



***PHOENIX TRAINING GROUP***  
**Preparation and Professionalism**

"In youth we learn; in age we understand"  
- Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach

## **Phoenix Training Group**

### **Preparation and Professionalism**

Anyone can say that they want to become an instructor, but it takes more than completing a course in Crisis Management and Prevention to become an excellent trainer. It takes the desire to become an excellent Instructor combined with the preparation and attention to the details of this business that ensure you're not simply an ordinary instructor, but instead a spectacular one. You've demonstrated by attending the training and starting the journey of becoming an instructor for Phoenix Training Group that you have the desire. And in this section we'll talk about some of the elements necessary to ensure that you develop into one of those excellent educators that actually make a difference when it comes to training individuals to stay safe within their workplaces, while helping organizations to provide the best and most therapeutic environment possible.

Hardly anyone can go out into the world following the instructor training workshops and be a great trainer that commands complete attention and respect from the individuals who attend their classes. It usually involves having some experience in teaching this program, or even another violence prevention program behind them, possibly combined with some experience in the behavioral health services, social services, regional centers, healthcare, security or law enforcement, mixed with some lessons in failure by learning what doesn't work when trying to teach this sort of training. Only experience can turn us into the trainers that we see ourselves becoming, just like life experiences are what shape us into the individuals we are comfortable being within our lives and each class you teach will serve as bricks to be laid next to the others to create a structure of form and functionality that you have built yourself. And what holds the bricks together is the mortar that becomes the strength of the structure. That mortar is what this section is all about and the willingness to recognize the small elements that help make your teaching easier and more effective is one thing that will help you to achieve the goals you have decided to pursue.

I'm already assuming that you are a smart, intelligent and focused individual just by your decision to take on the challenge of becoming a Phoenix Training Group VIP instructor, but even the most brilliant of scholars will bow to learning from other's experiences in order to help them become better at their chosen field. You may have a little or a lot of experience in the first place and that will help you survive some of the pitfalls of putting yourself in front of groups of individuals on a daily basis who are there, many times there because they have been forced to attend by their employers. And if you have no experience, then you can tap into the experiences you've had in other fields and situations to draw from when making the connections between what you have done in the past and what you will be doing with this endeavor.

Hopefully, my forty years of experience in the medical, emergency, behavioral health and law enforcement field, as well as thirty seven years in teaching this program will provide you with some information that might fill in the blanks of what you might not be aware of yet, much like how the mortar fills in the gaps of the bricks of a building. Having access to the trial and error of my tens of thousands of classes over the years might help you in preventing the difficulties that I encountered and overcame in becoming the educator that I am today. I want you to become successful in your plan to become or continue to train individuals and organizations in the prevention and management of dangerous or violent behavior and so I wrote this textbook in such a way as to provide you with not only the tools of what to do and teach, but how to pool from the experiences of others in order for you to learn what it takes to transform yourself into the instructor that can teach this subject with confidence and conviction, knowing that you're good at what you do. I know that you can do it effectively. There just are some tricks to ensuring it.

And in turn, that will help tremendously in convincing the individuals you train to treat you with respect because they get the sense from you that you are the voice of experience that they can actually learn from. And that claim is nothing to scoff at these days. People are so used to average or even terrible educators these days, that when one comes along that actually knows the subject backwards and forward and not only has the ability to teach, but teaches with flair and conviction, the people attending their class will truly soak up the knowledge for themselves and then pass that knowledge on to others in their fields because they were affected by the learning experience in such a way as to want to educate outward like a ripple effect. This is what I call *Viral Education*, where people attending a training find themselves at the end of it, compelled to pass on the information because the information is important, relevant and means something to them as human beings and who they care for, not just simply a class that they had to take because their employers expected them to. This is one of the great secrets in becoming a really good instructor, that you're providing them with something that they can take away with them that they actually own themselves, instead of just having to endure the next few hours.

