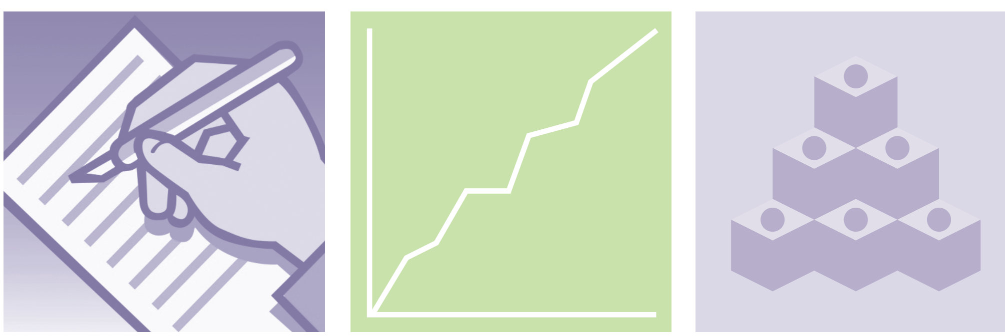
Training Module Facilitator's Guide



October 2012

National Center on Response to Intervention
http://www.rti4success.org

IDEAs that Work
U.S. Office of Special Education Programs

About the National Center on Response to Intervention

Through funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs, the American Institutes for Research and researchers from Vanderbilt University and the University of Kansas have established the National Center on Response to Intervention. The Center provides technical assistance to states and districts and builds the capacity of states to assist districts in implementing proven response to intervention frameworks.

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Contents

This Facilitator's Guide is designed to assist facilitators in delivering training modules from the National Center on Response to Intervention. Training modules include the following:

- PowerPoint Presentations that include slides and speaker's notes
- Handouts
- Videos (embedded in PowerPoint slides)
- Training Manuals

Introduction

The National Center on Response to Intervention (NCRTI) has developed training modules to guide practitioners in the implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI). These modules can be accessed by practitioners directly through our website (www.rti4success.org) or they may be presented by a trained, knowledgeable trainer. This Training Module Facilitator's Guide is intended to assist facilitators in planning for a successful learning event.

Objectives

Objectives for each module are listed at the beginning of each presentation; the presentations are available online at www.rti4success.org. Presenters should review the objectives with the audience. Presenters may want to remind participants that, although the content may be review for some, it may be completely new to others. The goal is to create a common understanding among all participants before moving to more advanced content. Presenters may also want to mention that, for participants completely new to RTI, some of the information may seem overwhelming, and efforts will be made to point out essential information. Participants will need additional support in implementing these practices beyond that provided in these modules; ongoing coaching and follow-up professional development will allow participants to implement the essential components effectively.

Training Module Facilitator's Guide

This document, the Training Module Facilitator's Guide, presents information for the facilitator about how to prepare to deliver professional development and how to train large groups. Facilitators should review the guide and become familiar with all content before presenting.

The guide includes several resources that may be useful for delivering the trainings. The training checklist, included in the guide, provides facilitators with a checklist of actions to take before, during, and after the training. The guide also contains a sample evaluation form for eliciting participant feedback that can be used to strengthen future presentations.

Training Modules

Training modules may include the following components:

- PowerPoint Presentations that include slides and speaker's notes
- Handouts
- Videos (embedded in PowerPoint slides)
- Training Manuals

PowerPoint Presentations

PowerPoint presentations are provided for each training module. Slides offer key talking points, but they should be expanded upon using the speaker's notes and the facilitator's own knowledge. Brief "team activities" are embedded in the presentations to give participants a chance to interact with the material and inform the facilitator of any misunderstandings. These activities may be omitted or extended based on time constraints and the needs of the audience.

Presentation Speaker's Notes

Detailed speaker's notes accompany each slide.

- Text formatted in standard font is intended to be read aloud by the facilitator.
- Text formatted in **bold** is excerpted directly from the presentation slides.
- Text formatted in *italics* is intended as directions or notes for the facilitator; italicized text is not meant to be read aloud.

Training Manuals

Training manuals include selected content from the modules. Each training manual is intended to serve as a reference guide, containing key information from its module. The facilitator should emphasize the information in the training manual within the presentation. The facilitator should also provide a copy of the training manual to each participant; it is written in full sentences, and the participant may more easily understand it than the slides when referring back to the materials after the training.

