

Instructors Toolkit Toolkits



Table of Contents

Adult Learning Principles	3
Presentation Basics.....	5
Facilitation Basics	7
Instructional Strategies	10
Classroom Management	12
Working with a Co-Instructor:.....	14
Classroom Setup	16
Notes.....	18

Adult Learning Principles

Definition of Andragogy:

- **Andragogy**

This term refers to the method and practice of teaching adult learners, distinct from pedagogy, which focuses on teaching children.

How do adults learn?

Key Assumptions in the Andragogical Model:

- **Need to Know:**

Adults must understand the rationale behind their learning.

- **Life-Centered Learning:**

Learning should focus on real-life situations and problems to enhance motivation.

- **Prior Knowledge and Experience:**

Adults come with experiences and a knowledge base that informs their learning.

- **Self-Direction:**

Adults prefer to take charge of their learning process and can self-direction.

- **Readiness to Learn:**

Adults are motivated to learn when the knowledge or skills immediately apply to their lives.

- **Internal Motivation:**

Internal factors rather than external rewards drive adults.

Instructors can use these principles to tailor learning experiences, ensuring they are relevant, engaging, and applicable. This approach can foster a more effective learning environment for adult learners.

Working with different learning styles:

No two learners are exactly alike. What helps one person understand a concept may not work for another. Some attribute this difference to individual learning styles, which are ways that individuals like to process new information.

Learning Styles:

- **Definition:** Learning styles refer to the preferred ways individuals process new information. Recognizing that learners are unique helps tailor instruction to their needs; however, the concept of distinct learning styles is debated.

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- **Common Learning Styles:**

- **Visual:**
Prefers visual aids like charts and videos.
- **Aural:**
Learns best through listening, including lectures and discussions.
- **Verbal:**
Engages with content through speaking and writing.
- **Kinesthetic:**
Excels in hands-on learning and movement-based activities.
- **Logical:**
Prefers reasoning and structured problem-solving.
- **Social:**
Thrives on collaboration and interactions.
- **Solitary:**
Benefits from independent study.

Instructional Strategies:

- **Accommodating Learning Styles:**

Instructors can engage different learning styles within the same teaching session by using a variety of methods:

- **Visual aids for visual learners**
- **Lectures for aural learners**
- **Group discussions for verbal learners.**
- **Interactive activities for kinesthetic learners**

Controversy and Research Insights:

- Skepticism exists regarding the effectiveness of strictly aligning teaching methods to individual learning styles, as recent studies suggest that such adaptations may not lead to significant increases in knowledge retention.
- However, substantial evidence supports **differentiated instruction**, emphasizing tailored teaching methods based on individual learner needs and contexts rather than specific learning styles.

Rather than categorizing learners strictly by their preferred learning styles, instructors are encouraged to embrace flexibility and adapt their teaching methods to accommodate their learners' diverse backgrounds and needs. This approach fosters a more dynamic and practical learning experience.

Presentation Basics

Presentation basics provide a comprehensive overview of effective presentation and facilitation skills essential for instructors. Here's a concise summary of the key points related to presentation roles, preparation, engaging learners, and presentation techniques:

Roles of the Presenter:

Presenters play an essential role in helping learners achieve desired learning outcomes. Knowing the key roles of the presenter will help Instructors easily make these needed shifts:

- **Engager:**
Captivates the audience using verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to maintain interest.
- **Informer:**
Delivers clear and relevant content that helps learners achieve desired outcomes.
- **Persuader:**
Align the audience with the presented ideas, addressing resistance through active listening.
- **Motivator:**
Inspires and encourages learners to act by conveying a clear mission and empowering them.

How to Present

Preparation for the Course:

Preparation is key to delivering an effective presentation. When a presenter knows the content, it shows. It is even more evident when a presenter does not know the content. Most Instructors teach part-time, so preparing for the course before delivering it is essential. The following will help you prepare for your course:

- **Pre-Course Checklist:**
Ensure all materials and equipment are ready.
- **Content Expertise:**
Familiarize yourself with the Teaching Notes,
- **Rehearse Introductions:**
Make a strong first impression with a well-prepared opening.
- **Go Off-Book:**
Practice enough to speak naturally and avoid reading directly from notes.
- **Self-Care:**
Ensure you are rested, healthy, and prepared before the learning event.

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Engaging Learners:

Most learners arrive at the course of their own volition. Therefore, they are generally on your side until you give them a reason not to be. Effective presenters must keep learners engaged or risk losing their attention and buy-in, which will negatively impact learning outcomes.