If the information they receive relates to them as people and they learn something that they can take with them that applies to their everyday lives instead of just within the walls of their workplace, then they have ownership over the information and this seems to be one of the successful elements to this program that other programs many times forget to include...the relevance outside of the workplace. And when the material is presented in such a way where the instructor gets through to the student's ability to connect the information to how they can use the lessons learned to help them in their own lives outside of their employment, then they will not only listen and want to learn from you, but will apply those lessons to improve their lives both inside and outside of what they may do for a living. And that's what makes the difference between a class that people dread coming to and one that they look forward to year after year.

I have been teaching this program for a long time, but it wasn't until I had the experience behind me from the places I worked for and the people I worked with, both staff and patients, that I evolved myself into an educator that people and organizations recognize as one that actually has a positive and lasting effect on those who attend my trainings. One thing that has helped me continue and grow with that aspect, is that I never stop learning from the people and profession that I have chosen to spend my life surrounding myself with and I hope that you never allow yourself to stop learning from those who you surround yourself with as well. The moment that we stop learning is the moment that we are too rigid and jaded to continue teaching effectively.

Just like the three elements of a successful negotiation, we have to first examine what the situation is that we are faced with...In this case, what you're facing is your decision to spend a significant portion of your time teaching a class to other people in the hopes that they will learn from it what you feel is important to know. You're going to be doing something that is important and worthwhile to other people, even when they may not know it yet and that is an admirable position to put yourself within. The second step is examining your reaction to the situation that you're faced with. Just having the desire and learning to teach the classes isn't enough...It's realizing your part in the process, that it's not a one way direction of learning. It goes both ways, both the learning process, as well as what comes back to you in return from being an instructor. I would not have taught the program for this long if I had not gotten so much from it and that comes with examining what you put out as an instructor that measures what you receive in return from this. It goes both ways and there is a significant return in pride and success if you put into it what you believe to be the best part of yourself and what you have to offer as an educator.

The third step is understanding through the combination of the first two elements of how you can present the best and most effective direction of execution possible, stemming from your commitment of becoming the best instructor that you can be. As with any negotiation, if you have these three elements in place and understand how they relate to both your intentions and the end goals, you'll find yourself realizing sooner, rather than later, that you have developed yourself into a great instructor, one that you will be proud to consider yourself to be, as well as one that we will be proud to say that you are. Below are some collective elements that I feel will help you to become the great instructor that we know you can become. And if you are already a great instructor, then it will be good to have you on the team, representing The Phoenix Training Group as an educator that we can be proud to have training our program.

Good Luck.

### **EFFECTIVE ELEMENTS IN BECOMING A GREAT INSTRUCTOR**

- ***Always arrive early.*** Make sure that you plan ahead and allow yourself more than enough time when heading to a location to teach a class. I always arrive for class at least one hour prior to the class start time. It allows the instructor plenty of time to set up for the class without having to rush and to have a buffer time in case anything goes wrong, you need to make copies of a handout you've forgotten, you need to find batteries for electronics that suddenly fail, or in the position that you run into traffic, etc. If it's my first time at a location, or I'm unfamiliar with the facility, then I usually arrive an hour and half before class, because no matter how much your contact has told you that everything is set up and ready to go for your class, there will always be something that is not there, or ready for you and there is nothing worse than to start late for your first class at a new facility. The students don't care why you're late, they will instantly judge you in a negative light and overcoming that negative judgment is extremely difficult, if not impossible to achieve. If you end up rushing to set up because you're late, or due to something going wrong, then you'll be starting the class out of breath and drenched in perspiration. Trying to start a class under these conditions will always throws you off in terms of preparedness and timing and that rocky start will usually carry over into the rest of the class. Many times if a class starts rough, the negative momentum will ripple through the remainder of the training without being able to get a handle on it.
- ***Know where you're going.*** If you're not familiar with a location you'll be teaching at, be sure to lookup the location on a map, mapping website or GPS the night before and if you don't have a GPS system in your vehicle, then print out a detailed map so you're not asking the local gas station for directions ten minutes before your class is about to begin. Once you're late, the students, as well as the administration of the facility will think you're not dependable. In some cases, they have had instructors in the past who were absolute flakes and if you're late as well, then they'll think you're just like the other person who they had to let go and you'll always have a credibility issue with them afterward. You have to be the instructor that repairs the bad taste from the last person they couldn't count on and restores their opinion trainers to the point where they brag about you to other facilities of how wonderful you are to have there now, training their facility and staff. I've gotten quite a few accounts from facilities that have heard we are more dependable and easy to work with than other trainers and companies they have experienced in the past and the word of mouth in this business is just a quick phone call or e-mail away.