Handouts

Each training manual also includes handouts that may be used when presenting the module. The handouts are intended to help participants begin to synthesize and apply the content to their own context. Facilitators should be mindful of the participants' level of understanding and implementation. Some may have already completed certain steps toward RTI implementation previously and may need to review and evaluate the choices they made; others may be just beginning to make plans. Time constraints may prevent participants from finishing all of the handouts during the training. Presenters may recommend that participants continue this work with their school or district teams after the training.

When participants are completing handouts in teams, presenters may recommend that teams assign roles such as timekeeper, note taker, and facilitator to facilitate the completion of these activities. More instructions about how and when to use these materials can be found in the speaker's notes for slides related to the handouts, and on the handouts themselves.

Videos

Brief videos are embedded in some of the presentations to allow participants to hear practitioners and experts talk about their experiences implementing RTI. To play the videos, presenters will need to have a reliable Internet connection and be able to connect to www.youtube.com, where the videos are housed. Skipping the videos is not recommended because it is valuable for the participants to hear a practitioner's point of view about the material. Links to the videos are accessible from the slides and speaker's notes.

Delivery

One person may deliver a module in its entirety, or two or more facilitators may choose to deliver the training together. Regardless of the number of facilitators, it is critical that they be familiar with the material. All facilitators should possess the following:

- Strong knowledge of RTI components
- Experience with RTI implementation
- Effective communication and presentation skills

Who Should Attend?

Most NCRTI trainings are designed for district and school leadership teams considering or involved in RTI implementation. Team members may include those who have authority over policies and policy settings, data analysis, and allocation of resources. They may be school or district leaders, such as principals and RTI coordinators, or instructional leaders, such as grade-level team leaders; specialist leaders; and reading, mathematics, and instructional coaches. It is the facilitator's role to communicate with the organizers of the training before the training date and provide guidance on the appropriate audience.

Customizing for Different Audiences and Contexts

The trainings can be tailored to participants' needs and interests, and can be used with a wide range of professionals, including teachers, administrators, researchers, local education agency staff, state education agency staff, and other technical assistance providers.

In general, the modules can be customized by altering the following:

- Order of the sections
- Time spent and emphasis placed on each section
- Time spent on examples, handout activities, and group work time
- Removal of sections or handout activities that are not relevant to the audience

When planning to present the modules, think about the audience's priorities, needs, and schedule. The focus of the presentation may be modified by spending more time on certain sections or slides or by removing slides that are not relevant to the audience.

Facilitators will know their audiences best; therefore, final decisions regarding customization are left to their discretion. The facilitator also may want to change terms and examples within the presentation to ensure that it aligns with local terminology and technology. For example, if a state uses the term Response to Instruction instead of Response to Intervention, the facilitator may decide to change the language in the presentation to reflect the state's terminology. In addition, if a school, district, or state uses a particular data system, the facilitator may want to draw examples from that system. When removing content, facilitators should be careful to ensure that participants have all the information necessary to understand the material in the remaining slides or modules.

Shortening the Presentation

Facilitators are encouraged to modify the length and order of presentations to meet the needs of their audience. Presentations may be combined to create a full-day training, or may be broken into parts to create a series of shorter trainings. Modules can be presented over time, such as during monthly faculty meetings or by dividing the modules into one-hour, two-hour, or half-day presentations. Slides and sections of the presentation also can be deleted or shortened to accommodate the goals, focus, and audience of the presentation. Be careful to order presentations so that introductory information comes first and subsequent sections build on learned knowledge from the previous sections. Refer to instructions provided in the speaker notes, where available.

Increasing Participant Engagement

NCRTI has included opportunities for encouraging audience participation in several presentations, often as Think-Pair-Share activities (described below) or as participant handouts. There are a myriad of ways to customize NCRTI trainings to provide additional opportunities for participant engagement, and facilitators should determine which strategies will work best for their audience and personal presentation style. When planning for participant engagement activities, consider how the size of the group and the space in which the training occurs will affect the activities. Also, think about providing engagement activities that allow participants to process the information in a variety of formats (e.g., talking with a partner, larger group discussions, personal reflection through writing). It would be impossible to document all of the possible participant activities in this guide; instead, this section provides a brief overview of three strategies not included in the speaker notes: Touch Each Page, Gallery Walk, and Think-Pair-Share. A few other activities are described in the Closing Activities section.

Touch Each Page: Participants use sticky notes for at least one question or comment on each page of the resource or handout. Participants can write follow-up questions or notes about connections they have made with the content on the sticky notes to reference after the training. This activity works best with multi-page documents.

