

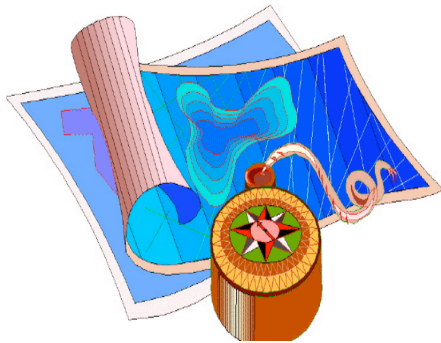
**Let the Compass be Your Guide:
Two Powerful Training Design and Delivery Tools.**

from: *The Ten-Minute Trainer*.

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Learning - not just listening but real learning - is like a journey through an ever-changing landscape. You know where you want to end up, you know some of the things you can expect along the way, but you're never really sure what you're going to find as you stride confidently along. Things change - land that once was dry is now wet, paths that used to be visible have now disappeared, a boulder blocks your trail, you find a shortcut but you're not convinced it will lead you to your final destination.

Being the savvy traveler you are, you take two tools with you that will keep you on your path and that guarantee you won't get off course or lost along the way. Your first tool is a directional compass. Your second tool is a map, which has the compass points as its foundation.

As a trainer, you can also use these two tools to design an effective learning experience for others. In fact, using these tools ensures that your learners will not only HEAR what you have to say, but will REMEMBER it and USE it after the learning session is over.

With the training compass and map, you will be able to:

- * **Design** learning experiences more easily and in a shorter period of time.

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* **Deliver** training that is based on how humans REALLY learn, and that honors the different learning needs of your audience.

* **Keep** your learners motivated, interested, and involved in their own learning.

* **Use** a simple yet powerful “blueprint” for every presentation or training, regardless of the length of the session, the size or age of your audience, or the topic of your talk.

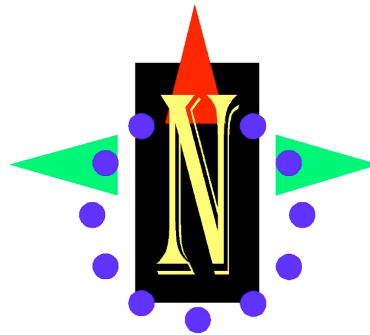
Of course, by now you’re asking, “What IS this compass? This map? How do they work?”

The answer is: You already know what they are. You use them, or parts of them in every training you facilitate.

The compass and map are natural teaching tools that all effective trainers use, whether they know it or not. Both tools are simply metaphors for how people learn - the natural steps along the way, the signposts that indicate where the learners are in the journey, and the stages that must be present for real learning to take place.

By the way, a lot of research exists about these powerful training tools. David Kolb, in his book *Experiential Learning*, calls

them “the natural learning cycle.” In *The Accelerated Learning Handbook*, author David Meier labels them “the four phases of learning.” In *About Learning*, Bernice McCarthy refers to them as “the format cycle of learning.” And in Sharon Bowman’s book *How To Give It So They Get It*, they are basic components of “the learning styles map.”



Begin with True North.

All learning begins with Self. All learning begins with the learner figuring out what it is he wants to learn, what it is he already knows about the topic, and what it is he needs to know in order to get to where he wants to go.

Learning begins with the learner’s own appraisal of all these pieces of Self. Whether he is a child learning to read or ride a bike, a teenager learning to drive a car or write a term paper,

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or an adult learning to do his taxes, or ski, or run a new computer program, learning is first an inner journey of desire and connections, and then an outer one of information and action.

The compass point North represents SELF. It is the first place learning begins. As a trainer, you want your learners to connect to their own personal goals for being in the training: what motivates them to learn about this topic, what they want to get from the learning, and where they want to go with it in their own lives. You want them to connect with their own prior knowledge about the subject, and what else they need to learn about it in order to get to where they want to go.

Move to the East.

