

Interview Subject-Matter Experts

Select Interviewees

1. Select an odd number of experts, never even.
2. Encourage everyone who will have any input into the course to attend the interviews.
3. Select true job performance experts.
4. Select people who are currently doing the job rather than supervising it.

Plan the Session

5. Prepare a written agenda, if possible.
6. Determine the specific information you want to collect.
7. Prepare a sample task listing and/or task analysis to be used as a guide/standard.
8. Prepare copies of the blank task analysis form (to be completed during the interview session).
9. Rehearse your opening comments.

Introduce the Session

10. Explain the purpose of the session, your role, and the subject-matter expert's role.
11. Distribute the agenda.
12. Explain the process you wish to follow by discussing the agenda.
13. Distribute and review the sample task listing and/or task analysis.
14. Avoid training jargon. Use terms the subject-matter expert will understand.

Lead the Session

15. Ask questions about the subject-matter expert's job and seek confirmation as needed.
16. Record details on the task listing and task analysis worksheets.
17. Refer to the sample task analysis as a comparison point whenever you're given questionable information. Rather than questioning the subject-matter expert's input, point out how his/her input deviates from the model.
18. Avoid discussing course content until the job has been thoroughly analyzed and recorded.
19. Pause the discussion immediately if the SMEs are proceeding too fast or if you're confused. Ask them to slow down or re-explain. **You must** understand the information that is being recorded.
20. Avoid disagreeing with the experts; if you doubt their input, ask questions, seek clarification, or refer to the model.
21. Call for a vote if the experts disagree among themselves. Give everyone a chance to speak before calling the vote.
22. Summarize the information you've recorded in your own words to be sure you fully understand the details of the job. Encourage the experts to offer corrections if you make any mistakes.

Follow Up the Session

23. Send copies of the completed worksheets to all attendees.
24. Send a thank you note to the subject-matter experts and their bosses.
25. Send a copy of the worksheets to anyone else who will have input into the course. Explain that the information contained on the worksheets was provided by the experts. Inform these people that they must provide their input **immediately**, not after the first draft of the course is completed.