff.</p> <p><b>Alignment question</b></p> <p>In this workshop/meeting/in-service, we are seeking some alignment (everyone being on the same page), not necessarily agreement on all points.</p> <p><i>Note: To assist with this, ask: 'How can we be more aligned as a group?'</i></p>	<p>Write up the response and refer to it as needed to keep group on track.</p>	
	<p><b>Overview of the session</b></p> <p>In this session we will be sharing our thoughts about training and development in this organisation with the aim of evaluating its effectiveness. To do this we will work through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ reminding ourselves of the business are we in</li> <li>▪ sharing our reflections from the discussion questions</li> <li>▪ looking for themes that come from our reflections</li> <li>▪ sharing our thinking about the information</li> </ul>		

Time	Suggested questions & prompts	Actions	
	<p>around what is training and development and our related obligations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discuss what this means for how we train and develop and decide what we want to change in this process (if anything).</li> </ul>		
	<b>What business are we in?</b>		
	<p>Revisit the organisation's vision, mission and values.</p> <p>How does this relate to training and development?</p>	Group discussion (large or small groups).	
	<b>Sharing our reflections from the discussion questions</b>		
	<p>What is the current process for training and development in the organisation?</p> <p>Ask each participant to share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>two strengths about the way training and development happens now</li> <li>two ways in which the way training and development happens now aligns with how we said we were going to do training and development</li> <li>two ways in which training and development could be improved.</li> </ul>	<p>Group discussion with facilitator recording the steps.</p> <p>Write these up on post-it notes grouped under the three headings.</p>	
	<b>Looking for themes from our reflections</b>		
	Once finished asked participants for a word or short description of the themes.		
	<b>Discussing 'What is training and development — what does it look like?'</b>		
	<p>Discuss people's thoughts around the information on <i>'What is training and development — what does it look like?'</i> and our obligations around training and development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What was surprising?</li> <li>What was new information?</li> </ul>	Group discussion.	
	<b>Where to from here</b>		
	<p>Recap on the themes that came from reflections and discuss these in light of the information <i>'What is training and development — what does it look like?'</i></p> <p>What do we want to change in the way we train and</p>	Write up an action plan, indicating the priority, which person is to be responsible and when. Include a review date.	

Time	Suggested questions & prompts	Actions	
	<p>develop our staff?</p> <p>What is the priority, the benefit and the resources required of these actions?</p>		
	<b>Conclusion</b>		
	<p>Review the discussions held and summarise the actions agreed.</p> <p>Is there anything that you wish to change or add?</p> <p>Explain how and when the group will get feedback on what happens next (ideally within two weeks of workshop).</p>		
	<b>Thanks and acknowledgements</b>		

The following tips aim to help facilitators conduct the workshop provided in this information pack.



**Important note:** The session plan has been written assuming that people from the same workplace (or organisation) are working together on the issue and how it pertains to their organisation. The session plan will need to be altered if this is not the case.

### Preparation

- Provide pre-reading information with enough time for the participants to digest it and have a chance to ask questions before the session begins. The pre-reading information will include the information sheets from this information package, the disability service standards and any policy/procedural information that is relevant to the topic.
- Gather information about the room, food, timing and travel requirements of the participants prior to organising the session and venue.
- Familiarise yourself with the session materials and if necessary adapt them to the group's characteristics and experiences for example: break into smaller groups for discussions or activities; think about the time you have for each activity and mark these on your workshop plan in the time column; allow time for extra activities if needed; or use two facilitators if working with a large group).
- Consider covering the associated costs for participants with disabilities e.g. transport, childcare, attendant carers etc.

### During the session

- Take care to validate all contributions.
- Be flexible with timing and frequency of breaks. Aim for a break every hour. Allow more time for breaks if the interactions during these breaks are flowing freely (relationship building is the best outcome and worth sacrificing time spent on workshop content).
- Don't start by knowing the answers — participants will pick this up. The intention is to explore the possibilities, not confirm solutions you have already identified.
- When you are recording discussions make sure you label the information as you collect it to make the collation after the session easier.
- Keep an eye on all participants and their level of interaction; follow up with any individuals who may not be fully participating to see if there is any assistance that could be provided to increase their level of involvement.