If you capture learners' attention at the start of the learning segment, they will invest their attention in listening and learning the content. Here are some strategies for getting learners' attention:

- **Capture Attention:**
Start strong to secure learners' attention and investment in the content.
- **Storytelling:**
Use emotionally relevant stories to connect with learners.
- **Compelling Questions:**
Prompt discussion and activate prior knowledge through thought-provoking questions.
- **Content Relevance:**
Tailor examples and anecdotes to fit the audience without stereotyping.
- **Authenticity:**
Communicate in a genuine manner that reflects your true self.

Presentation Techniques:

The following techniques can help you establish or improve your presentation style:

- **Voice Modulation:**
Use tone, pacing, and volume to enhance your message.
- **Movement in Space:**
Move around the presentation area to maintain engagement.
- **Body Language:**
Employ culturally sensitive eye contact, posture, and gestures.
- **Audience Interaction:**
Observe and listen to verbal and nonverbal audience responses to adjust your delivery as needed.

Instructors should integrate these techniques and strategies to enhance presentation effectiveness, ensure learner engagement, and achieve better learning outcomes. Presenters can create a more dynamic learning environment by focusing on preparation and their roles.

Facilitation Basics

Your text on facilitation basics provides a comprehensive overview of practical facilitation skills essential for instructors. Below is a summarized version that highlights the key roles facilitators play, strategies for effective facilitation, and the importance of feedback:

The Role of the Facilitator:

Facilitators play a crucial role in guiding learners toward achieving desired outcomes by shifting between various roles, as identified by McCain (2015):

- **Group Leader:**
Sets the collaborative tone and encourages teamwork during activities.
- **Agenda Manager:**
Adapts the course schedule to include breaks and ensures timely progress throughout the session.
- **Role Model:**
Demonstrates strengths-based and person-first language, alongside nonjudgmental listening.
- **Content Expert:**
Masters content enables instructors to field questions and confidently guide discussions.
- **Consultant:**
Learners receive formal and informal support as they work independently through the groups.

How to Facilitate:

- **Support Learning:**
As Carl Rogers (1951) emphasized, knowledge transfer can be facilitated by employing instructional strategies that enhance the learning experience.

Monitoring:

Many of the activities used require small groups or independent activities. Still, the instructor must support learners as they work through the activities. This is not the appropriate time for Instructors to check their phones or step out of the room for a break. Use these strategies to monitor activities:

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Provide clear and concise directions.

Before beginning the activity, give instructions for the entire activity so that all learners know what to expect. Be sure to explain the purpose of the activity.

- Give instructions orally and refer to the Participant Processing Guide as indicated in the Teaching Notes. You may wish to prepare a chart paper with the instructions before the start of the learning event. Ensure that written instructions are visible to the entire group for the duration of the activity.
- Be as specific as possible. Provide instructions using a step-by-step formula. The Teaching Notes can support the instructions you give to learners.

Support learners.

- Walk around the classroom to listen as groups learn. Circulate the room, pausing briefly at each group. If you notice a group struggling, you may offer your assistance. Be careful not to jump in too early. Allow learners to work through their struggles independently, promoting learning and knowledge transfer.
- Reiterate or re-explain instructions if you notice a group struggling. Point out the instructions you have visibly posted at the front of the classroom.

Stay on time.

- The Teaching Notes provide recommended time frames for activities. Consider tracking your timing for each section to assess if you are ahead, behind, or on schedule. Adjust accordingly.
- Before they begin, tell learners how much time they will have to complete the activity. Stay as close to this time frame as possible. You will lose credibility as a facilitator if you plan for an activity to last 10 minutes, but it goes on longer, and you don't check in with the learners.
- If you're running behind, reduce the time spent on an activity rather than the debrief. The debrief is where the learning takes place.
- Use time checks to see that learners can complete the activity in the allotted time frame. Try saying, "By a show of fingers, tell me if you need one, two, or three more minutes to complete this activity." Honor the majority opinion.
- Give time warnings to let learners know how much time they have left to complete the activity.

Debriefing:

Use debriefs to summarize key points and connect them to learning objectives, enabling learners to track their progress and understanding.

- Use the Teaching Notes for key points on how to debrief each activity.
- Review the key points of the activity after learners have completed it.
- Connect these key points to the learning objectives to help learners understand their progress toward mastery.

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Providing Learner Feedback:

Feedback is “the evaluative or corrective information about an action, choice, or inquiry the learner has made within the instructional program. Feedback is an essential part of the learning process.