Gallery Walk: A "gallery walk" is a larger-group activity that provides participants an opportunity to work as teams to process information and then walk around and learn from the work of other groups. There are many ways to use this process to allow each group to display key ideas (to be determined by the facilitator) on large chart paper, which is then displayed around the room. Ask participants to break into groups, and provide a prompt or topic for each group. The prompt can be the same for every group, or different for each group. Each group discusses the prompt and writes or draws its response on chart paper. The facilitator then gives groups time to walk around the room, look at the other groups' responses, and take notes. The facilitator may provide groups with guiding questions to reflect on during this time. After groups have reviewed the responses posted around the room, debrief with the entire group about key concepts and ask them to share what they have learned.

Think-Pair-Share: Think-Pair-Share opportunities are embedded throughout each module. This strategy enables participants to relate to a topic, formulate their own ideas, and then share these with other participants. Rather than using a basic recitation method in which a trainer poses a question and one participant offers a response, Think-Pair-Share encourages participation, and can help keep participants on task. Think-Pair-Share helps participants become actively involved in thinking about the concepts presented in the training. When participants discuss new ideas, they are forced to make sense of those new ideas in terms of their prior knowledge. Their misunderstandings about the topic are often revealed (and resolved) during this discussion stage. Participants need time to process new ideas in order to store them in long-term memory. When facilitators present too much information in a single block, much of that information is lost. If participants are given time to "Think-Pair-Share" at selective points throughout the training, more of the critical information is retained.

Think-Pair-Share is easy to use on the spur of the moment and with large groups. Participants tend to be more willing to participate in the small-group activities because there is less pressure than in the large group. Using a timer can help keep this activity brief and maintain structure.

To facilitate a Think-Pair-Share, ask participants to follow these three steps:

1. **Think** about a particular topic. *Give participants approximately 20 seconds.*
2. **Pair** with your neighbor or table.
3. **Share** with your neighbor or table. *Give participants approximately 2–3 minutes.*

If time allows, have two or three pairs or tables orally share their ideas with the entire group.

Preparing for Training Day

Successful delivery of professional development requires detailed planning. It is recommended that facilitators meet with the organizers several weeks prior to the training in order to—

1. Gather more information about the audience members' needs and priorities and past experiences with the content,
2. Identify related tools or procedures currently being implemented,
3. Verify the agenda and training outcomes,
4. Confirm training logistics, and
5. Communicate technical requirements and provide a list of materials needed. The training checklists and sample evaluation in Appendixes A–D can assist facilitators in preparing for and completing training activities.

Presentation Strategies

Presenting to groups can be exciting, and it also can create challenges for some facilitators. The following strategies can help both inexperienced and experienced facilitators effectively manage audience questions, gain audience attention, and deal with disruptions.

Know the Audience

It will be easier to meet the needs of participants if the facilitator knows their roles and familiarity level with RTI. It can be helpful to have a discussion with the session organizers prior to the day of the presentation about who will be attending. Using this information, the facilitator can tailor the presentation to meet the needs of participants. On the day of the training, begin by polling the audience to see who is in the room. In the "What Is RTI?" presentation, we suggest starting off by asking participants to briefly share their existing knowledge of RTI. This can help the facilitator assess what the audience already knows and where misconceptions may lie. Having knowledge about the audience will help the facilitator emphasize the most relevant and critical points during the presentation.

Helpful Strategies for Addressing Questions

It is important to give participants a chance to ask questions on the information presented, but it can feel intimidating to answer questions on the spot. Below are some suggestions to help you both encourage and respond to questions.

Parking Lot: Consider using a "parking lot" to store questions during the presentation. This strategy allows participants to ask questions without disrupting the flow of the presentation. It also gives the facilitator a chance to sift through potentially difficult questions and think about the best way to address them.

To use a Parking Lot:

1. Place a few large pieces of chart paper around the room. Label each "Parking Lot."
2. At the beginning of the presentation, tell participants that if they have a question at any time, they should write it on a sticky note and post it to one of the parking lots.
3. At the end of a section or during a break, collect questions from the parking lots and think about how to respond to each question.
4. After the break, read (or paraphrase) each question out loud to the group, followed by your answer.

Share Personal Experiences: Using personal examples is an excellent strategy for answering questions and explaining material. There are many ways to design and implement the RTI framework. Therefore, rather than providing information as if it is required or is a given, frame the information with "This is one way this has been done," or "I have seen it done this way."

