

Presentation Skills

Performing a Needs Analysis

A needs analysis measures what skills employees have -- and what they need. It indicates how to deliver the right training at the right time. The results answer the following questions:

1. What is the **audience** with the problem or need for change?
2. What **tasks** and subtasks does an expert perform to complete a work process?
3. What **gaps** exist between experts, average, and poor performers of a work process?
4. How do we translate the needs into objectives to promote a strong learning **outcome**?

Preparing Mentally

Visualization is the formation of mental visual images. It is an excellent way to prepare your mind before a presentation. There are several types of visualization:

- **Receptive visualization:** Relax, clear your mind, sketch a vague scene, ask a question, and wait for a response. You might imagine you are on the beach, hearing and smelling the sea. You might ask, "Why can't I relax?", and the answer may flow into your consciousness.
- **Programmed Visualization:** Create an image, giving it sight, taste, sound, and smell. Imagine a goal you want to reach, or a healing you wish to accelerate. Jane used visualization when she took up running, feeling the push of running the hills, the sweat, and the press to the finish line.
- **Guided Visualization:** Visualize again a scene in detail, but this time leave out important elements. Wait for your subconscious to supply missing pieces to your puzzle. Your scene could be something pleasant from the past.

Listening and Hearing: They Aren't the Same Thing

Hearing is the act of perceiving sound by the ear. Assuming an individual is not hearing-impaired, hearing simply happens. Listening, however, is something that one consciously chooses to do. Listening requires concentration so that the brain processes meaning from words and sentences. Listening leads to learning.

This is not always an easy task. The normal adult rate of speech is 100-150 words per minute, but the brain can think at a rate of 400-500 words per minute, leaving extra time for daydreaming, or anticipating the speaker's or the recipient's next words. Listening skills, however, can be learned and refined.