- Focus on task-specific feedback to improve performance.
- Avoid personalizing feedback that may lower confidence.
- Provide immediate feedback for simple tasks and delayed feedback for complex tasks.
- Offer frequent and specific feedback but avoid overwhelming learners.

Feedback Opportunities:

- **Assessments:**
Conduct pre- and post-evaluations to assess learner understanding and progress.
- **Discussions:**
Encourage participation in discussions to affirm responses and keep learners on track.
- **Peer Feedback:**
Foster a collaborative environment where learners provide feedback to one another.
- **Coaching:**
Offer individual support during activities, using learner names to validate participation and provide encouragement.

Facilitators should embody multiple roles to support learners effectively through active engagement and structured guidance. They can enhance learning outcomes and foster a positive educational environment by focusing on monitoring, debriefing, and providing timely feedback.

Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies are the techniques that Instructors use to facilitate learning. The following instructional strategies may be used in the course. Familiarize yourself with each instructional strategy before teaching the course. Instructional strategies provide an in-depth look at various methods instructors can use to facilitate effective learning. Below is a concise summary of the key instructional strategies categorized into content development, structured activities, skill development, and learner support:

Instructional Strategies Overview

1. Content and Knowledge Development:

- **Lecture:**
An oral presentation of information; recommended to be combined with interactive methods to enhance engagement.
- **Slide Deck:**
Visual aids accompany lectures to support auditory and visual learners.
- **Video:**
A multimedia approach delivers information effectively in audio and visual forms.
- **Published Materials:**
Written resources learners can follow; highlights and reviews of key content aid comprehension.

2. Structured Activities:

- **Independent Work:**
Learners complete tasks individually without peer or instructor assistance.
- **Guided Discussion:**
The instructor facilitates a conversation using probing questions to deepen understanding and recall.
- **Jigsaw:**
Small groups become experts on specific topics and then share their knowledge with the larger class, fostering collaborative learning.
- **Gallery:**
Small groups display presentations around the classroom, allowing learners to review peer work.
- **Debriefing:**
A group discussion following activities to reiterate key points and connect learning to real-world applications.

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3. Skill Development and Transfer:

- **Role-Playing:**
Simulated scenarios allow learners to practice responses in a safe environment for real-life situations.
- **Action Planning:**
Learners identify real-world steps to implement their new skills, fostering practical application.
- **Barrier Identification:**
Discussions help learners recognize obstacles to effectively applying their knowledge and skills.

4. Supporting Learners:

- **Moderation of Tone and Gestures:**
A serious demeanor and controlled gestures are essential when discussing sensitive topics.
- **Appropriate Humor:**
Maintain a serious approach while allowing for lightening the mood if necessary, being cautious with humor.
- **No Stigmatizing Language:**
Use compassionate language, such as “died by suicide,” instead of stigmatizing phrases.
- **Verbal and Nonverbal Cues:**
Observing learners’ body language to gauge engagement and participation.
- **Use of Person-First Language:**
Emphasize the person rather than their illness (e.g., “a person with depression” rather than “a depressed person”).
- **Private Check-Ins:**
Address individual learner needs, particularly when a learner struggles to meet course standards.

Various instructional strategies can enhance the learning experience and ensure that different learner types are engaged effectively. By employing these strategies mindfully, instructors can create a supportive environment that fosters skill development and knowledge transfer.



Classroom Management

Classroom management provides a comprehensive approach to creating a safe and supportive learning environment for instructors.

Creating a Safe, Positive Classroom Environment

Mission:

- To provide high-quality, evidence-based education that empowers community members with the skills to support individuals facing mental health and substance use challenges.

Setting Expectations:

- **Share Course Goals and Objectives:**
Use the slide deck and Teaching Notes at the start of the course.
- **Communicate Learner Rights and Responsibilities:**
Share this document in the Participant Processing Guide, which outlines essential course policies.
- **Clarify Passing Requirements:**
Inform learners that they must attend at least 90% of the course and participate in at least 70% of activities to earn a certificate.
- **Encourage Participation:**
Highlight the importance of active involvement and reassure learners that making mistakes is part of the learning process.

Handling non-participation:

There are many valid reasons why a person would not want to participate in an activity. As noted in the course policies, learners may opt out of any activity for any reason and are not required to disclose why to the instructor.

However, if a learner continually opts out of discussions and activities, the instructor should try to find out why and if there is a solution that both parties agree on. Be sure that you have conveyed the course passing requirements to all learners so they are clear on the expectations for participation.