From True North or SELF, the learner moves to the East, or OTHERS. The learner now seeks out others to help her learn. She finds out what they know and how that all fits with what she already knows. She defines her goals a bit more. She gets ready to move in the direction of her goals. She makes connections with others - comfortable connections that create a safe and supportive "learning community."

As a trainer, you know how important these connections are. You make sure that learners connect with each other early in the learning experience so that they can learn from each other. This supportive community enriches and strengthens the learning that will take place later in the journey.

Go to the South.

Now new information is added to the mix. The learner takes in this new information on many levels - by hearing it, seeing it, talking about it, experiencing it, thinking about it, responding to it, asking questions about it, and adding it to what he already knows.

The compass point South represents INFORMATION. As a trainer, you make sure your learners not only hear the concepts you're teaching, but that they also interact with the new material in a variety of ways. You know that the more you involve your learners as you present new information to them, the more they will remember and use that information later.

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Travel to the West.

The compass point West represents ACTION. After learning some information about the subject, the learner puts that information into action. Practicing a skill, reviewing the information in hands-on ways, or creating something from the new learning, are all ways of acting on what was learned.

As a trainer, you build in time for your learners to practice DOING something with what they learned. You understand that the doing is an important part of making sure they remember the information - of moving that learning into long-term memory.

Return to the North.

Just as all learning begins with Self, all learning ends with Self. The learner now takes a look at the journey - what she wanted to learn, where she began, where she has ended up, what she learned, and what she can do with it all in her own life. This returning to True North or SELF is what real learning is all about. The Self has grown, changed, and expanded as a result of the journey. The learner is different because of what she learned.



Follow the Map.

As you can see from the picture above, the four compass points create a four-step map. This map is your guide as you design learning experiences that truly honor the way humans naturally learn - not the way they have been told that they should learn, which was often just listening to an information dump (South only) without the other four compass points to round out the learning experience.

The four steps of the map are necessary only if you want your training participants to LEARN, and not just to listen. The four steps are crucial only if you want your learners to REMEMBER and USE the concepts you teach them.

**Step One:
Making Connections.**

The journey from SELF (North) to OTHERS (East) is about connections: learners connecting to what they already know, what they want and need to know, and what others already know about the topic. The connections create a “learning community” - a safe, supportive, encouraging group in which learners feel comfortable asking questions, making mistakes, and learning from each other.

As the trainer, you lead your learners through one or more “connecting activities” that help them make these connections. The connecting activities can be as short as a few minutes or as long as an hour or so. Connecting activities differ from “icebreakers” in the fact that they not only connect learners to each other but also to the topic. They are about “cognitive connections,” as well as “social connections.”



**Step Two:
Explaining the Concepts.**

The movement from OTHERS (East) to INFORMATION (South) is about learners adding to what they already know by learning new concepts and information. Learners use a variety of sensory modalities to learn these new concepts: auditory (they hear the new information and talk about it), visual (they see it, draw it, associate images with it), and kinesthetic (they write it, take notes, associate movement with it, or move around while learning).

For you as the trainer, this step means that you present your information to your learners in a variety of ways, and involve them while you do so. You speak it (this is where lecture fits in), you show it (with graphics and other visuals), you model it, you demonstrate it, and you invite your learners to participate in the presentation (writing, drawing, signaling, discussing, verbalizing, asking, answering, moving).

**Step Three:
Practicing the Skills.**

Traveling from INFORMATION (South) to ACTION (East) means extending the doing part of the learning. Learners DO something

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with the new concepts. They practice a skill, actively review what they learned, create something with it, and refine it all.

As the trainer, you lead your learners through one or more activities that help them use the new material in ways that are relevant and important to THEM. You might involve them in a review game or a simulation in which they use the skills in some fashion. Or you might have them create different projects reflecting what they learned. All the while, you check for understanding and offer “guide-on-the-side” assistance when needed.

**Step Four:
Celebrating the Learning.**

Coming full circle, learners move from ACTION (West) back to SELF (North). They assess what they learned, how well they learned it, how they can use the new concepts in real life, and what else they need to know - their “next steps,” if you will. And they celebrate it all - the learning, the journey, the connections, the energy, the new directions.