Strategies for Responding to Difficult or Inappropriate Questions

When training a large group, presenters may be asked to address difficult or inappropriate questions on the spot. Presenters may keep questions focused on the topic by

1. Communicating clear expectations,
2. Providing the agenda and goals for the day at the beginning of the session, and
3. Providing basic guidelines for when and how questions will be addressed throughout the training.

The types of information that will be covered in the presentation should be clearly articulated in order to deter off-topic questions and to limit participants from asking questions on material that will be addressed later in the presentation.

Some general tips for addressing questions during the presentation include acknowledging all questions, being sure that everyone has heard the question by repeating it, and being honest and answering questions directly. Presenters should feel comfortable answering with "I don't know, but I can try to find out" if the answer is unknown.

In many cases, it may be more helpful to guide a participant through the process of answering his or her own question instead of automatically providing an answer. Challenge participants to think through their questions by asking them prompting questions. For example, participants may ask whether a specific assessment used at their school—such as a pretest in a textbook—is considered a screener. Instead of responding with a yes or no answer, prompt them to apply knowledge from the presentation by asking, "What do you use this test for? What information do you get from it?" If participants say that they use the test to determine which students are at risk, they may be using it as a screener. If they say that they use the test to see which concepts students need to learn, they may be using the test as a diagnostic tool.

The following are specific types of difficult questions that presenters may encounter, along with strategies for addressing them.

Off-Topic Questions

Off-topic questions may include questions asked about material that will be covered later in the presentation, questions that pertain only to a particular school or situation, or questions about components of RTI or material that is not a focus of the presentation.

If the question relates to material that will be addressed later in the presentation, presenters can provide a brief response, if appropriate, and let the participant know that the topic will be discussed in more detail later.

If the question is about a specific example (e.g., "At my school…"), presenters should try to restate the question more broadly so that it is relevant to everyone. If the question cannot be broadened, presenters may recommend that the participant find them after the presentation or during a break.

If the question is not related to the material being presented, remind the audience of the focus of the presentation and direct the participant to a relevant resource to learn more. For example, if participants ask questions about interventions during the screening module presentation, let them know that this presentation is focused on screening and that a subsequent presentation will provide more information on selecting evidence-based interventions. Participants should be referred to resources, such as the NCRTI website (www.rti4success.org), where they can find more information in the interim.

Questions That Never End

There are times when participants (or a single participant) ask a barrage of questions. One way for presenters to address this without being confrontational is to answer each question as briefly as possible. By being brief, presenters limit the information available to spark additional questions. After giving a brief response, presenters should move to the next topic. If short answers and setting limits have not deterred interruptions, presenters can acknowledge the question but delay the answer. Bridging techniques, words, or phrases allow presenters to acknowledge and move on without being considered rude or dismissive. An example of a bridge is "I understand what you are asking. Lots of people are concerned about that, but they need to know… [give important points]." Presenters can also signal and underline the end of the question-and-answer period by saying, "I will take one more question, and then we need to move on."

Confrontational Questions

When dealing with a confrontational question, it is important for presenters to separate the attitude of the questioner and tone of the question from the content of the question. Participants who have been unsuccessful in past attempts or are struggling with a difficult issue related to RTI implementation may come to a training session with some level of skepticism or frustration. Presenters should try to rephrase and restate the question without the confrontational tone and answer the question as honestly as possible. If the question is impossible to address in the group setting, the presenters may consider meeting the participant during the next break.

Comments Instead of Questions

Sometimes participants will provide comments or personal examples instead of asking questions. In these situations, presenters should thank them for making the point and, if necessary, restate what was said in the presentation and move on to the next question.

Strategies for Gaining Attention

There are many strategies for gaining participants' attention. Presenters should consider using strategies with which they feel the most comfortable. A strategy will be most effective if it is used consistently throughout the presentation. At the beginning of the training, it is recommended that presenters communicate how they will bring the group back together. For example, a presenter might say, "When I raise my hand, it is time to pause conversations and come back together as a group." Several other strategies are as follows:

- Use a bell, tone, or sound
- Use a clapping pattern
- Flick the lights
- Use a countdown (could be a timer on your computer)

Dealing With Disruptive Talking

In large groups, people occasionally get distracted and talk among themselves. Although presenters may choose to overlook some small discussions among participants, it may be necessary to take action if these discussions are distracting to other participants. One of the best ways to address disruptive talking is to increase proximity to the talkers. This might mean walking near them. This method allows the presenter to indicate that they are disrupting without making a scene and asking them to be quiet. If disruptive behavior continues, it may be necessary to speak with the participant during the next break.

