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# UNIT 16: PREPARING FOR THE CERT BASIC TRAINING COURSE

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In this unit you will learn about:

- **What Needs to Be Done to Put on a *CERT Basic Training* Course**
- **Factors That Might Affect a Smooth Course Offering and How to Address Each One**

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## UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit reviews the activities that are needed to put on a *CERT Basic Training* course and identifies who should be responsible for seeing that the activities are completed.

This unit also offers some tips for how to have a smooth *CERT Basic Training* course. The things discussed in this unit fall under the instructor's role of classroom manager (see Unit 2).

At the conclusion of this unit, the participants will be able to:

- Explain what needs to be done to put on a *CERT Basic Training* course
- Name who is responsible for each task
- List factors that affect a smooth course offering
- Explain how to address each one

## POSSIBLE PLAYERS

Several people may share the responsibility for putting on a *CERT Basic Training* course.

The *CERT Basic Training* course may be put on by:

- Course Manager
- Lead Instructor
- Other instructors
- Volunteers

Sometimes the same person wears more than one hat, e.g., Course Manager and Lead Instructor. However, in many communities, the CERT Program Manager also assumes the roles of Course Manager and Lead Instructor.

It usually takes a number of people to put on a *CERT Basic Training* course.

## CERT BASIC TRAINING COURSE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

1. **Recruit instructors.**     **Person responsible:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. General rule: At least two instructors should jointly conduct each session.
  - b. Units 3 and 4 should be conducted by licensed or certified paramedics, emergency medical technicians, or nurses.
  - c. All other units (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9) should be conducted by skilled fire and rescue instructors.
  - d. Assess an instructor's training skills (ask for references; ask people who have taken a class with the instructor).
2. **Locate a facility.**     **Person responsible:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Space needed:
    - i. Classroom training space that can be arranged as desired
    - ii. Hands-on activity training space
    - iii. A good rule of thumb is 1,000 square feet for every 20 participants (classroom and practice), as long as there is plenty of room to spread out for the practice exercises.
    - iv. Room for the Unit 9 exercise stations (three inside areas and one outside area)
  - b. Learn how to regulate the temperature and lighting in the training facility.
  - c. Know whom to contact for help in emergencies (e.g., if the power goes out).
3. **Prepare the instructors.** **Person responsible:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Make sure that instructors know about:
    - i. The types of hazards (natural, technological, and manmade) that present the greatest risk to the community
    - ii. Local building structures that present the greatest hazard in the event of a disaster
    - iii. The community's emergency operations plan
    - iv. The CERT Program: its purpose, its place in the emergency operations plan, its messages and values
    - v. The *CERT Basic Training* course: what it covers, how it is structured
  - b. Ask instructors to tailor their units to your community with photos, handouts, scenarios, and examples.
  - c. Conduct a walk-through of all the hands-on activities. Identify equipment needs and desired space layout. Anticipate questions and problems.
  - d. Develop the Unit 9 scenario if using the disaster simulation model.

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**COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM BASIC TRAIN-THE-TRAINER**  
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4. **Gather equipment and supplies. Person responsible:** \_\_\_\_\_
- a. A computer with:
    - i. MS Office 2003 (Word and PowerPoint)
    - ii. Adobe Flash 8 plug-in
    - iii. CD/DVD player
  - b. Projection system and screen
  - c. 1-2 easel pads and easels
  - d. Markers (variety of colors)
  - e. Masking tape
  - f. Food and water for participants
  - g. Pens and pencils
  - h. Hands-on activity equipment
5. **Prepare printed materials. Person responsible:** \_\_\_\_\_
- a. Agenda
  - b. One Participant Manual for each participant
  - c. Any additional handouts that are not included in the Participant Manual, e.g., Hazards

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**COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM BASIC TRAIN-THE-TRAINER**

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6. Recruit “survivors” for activities. Person responsible: \_\_\_\_\_
- a. “Survivors” can be recruited from high school drama classes or high school and college health classes
  - b. CERT members who have already completed the *CERT Basic Training* course also make good survivors.
  - c. The appropriate number of survivors is dependent on the number of CERT participants. Two or three survivors for every CERT participant are recommended.