### After the session

- Always thank and acknowledge all participants (including staff) and those who helped organise the session.
- Make sure feedback is provided within two weeks of the workshop (be realistic when you give a timeframe at the end of the workshop).

## **Tips on conducting the sample workshop**

### **Introductions**

- The introduction part of the workshop can be altered to suit the group and the facilitator. The activity listed in the session plan is designed to warm people up to the topic, be a non-threatening sharing activity and to make sure everyone is aware of who is in the room. If people do not know each other you may wish to spend more time on this to ensure all participants are comfortable.
- You may agree on some ground rules for the session. If so these should be recorded and remain in sight of the group throughout the session.

### **Alignment activity**

- This activity is about creating a good atmosphere for the group to work with each other on the session tasks. It is worth spending as much time as is required on this activity before progressing. The outcome will have a huge impact on whether the group will achieve the purpose of the session.
- The alignment discussion is designed to identify individual perspectives and how this will affect the work of the group. The more strongly aligned, the easier it will be to attack the workshop topic.
- One of the keys to successful group work is having an environment where there can be debate, questioning, curiosity, enquiry, disagreement and agreement around the topic at hand without personal agendas preventing all the issues being discussed.
- If people do raise significant concerns about whether they can work together you will need to facilitate a discussion to explore this. If this takes up the entire session the outcome will still be worthwhile.

### **Overview of the session**

- Check with the participants about whether this meets their expectations and spend time clarifying and agreeing on how you will be spending the rest of the session.

### **What business are we in?**

- This activity is designed to provide the context for the discussion. If there is disagreement on the vision, mission and values stop the session and discuss this issue. Agreeing on the vision, mission and values is vital for any of the work outlined in the session plan.

### **The next few activities (reflection and discussion)**

- These require people to have read the pre-reading. If this has not happened you may need to give people time to individually read the information.

### **Where to from here**

- This activity is the planning part of the session. Your role as a facilitator will be to ensure this is recorded and test out the feasibility of the plan. The plan needs to be owned, resourced and be reasonably practical to achieve.
- This write-up is able to be used as evidence of review of practice for the service audits; ensure the documentation is appropriate.

The information contained in this pack will not provide enough detail for more in-depth work on improving training and development programmes. The following list of resources is not exhaustive, however it is a useful place to start.

- *The Little Book of Coaching, Motivating People to be Winners*: Ken Blanchard and Don Shula
- *Retaining Staff — Teach Yourself series*: by Edward Peppitt
- *Training and Development Handbook* R. Fritz (1987) McGraw - Hill
- *The DSQ People Management Toolkit*: provides extensive information of Staff Performance Management, Training Needs Analysis and Accessing Training generally:  
[www.disability.qld.gov.au](http://www.disability.qld.gov.au) (or follow these links from the home page: Community involvement > Workforce planning > People management toolkit)
- *Department of Employment and Training (DET)*: [www.det.qld.gov.au](http://www.det.qld.gov.au)
- *National Training Information Service*: [www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au)
- *TAFE Qld*: [www.tafeonline.qld.edu.au](http://www.tafeonline.qld.edu.au)
- *The Qld Community Services and Health Training Council*: [www.qcshitc.org.au](http://www.qcshitc.org.au)
- *Australian Human Resources Institute*: [www.ahri.com.au](http://www.ahri.com.au)
- *Australian Institute of Training and Development*: [www.aitd.com.au](http://www.aitd.com.au)
- *CCH Human Resource Management — CCH Australia Ltd*: this is a subscription service which is free of charge [www.cch.com.au](http://www.cch.com.au)
- *Australian Standards*: this website publishes a range of standards and guides to assist managers in a whole range of processes: [www.standards.com.au](http://www.standards.com.au)
- *Disability Online*: [www.disability.qld.gov.au](http://www.disability.qld.gov.au)
- *Department of Education and Training*: [www.training.qld.gov.au](http://www.training.qld.gov.au)



**Please note:** These resources were current at the time of publication, however some website addresses or page links may change without our knowledge.