Communicating Facility Information:

- Explain emergency procedures and locate restrooms, ensuring learners feel comfortable taking breaks when needed.

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Brain Breaks and Re-energizers:

Sometimes, regardless of the instructor's best efforts, the learner's attention shifts. An instructor must notice when their audience's attention diverges and bring it back to focus as soon as possible. The following activities can be used whenever the audience's attention has drifted away from the instructional task.

In some instances, learners will lose energy and focus. The following activities are designed to give learners a break from the routine of the training and help them re-energize and return to the training ready to learn:

Use these activities to refocus the class when attention wanes:

For Re-Energizing:

- **Charades:**
Act out the steps of the Action Plan using silent gestures.
- **Yoga:**
Form the letters with pairs of learners.
- **Jigsaw:**
Groups recreate the steps of mixed-up words.
- **Toss:**
A ball-toss game where learners state the appropriate action upon receiving the ball.

Take a brain break with breathing activities.

- **Hand on nose activity:**
Use the breath as a focus point. Have learners place one hand close to, but not touching, their nose and the other on their belly. As they breathe in, have they felt their bellies expand? As they exhaled, they could feel the warm air hit their hands. Learners will focus on this breath for only one minute. Let them know it's OK when thoughts sometimes come into the mind uninvited. Tell them to exhale those thoughts.
- **The deep-dive breath:**
Have learners inhale for four counts, hold for four, and exhale for four. Once they find the rhythm of the exercise, you can increase the holding of breath by a few seconds.
- **Energizing breath:**
Have learners pant like a dog with their mouths open and tongues out for 30 seconds. Then, have them continue for another 30 seconds with their mouths closed, taking short breaths with one hand on the belly. Take three energizing pant breaths per second. After a full minute, have them do the deep-dive breath.
- **60-second stretch:**
Have the group stand up and move for 60 seconds. Set a timer so learners don't wander too far.

Cultural Considerations:

- Acknowledge the cultural diversity within the classroom and understand how culture influences communication.
- Explore individual cultural beliefs and experiences while avoiding assumptions.
- Be sensitive to communication styles across cultures, such as verbal and non-verbal expressions, and provide information in preferred languages.

Working with a Co-Instructor:

Instructors wear many hats and have many responsibilities before, during, and after a learning event. They are responsible for presenting and facilitating a course but must also continue their professional development to ensure they give the best possible instructions.

One way to manage these duties is to partner with a co-instructor. Co-instructing is when two Instructors are responsible for managing a single learning event. Co-instruction can help divide the responsibilities equally and allow Instructors to observe one another during the learning event.

Co-instructing benefits not just the instructors. Learners also benefit from the diverse viewpoints and more individualized attention from having two instructional experts in the room.

- **One teaches; one assists:**
One Instructor takes the lead at the front of the classroom while the other takes a supporting role. The primary Instructor delivers content, and the secondary Instructor supports the primary Instructor or learners individually. Instructors share the primary Instructor's duty and switch roles at predetermined intervals.
- **Parallel teaching:**
Instructors divide the class into two equal groups and deliver duplicate content. This strategy can be beneficial with large class sizes, as it helps to reduce the learner-to-instructor ratio. The lower the learner-to-instructor ratio, the more individualized attention learners have.
- **Team teaching:**
Think of team teaching as the “one brain, two bodies” style of instruction. Both Instructors share the lead in presenting content and facilitating learning activities. This style of co-instruction works best with Instructors who share similar andragogical styles. There is no “right” way to team teach, but it should be conducive to learning.
- **Make connections.**
When introducing a new learning segment, the instructor connects by referring to content the co-instructor previously taught.
- **Use names.**
Instructors should frequently refer to their co-instructors by name to tell learners they are working as a team.

INSTRUCTORS TOOLKIT

Check-in.

Instructors and co-instructors should meet to discuss their work and what they observe in the classroom.

Before you consider co-instructing, ask yourself:

- Do I work well in a primary role? In a secondary role?
- What are my strengths as an instructor?
- What are my limitations as an instructor?
- What kinds of things push my buttons?

Instructors should strive to create an inclusive, safe, and respectful learning environment while adapting to individual and cultural differences. By employing appropriate classroom management strategies and considering co-instruction, instructors can enhance the learning experience for all participants.

If you have any questions about specific strategies or need additional information on classroom management, feel free to ask!

