

10 Tips to Co-Training

Teaching/training with someone else is different from doing this solo. Here are some tips to ensuring you are successful:

1. **Check in with each other in advance.** As soon as you know you will be working with each other, get together to plan. You need to agree on the timing, who will do which sessions and what roles and responsibilities you each have.
2. **Tell your co-trainer what you expect and need.** The first time you meet, tell each what you expect from a co-trainer and how you work best. Everyone has a different understanding of co-training and this needs to be shared *before* you work together.
3. **Check in with each other during the training.** When possible and necessary during each session, check in with each other briefly. Sometimes you just need to tell the person you are going to end early or that you will need paper, but sharing this information can help the flow of the workshop and minimize frustration. The best time to check in with each other is during breaks. Avoid talking to one another when learners are working on their own rather than listening to the dialogue attentively.
4. **Check in with each other before and after the training.** Before the training you need to check in with each other about what you are planning to do and if anything has changed since you last spoke. After the training you need to check in to share your thoughts on how the session went, what needs to change in the following session, and what could we do better next time. Because ‘the unexpected’ can always happen, checking in *before and after* a session is critical. This is also a great time to affirm each other.
5. **Support your co-trainer.** While your co-trainer is leading an activity you should be fully attentive to what he or she needs *and* what the group may need that you can best do. Helping your co-trainer hand out paper, support a confused working group or tape something on the wall, can help him or her be more focused on the task at hand and keep the energy of the group up.
6. **Don’t interfere.** While your co-trainer is leading an activity, don’t interfere or contradict him or her (unless it is critical to the learning). You need to stay focused on what is happening so that you can support your co-trainer without being an interference or burden.

7. **Set personal and team goals.** Before you teach, name 1-2 things you want to remember and work on in the session. If you share these with your co-trainer, you can also get feedback on these goals at the end of the session. Setting team goals is also a great idea.
8. **Stay on time.** Always try to stay within your delegated time frame. The sessions are scheduled for a short amount of time, where every minute is valuable and accounted for. If you use more than your allotted time, it will impact your co-trainer's activity and the learning that needs to happen.
9. **Affirm each other.** Whenever possible and true, affirm your co-trainer. Everyone feels nervous about teaching, especially to peers. You need to take every opportunity to tell your co-trainer what he/she is doing *well*.
10. **Work as a team.** At all times, you want the learners to see the two of you as "a team". Support each other, affirm each other in front of the group, and weave the work your co-trainer did into your work. You want the learners to think "Wow, you work well together!"