



The Doctor Is In!

Being an instructional designer (or designing training programs) is a bit like being a doctor.

You have to ask questions and dig deep to find the cause of the problem - in our case the cause of non-performance - before you begin designing a training program.

Early in the “examination” of non-performance, it is important to take a close look at the learners, known as a **Target Population Analysis**.

A Target Population Analysis - or T-POP - is often overlooked because we assume (and we know how dangerous that can be!) we already know an awful lot about our learners. However, **not** doing a TPOP can come around to bite us!

Here are some symptoms of NOT doing a T-Pop:

- A trainer that doesn’t “fit” the group
- Too much remedial information presented
- Too much advanced information presented
- Examples that don’t depict where your learners “live”
- Dis-engaged learners
- Disruptive learners
- An increasing number of “now shows” at your sessions

Enough with the pain!

Let’s take a closer look at a **T-POP** and how you can best **diagnose** your learners!

What is a T-POP?

A target population analysis is a “**snapshot**” of your learners so that you can

thoughtfully prepare to meet your learners' needs.

It helps you decide **who** needs training and how a specific course must be **customized** to meet the learner's needs.

It also helps identify **what class groups** are appropriate, e.g. should employees be together with their supervisor?

Consider the following when gathering information about your learners;

Interests

What personal or business interests are important to the learners? What do they care about? What do they prioritize? What do they think they need?

Personal Benefit to Learning

What's the WIIFM (What's In It For Me) for the learner?

Previous Training Experience

Don't bore someone with repeated information. Identify what types of classes the learners have attended that might be similar to your training.

Demographics

This information is helpful when determining the best delivery methods, planning groupings, customizing examples and exercises, etc.

- Age
- Gender
- Educational Background
- Technology Savvy

Physical Characteristics

This category is relevant only if it relates to the job.

Attitudes & Biases

This one is always FUN! How do learners feel about training in general and the topic specifically?

Culture

Include both traditional world cultural awareness but also corporate culture.

Write a T-Pop Statement

Write a narrative statement describing the target population that includes as many of these categories of information as you can.

This is a critical step. It helps you keep the learner top of mind as you are diagnosing the performance issue and avoid **BLM** (Be Like Me) Syndrome (you know, where you think everyone is just like you. They aren't!)

For more information on T-POP and other tools and tips to enhance your design skills, join us at our upcoming design workshops:

Plan Training for Results!

One Day, ILT Workshop
October 15 - Southern CA
November 4 - DC Metro area

How to Craft Amazing Learner Materials & Activities

One Day, ILT Workshop
October 16 - Southern CA
November 5 - DC Metro area

Now go and grab your white coat and have fun TPOP-ing!

Cheers,

Team M&M
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The Training Clinic

We're all on this journey together!

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