### **PREPARE FOR THE UNFORESEEN**

One of the most important things to do when getting ready for a *CERT Basic Training* course is to think of what might happen.

What “what if” questions should you ask yourself as you are preparing for the *CERT Basic Training* course?

### **FACTORS THAT AFFECT A SMOOTH COURSE OFFERING**

Instructors must master the following factors to have a smooth course offering:

- Time management
- Equipment use
- Familiarity with whole course
- Team teaching

## FACTORS THAT AFFECT A SMOOTH COURSE OFFERING (CONTINUED)

### TIME MANAGEMENT

- There is a lot to cover in the course so stick to the times suggested in the IG.
- Start on time and end on time; people aren't going to want to stay past the end time.
- Watch your stories and adding extraneous info.
- Know how to wrap up a discussion.
- Know how to use the equipment; don't waste class time learning how to use it.

Learning how to use classroom equipment before the class begins will save a lot of time. You don't want to lose time and break the flow of the class because you're fumbling with equipment.

The following equipment may be needed for the *CERT Basic Training* course:

- Computer
- PowerPoint and video projection system
- PPE
- All activity materials, e.g.,
  - Fire extinguishers
  - Sterile dressings
  - Stretcher
  - Pry tools and cribbing
- Splinting materials

## **FACTORS THAT AFFECT A SMOOTH COURSE OFFERING (CONTINUED)**

### **Tips for Effective Time Management**

1. At the start of the unit, establish some ground rules:
  - a. There is a lot to be covered. The instructor reserves the right to wrap up a discussion and move on. Minimize instructor and participant “war stories.”
  - b. Everyone gets a chance to talk but no one dominates.
  - c. Use a *Parking Lot* to capture items that need to be pursued but are not the focal points for this unit.
  - d. Ask the group to keep focused.
2. Ask for help from the group. “Folks, we have 10 minutes remaining for this item. We need to refocus. How can we wrap up this discussion?”
3. Practice and practice until you can use the equipment easily and comfortably.
4. As much as possible, get activities set up ahead of time.
5. Get non-participant volunteers to help set up the hands-on activities at the appropriate time.
6. As you prepare, practice giving the directions for the activity. They need to be simple, clear, complete, and in logical order.

## FACTORS THAT AFFECT A SMOOTH COURSE OFFERING (CONTINUED)

### FAMILIARITY WITH WHOLE COURSE

You should know what is covered in each of the units so that:

- You can tell people where the answer to a question will be addressed
- You can refer to a point or skill learned in a previous unit that supports material in the current unit
- You can make the connections that show CERT as a cohesive model
- You look more competent
- You can help the “specialty” instructors who may be less familiar with the course

### TEAM TEACHING AND CERT

Here are some tips for how instructors can work together to teach the *CERT Basic Training* course:

1. There should be at least two instructors present for each unit.
  2. Plan together before the class for how you will divide up the instructor roles:
    - a. Trainer
    - b. Coach
    - c. Evaluator
    - d. Classroom manager
- You can take turns instructing different parts of the unit. One teaches while the other takes notes, writes on the easel pad, and deals with administrative issues.
  - One can open, close, and help with activities while the other teaches the skill.
  - One can do all the teaching while the other simply monitors, being an additional set of eyes and ears.
  - However the delivery of lectures is divided, both trainers are needed to coach and evaluate participants' hands-on practice of the skills.

### FACTORS THAT AFFECT A SMOOTH COURSE OFFERING (CONTINUED)

3. Rehearse whenever possible so you can figure out timing and identify any areas that might cause a problem.
4. Meet afterward to evaluate and suggest improvements for the future.
5. Other tips:
  - a. In particular, know how to support specialized instructors.
  - b. Agree to make any difference of opinion “respectful debate.”

### UNIT SUMMARY

This unit has reviewed the activities that are needed to put on a *CERT Basic Training* course and who should be responsible for seeing that the activities are completed.

This unit also examined things instructors need to master in order to have a seamless *CERT Basic Training* course.

- Time management
- Familiarity with the whole course
- Team teaching
- Equipment use

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