As the trainer, you help them do all this through some “closing” activities that guide them as they come full circle. You may have them “perform,” i.e. present their

projects or their action plans in a variety of ways. Or you may have them simply discuss the most important things they learned and what they can do with the new information in their own lives and work. You also make sure they reconnect with each other so that they take the energy and support of the learning community with them when they leave.



Making the Map Your Own.

You can “mess with the map,” changing the order of the steps to best fit your training goals. You can make each step as long or as short as necessary.

You can repeat steps. For example, you can move back and forth between step two and step three (information to action) as you cover a portion of your material and then have your learners do something with each informational piece. Or you can do steps

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one, two, and three for each topic, and then come full circle in step four with special projects that represent all concepts covered.

Sometimes you can skip a step or assign it for “homework” later. Just remember that whenever you do include all four steps in your training, you up the odds that your learners will remember and use the concepts they’ve learned.

Where to Go from Here?

You can find activities for each step of the map in the resources listed at the end of this article.

You can also look at the activities you already use and simply put them where they are best used, given the goals of each of the four steps.

With a little practice, using these two powerful training tools will become second nature to you. In fact, you will probably make them the blueprint of every learning experience you design and facilitate.

These two tools will not only guide you as you guide others, they will become the tools by which you gauge the success of the learning journey, both for you and your learners. Happy traveling!

“Let the Compass Be Your Guide” is an excerpt from Sharon Bowman’s newest book *The Ten-Minute Trainer! 129 Ways to Teach it Quick and Make It Stick*, to be published by Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer in 2005, and printed with permission. Please cite the source when downloading this material. You can contact www.Bowperson.com for more information about *The Ten-Minute Trainer*. Read on for a brief description:

Got a minute? Choose from over dozens of **60-second activities** to help your learners review, repeat, and remember. Or select a number of high-energy, **5 - 10 minute activities** to move information into long-term memory. Use the **Power Hour** templates with your own training topics. And best of all, discover the most useful training tool around to speed up both design and delivery – **The Training Compass**. The bottom line?

**Create a lot of learning
in a little time!**

The Ten-Minute Trainer is a “grab-it-and-go” book – with loads of back-pocket ideas you can use immediately with little or no preparation. To be notified when the book is published, send your contact information to: Sharon@Bowperson.com. Be sure to log onto www.Bowperson.com for selected excerpts of *The Ten-Minute Trainer*.

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**Resources:
Books and Web Sites**

These resources are listed in the order of the amount of information - most to least - they include about the training compass and map.

The Ten-Minute Trainer! 129 Ways to Teach It Quick and Make It Stick.
Sharon Bowman (to be published by Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer in 2005; contact www.bowperson.com)

How To Give It So They Get It.
Sharon Bowman

The Accelerated Learning Handbook.
David Meier

One Approach - with Style.
Community College of Aurora
(Contact Bowperson Publishing at 775-749-5247 for more information)

About Learning. Bernice McCarthy

Creating Highly Interactive Training Quickly and Effectively. Carolyn Thompson

Experiential Learning. David Kolb

The Instant Trainer. Chris Clarke-Epstein

www.Bowperson.com
Sharon Bowman

www.alcenter.com
Center for Accelerated Learning

www.bobpikegroup.com
Creative Training Techniques

www.thiagi.com
Thiagi



Author and traveling teacher Sharon Bowman helps educators and business people “teach it quick and make it stick,” - fine-tuning their information-delivery skills and turning their passive listeners into active learners.

Over 40,000 copies of Sharon’s 6 popular teaching, training, and motivation books are now in print. Titles include: “*Preventing Death by Lecture*,” “*Presenting with Pizzazz*,” “*How To Give It So They Get It*,” and “*Shake, Rattle, and Roll*.”

For more information about Sharon Bowman and her books and training, log onto www.Bowperson.com, or email her at SBowperson@aol.com.

For book orders, go to www.trainerswarehouse.com, www.amazon.com, or call **Bowperson Publishing at 775-749-5247**.
