

Choosing the right training for you



In a recent lifelong learning conference I presented information about making good decisions about your training options. I thought I would share my thoughts with those of you who did not attend.

How much time do you spend every year, investing in yourself and your profession? If you don't invest enough, how does that affect your opportunities in the future?

First of all, it is really up to you. Whether you want to change the world, your community, or the organization around you, starting with yourself is a good place to begin. You have more control and influence over what you learn and do than any other aspect of your job or workplace. As Gandhi said, "be the change you wish to see in the world."

Let's look at some things to consider as you resolve to upgrade your professional skills:

Cost: What is the total cost? Think about the three T's: your Time away from work, Travel time, and Training expenses.

Access: How far will you have to go? Can you get a similar learning experience at your desktop through distance learning courses?

Availability and timing: Is it available when you need it? Are training providers flexible in their arrangements? Will you be able to practice what you learn immediately to solidify the lessons learned?

Who will teach you? Are they qualified? Do you respect them?

Quality: How good is the program? Have others you respect recommended it? Are the instructors from credible organizations?

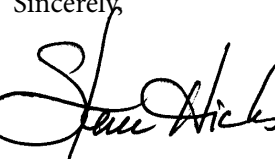
Methods: How is it delivered? Is it provided in a way that will help you learn? Recognize that we all have preferences, yet, if the training is well-designed you can learn from it, no matter what training method is used.

Competency-oriented: Is it based on approved job or public health professional competencies? Will it help you develop the ability to do what you need to do in your job, now and in the future, in public health?

Relevancy and currency: Is the program relevant to the work you do? Is it up-to-date? When was the last time it was revised by the instructor?

Ask these questions about training programs to determine how to invest your time and energy as you work steadily toward improving your public health competencies and workplace performance. By making informed training choices, you reap greater development rewards and position yourself for increased performance and advancement options.

The Office of Continuing Education (OCE) has created many tools to serve public health practitioners at ncpublichealthacademy.org. As always, we are here to serve you.

Sincerely,

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