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Classroom Setup

We encourage open communication and collaboration between learners and Instructors. Learning around the room is an integral part of the learning event, and the classroom setup should facilitate communication and cooperation.

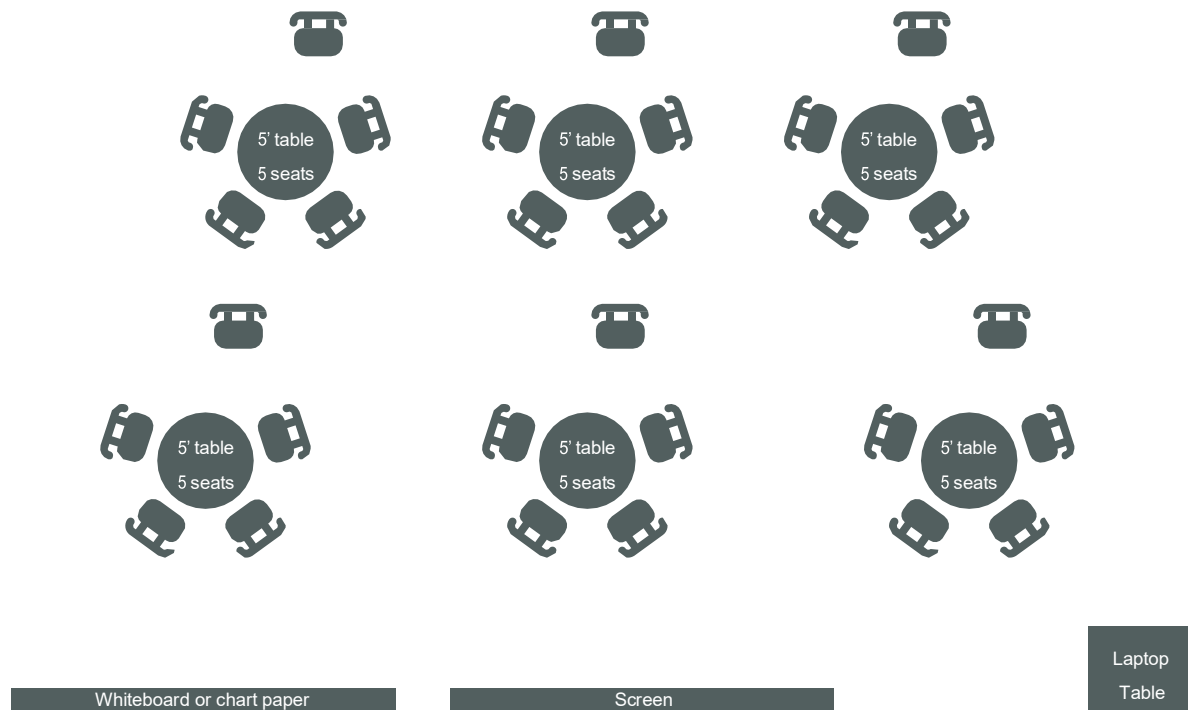
Seating arrangements

Several standard classroom setup designs are used in training environments. We encourage banquets, cabarets, or team table seating arrangements. Instructors are free to choose from these designs when setting up their classrooms. Consider the space and available resources before selecting the design.

Instructors should avoid using classroom setup designs that focus learners' attention on the instructor(s) instead of other learners. For example, avoid theater, U-shape, or fishbowl seating arrangements.

Banquet seating arrangement.

Banquet seating allows for small-group discussion and teamwork, as required by several activities found in the Teaching Notes. This seating style will enable learners to get to know each other well and help maximize available space in the room. However, it is more difficult for learners to interact with others at different tables. Consider this setup if you have a whole class roster of 30 learners.