Closing Activity

At the close of training, it can be helpful to conduct an activity for participants to synthesize the content they have learned. These activities can help participants identify the main lessons of the training and also can be used to quickly assess the knowledge that participants have gained from the training. Multiple strategies can be used, such as these:

- Exit Ticket: Ask participants to answer one or two reflection questions and to hand their reflection to you as they leave.
- Review Game: Play a quick review game by adding presentation slides that ask participants to answer content-related questions.
- 3-2-1: Ask participants to write down three new things they have learned during the learning event, two things they have reaffirmed, and one burning question.

Ongoing Professional Development

It is important that facilitators keep up to date with innovative RTI evidence-based practices, procedures, processes, and tools. Prior to conducting trainings, NCRTI recommends that presenters review current resources and research found in peer-reviewed journals and on the NCRTI website (www.rti4success.org). We also recommend that you review literature on facilitating professional learning from organizations such as Learning Forward (www.learningforward.org), ASCD (www.ascd.org), and the IRIS Center (http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu.)

Appendixes

Appendix A. Training Checklist

Complete?	Weeks Prior to Training
	Schedule meeting with training organizers and leaders.
	Determine audience member needs, priorities, and prior knowledge.
	Verify training outcomes and final agenda.
	Determine final number of teams/participants.
	Confirm training location and room setup (round tables for teams are recommended).
	Provide host with technology requirements (see Appendix B).
	If needed, customize training materials to match audience needs, priorities, and prior knowledge.
	Ensure training materials will be printed and ready (see Appendix C).
	Review material and practice presenting material.
Complete?	**Training Day**
	Arrive at least 30–60 minutes early to set up.
	Ensure presentation and technology are available and working properly (e.g., LCD projector, laptop).
	Test videos and microphone to ensure the audio is functioning appropriately (some trainings only).
	Place supplies (e.g., markers, sticky notes) in the center of each table.
	Check that all participant materials and sign-in sheets are available.
	Ensure participant tables are positioned to maximize team discussion and view slide content.
	If desired, set up “Parking Lots” for audience questions.
	Introduce yourself to participants.
	Gather completed training evaluation forms (see Appendix D for an example).
Complete?	**Soon After Training**
	Analyze participant training evaluation data and compile results.
	Schedule meeting with training organizers to debrief.
	Share evaluation results and discuss next steps.
	Follow up to answer any unanswered audience questions.

Appendix B. Recommended Technology Checklist

Presenter (P) or Organizer (O) Responsibility?	Technology Requirements	Purpose
	Laptop computer	Presentation
	LCD projector	Presentation
	Large screen	Presentation
	Presenter microphone	Presentation
	Remote control clicker	Presentation
	Timer	Activities
	Participant microphone	Participant questions
	Speakers or sound system	Videos
	High-speed Internet connection	Videos

Appendix C. Training Day Materials Checklist

Presenter (P) or Organizer (O) Responsibility?	Training Materials	Purpose
	Electronic copy of presentation	Presentation
	Presentation slides and speaker's notes (one for each presenter)	Presentation
	Sticky notes, pens or pencils, markers (one set per table)	Note-taking and activities
	Name badges (one per participant so participants can learn each other's names)	Introduction
	Table tents (one per table to identify where specific groups should sit)	Introduction
	Sticky chart paper (one pad)	Parking Lot and activities
	Individual participant training materials: 1. Presentation handouts with printed slide images 2. Worksheets/handouts 3. Training manual (selected trainings) • Training material • Handouts • Glossary of terms 4. Other relevant documents from NCRTI's website, www.rti4success.org (Tool charts, "What Is RTI" placemat, etc.)	Participant resources
	Evaluation form (one per participant)	Evaluation

Appendix D. Sample Evaluation Form

Presentation Evaluation

Presenter(s): ______________________

Date: ______________________

Meeting/Conference: ______________________

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:				
The topic and content of the presentation are important and useful to the field.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The ideas and concepts were explained clearly.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The presenter(s) answered questions thoroughly.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The presentation met my expectations.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Please rate the overall quality of the presentation:				
Presentation content	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Presentation format	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Prior to today's presentation, what was your knowledge level of the topic and content presented?	No Knowledge	Some Knowledge	Average Knowledge	Above Average Knowledge
As a result of today's presentation, how did your knowledge level of the content/topic area change?	No Change	Slight Increase	Moderate Increase	Great Increase

What did you like best about this presentation?

____

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What did you like best about this presentation?

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What suggestions do you have for improving this presentation?

____

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Additional comments. Feel free to use the other side.

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