

What Should You Do When Trapped Between a Meager Budget and Limited Training Time?

By Gary Turner, Turner Consulting

Caught in a Constant Dilemma

A training manager at a gas and oil company's large corporate office in Texas needed help. The company had a "lunch and learn" culture that expected them to coordinate 35-45 minute presentations for weekly brown-bag get-togethers.

For years, in-house experts discussed topics like accounting, project management, drilling processes, employee benefits, IT security, and more. While the training manager appreciated how knowledgeable speakers taught relevant topics and raised employees' levels of engagement and motivation, they noted that they were frequently trapped between a meager budget, limited time for scheduling, and the executive sponsor's growing love for ancillary topics.

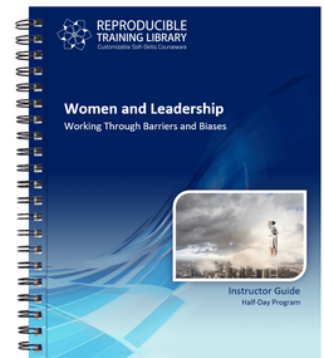
It became more challenging to prepare speakers and topics far enough in advance to announce them. There was more pressure added to hold specific training sessions that discussed women and leadership in a male-dominated culture, but the manager had trouble locating materials and speakers in time.



A Surprising Solution

The training manager sounded surprised at the suggestion of planning a "Topic of the Month" based on the subject using HRDQ's Reproducible Training Library (RTL).

This valuable collection contains more than 90 customizable and reproducible soft skills training titles and covers a wide range of topics. Each title is built for a half-day, four-hour workshop, but they are completely customizable and highly versatile, and easily turned into their 45-minute desired format.



Crafting a Custom Workshop

The Reproducible Training Library program, *Women and Leadership*, was a perfect fit for what the team needed. I helped solve the company's problem by proposing that we break this course down into four weekly sessions:

- Week 1: Challenges Women Face in Becoming Leaders
- Week 2: Inward-Focused Leadership Skills
- Week 3: Outward-Focused Leadership Skills
- Week 4: Planning Your Growth

The client took the program, ran with it, and attendance in every course grew as word spread about how exciting and productive these sessions were.

It was easy to create a two-sided handout for each topic while formulating thorough instructor notes and a slideshow for every session. We even varied the primary instructional strategy for each of the four topics to make them more interesting.

- Week 1: Partner-Sharing the Challenges (Interactive Brainstorming)
- Week 2: Assessment of Limitations (Personal Reflection)
- Week 3: Skill-Building (Written and Oral Practice)
- Week 4: Action Planning (Charting)

Once we quickly compiled the materials, my client recruited an in-house director to serve as a session facilitator. They took the program, ran with it, and attendance in every course grew as word spread about how exciting and productive these sessions were.

Engaging, Relevant, and Meaningful Sessions

After our success, my client went on to create numerous “Topic of the Month” courses using the RTL. Some of the topics included Solid Business Writing, Resilience, Multi-Generational Workplace, Critical Thinking, Managing Emotions, and others.

The Bottom Line

The training manager, their executive sponsors, and their corporate office clients were all extremely pleased with the interesting, relevant, and meaningful four-week sessions.

About the Author

Gary Turner is an award-winning trainer and consultant and has over 30 years of professional experience with major corporations such as M&M Mars, Aramark, and AT&T. His diverse areas of expertise include consulting on leadership, team development, organizational improvement, communication, conflict management, and collaboration. He has been a requested speaker at conventions of ASTD, the American Society for Quality, and more.



The Reproducible Training Library provides:

- **Engaging content:** Research-based content offers rich, reliable learning experiences
- **In-demand topics:** Choose between communication, leadership, team building, negotiating, and more
- **Customizable content:** Edit training materials in any way you like or use them right out of the box
- **Unlimited resources:** With a yearly subscription, reprint and reuse as often as you like within your organization



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