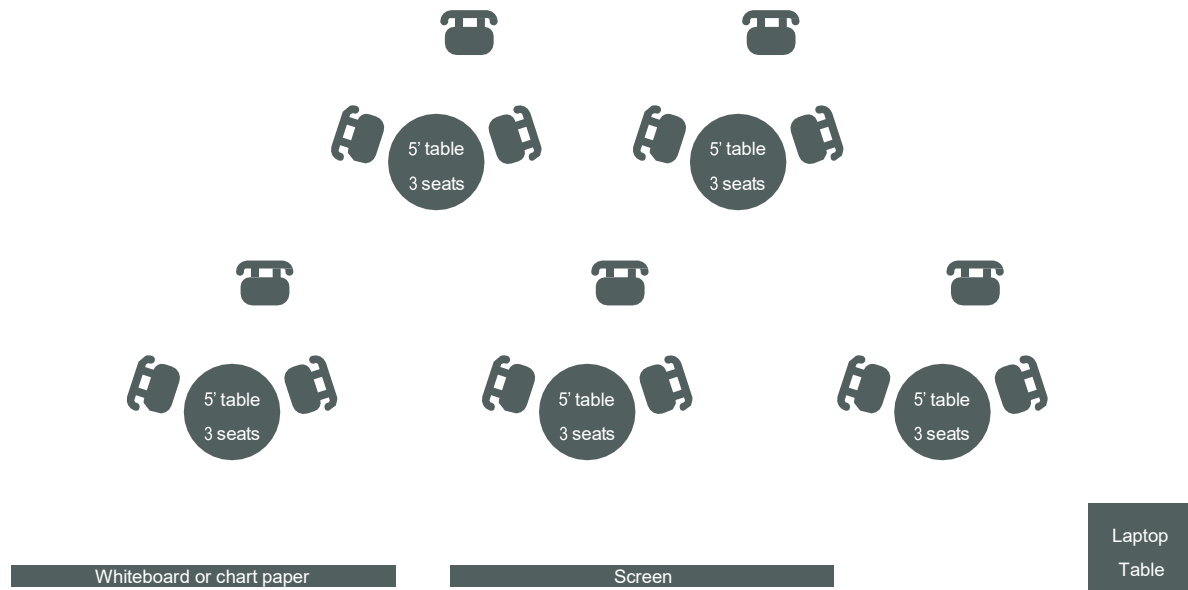


Use this diagram for ideas and adapt the seating arrangement to accommodate the available space best.

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Cabaret seating arrangement

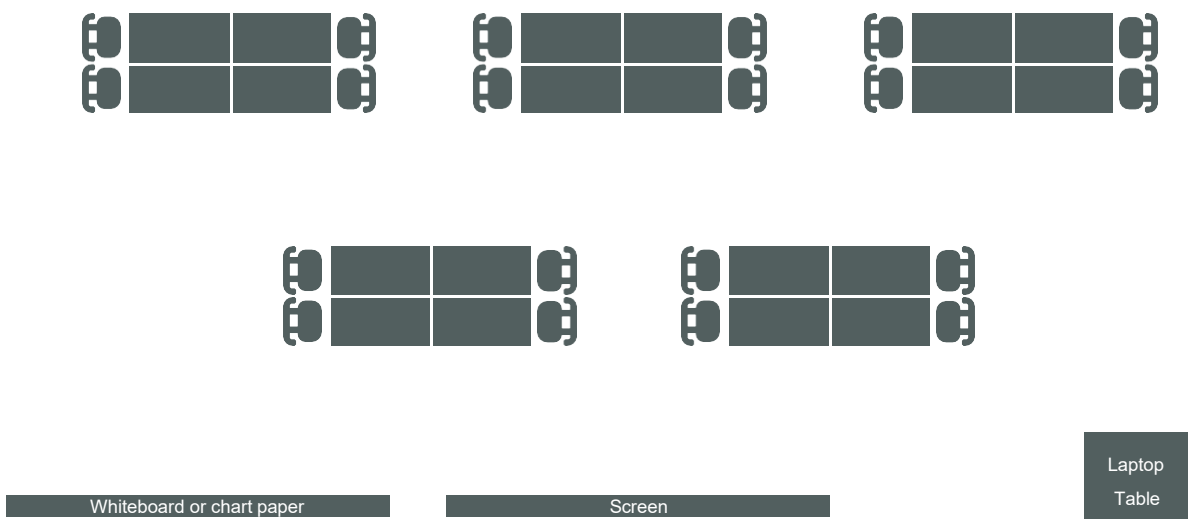
The cabaret arrangement shares many benefits of the banquet seating arrangement, such as facilitating small-group discussions and collaboration between individuals seated at the same table. An advantage of this seating arrangement over the banquet style is that it allows for an unobstructed view of the screen and whiteboard. A disadvantage is that it accommodates fewer learners. This seating arrangement is best for smaller class sizes of no more than 18 learners.



Use this diagram for ideas and adapt the seating arrangement to accommodate the available space best.

Team tables seating arrangement

Team tables are very similar to banquet tables in the number of learners they can accommodate and their ability to foster communication and collaboration between learners. This seating arrangement is best used in formal classrooms by rearranging desks into four clusters.



Use this diagram for ideas and adapt the seating arrangement to accommodate the available space best.

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Notes

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