

## Staffing the ERP Training Team

Staffing an ERP Training Team can be intimidating. This may well be the biggest, most complex, training project you ever attempt. However, the standards and thoroughness you normally use when staffing projects still apply.

You pore over the project plan to get an idea of timing. You look at scoping documents to learn about content complexity. You ask questions to understand your audience and figure out which training delivery systems you might be able to use. Then, you identify skills needed and roles to be staffed.

## Roles Needed Throughout the ERP Project Lifecycle

On this chart you'll see some familiar training team roles, set within the context of a typical ERP project lifecycle. Below, we'll step through each role and discuss activities performed and skill sets needed.

<b>Project Preparation</b>	<b>Business Design</b>	<b>Development</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
Training Team Lead	Training Team Lead	Training Team Lead Instructional Designer Online Learning Developer Technical Writer	Training Team Lead Trainer Training Coordinator

## Training Team Lead

The team lead is the first of the training team members to arrive and usually the last to leave the project.

During the first two project phases, the team lead performs information-gathering and planning tasks such as:

- Conducting an audience assessment
- Developing a training strategy and plan
- Contributing project plan line items
- Selecting and securing other training team members
- Developing a project orientation in preparation for other training team members joining the project
- Contributing to the Change Management strategy and plan

A good candidate will have a broad knowledge of the business and great analysis and negotiation skills.

During Development, the team lead becomes a conduit between project management and the training group. Some of the crucial activities performed during this phase are:

- Keeping the team moving towards milestones
- Training the team on development tools or systems used for training
- Communicating and resolving issues within the team and on the project
- Communicating status
- Preparing and delivering end user training presentations to the business

The lead must be highly organized and possess superior communication and people skills. Ideally, the person will also have led multi-functional teams and had some ERP experience. If experience cannot be found in-house, a consultant is often paired with the team lead, to provide mentoring and support.

### Instructional Designer

Instructional designers build the curriculum and design the courseware. They join the project during the Development phase, and their participation continues until the training materials are complete.

Their contributions include:

- Curriculum development
- Course design
- Course development for the classroom or the web
- Train the Trainer Workshop design and development

In this role, the ability to understand and analyze complex business processes is important. You'll need to look for individuals who are team players and have experience in instructional design, adult learning theory, interviewing, and communications.

The number of instructional designers needed is based on three factors:

- Timeline—The shorter the timeline, the more you'll need.
- Number of business processes and their complexity—How many processes can one instructional designer reasonably handle?
- Number of subject matter experts—How many people will one designer need to work with to obtain information?

### Online Learning Developer

If you plan on delivering training over the web, you'll need an online learning developer. The individual initially consults with your instructional designers to develop courseware standards and give advice about how learning content translates to an online environment. The person then builds on-line modules from course storyboards.

The online learning developers should be skilled in:

- Training development tools for the web
- Producing online learning for business process and software tools
- Instructional design concepts
- Visual communication of ideas

The number of online learning developers needed depends on many factors unique to your project.

### Technical Writer

Technical writers can make fast work of many tasks, if the tasks are clearly delineated.

Add this talent during the last 2-3 months before end user training begins.

Skills to look for are:

- Experience writing online help and tutorials
- Knowledge of your online development tools
- Broad and numerous writing experiences within a corporate environment

Assign one technical writer to do all the online work. Assign others to produce reference manuals and associated job aids.

### Trainer

There are two ways of finding trainers for classroom delivery.

The first way is to grow your own. Find individuals in each business area with good communication and people skills. Over the life of the project, show them how the ERP system will work for them. As end user training nears, teach these subject matter experts how to use the course materials you've developed to train the end-users.

The second way is to hire professional trainers who already know the system and processes to be taught. Professional trainers can be added to the project about 1-2 months prior to the start of end user training.

With either approach the duties of the trainer are the same:

- Become familiar with course material
- Assist instructional designers in the development of the participant exercises by advising on likely business scenarios.
- Load practice data in a training system.
- Deliver end user training
- Participate in the assessment of the end user training

Required skills include excellent communication and facilitation skills, ERP subject matter expertise, and limitless patience and enthusiasm in the classroom.

The number of trainers needed depends upon the number of business processes and end users to be trained.

### Training Coordinator

The training coordinator takes on the enormous task of scheduling learners into appropriate courses, tracking completion, scheduling make-up courses, and adjusting training schedules. Add this full time person to the project about 2 months prior to the start of end user training.

Essential skills include attention to detail, organization, working knowledge of database software, and above average written and verbal communication.

Now that you have a clearer understanding of the skills required for each training team role, staffing your ERP training team will be easy.