- ***Be available to your facilities.*** Always be easy to find when they have a question or need to get in contact with you. If they can't get a hold of you, they will stop contacting you to teach for them. If you are unable to take calls at times, have a voice mail system and check it often. Calling back the next day many times is just too late when working within this fast-paced world of business and they will expect you to exist within the modern world of instant gratification when it comes to needing something from you that might be time-sensitive to a twenty-four hour industry like the medical field. We have a reputation of being very easy to get in contact with, even after hours and that in itself has solidified many deals of acquiring contracts with facilities. If you rely on e-mails, then I recommend that you check it throughout the day if possible so you can respond quickly. No one likes someone that you can't get a hold of, least of all someone who you are paying money to, to answer important questions that pertain to their compliancy issues with regulatory agencies. Facilities and organizations know that we can and will assist them whenever they need an important issue resolved and that is not only invaluable, but many times, a deal breaker when it comes to continuing their contracts with you. Get in the habit of telling your contacts that you're always available for them and if there is anything that they need from you, not to hesitate to contact you, as you want to do whatever you can to help them with what they need.
- ***Always be prepared.*** Plan for the unexpected when training. The more you ask the facilities for help with things *you* could take care of, or for items that you may have forgotten, the more they will see you as too high maintenance. I've included a checklist of materials to have with you so you start to get into the habit of not needing their assistance or teaching aides as much as possible. Gain the reputation of being very self-sufficient when it comes to your classes. That's not to say that you can't request that they provide items like projectors and screens and such, but facilities love when you tell them that if they have the equipment, that's great, but if not, we have everything we need to teach the class. Many facilities are just not used to this and are so surprised and pleased at how we are so self-contained and low maintenance when we're at a location. Reputation is everything.
- ***Dress professionally.*** Always dress to impress, especially when you might be interacting with managements or administration. This business allows for a certain casual atmosphere when picking out attire for class since there is physical movement within the curriculum, but you are a professional and you want the facilities and the students to take you seriously and have respect for you and your position. Worn out jeans, beat up tennis shoes and T-shirts say volumes about your credibility and if administration just happens to drop by when you're dressed like that, they will never take you seriously again and whether you like it or not, they will look down upon you and assume you're not educated or good at what you do. Dockers, a casual shirt and nice comfortable shoes along with not dressing too provocatively or flashy always help sell you as the capable professional you are.
- ***Be willing to give, in order to get something in return.*** This is one of the basic principles of negotiation when it comes to trying to obtain the results you want and when teaching classes, it's no different. If you want the best possible reaction to your training, as well as active participation and attention, it's always a good idea to give something so that the students are able to walk away from your class that day saying that they received something from it besides education. That's why when I teach classes, I often bring some donuts in the morning and bowls of pretzels in the afternoon. It costs very little in comparison to what you receive back in payments from the facilities and attention from your students. Providing your students with an instant gift when they walk into the class sets an instant positive tone toward you and the class that usually remains throughout the day.

- **Be organized.** Organization skills are essential when it comes to completing your paperwork and providing the facilities with the documents and certifications that they need to place into their employee's files and have on hand in order to be compliant with the regulatory agencies. If you don't follow through on getting materials back to management and administration in a timely fashion, you are creating a deteriorating relationship with them that will not last long. I have often been contacted by facilities to take over contracts because they are so frustrated with their instructors for not completing and returning their employee's certificates following the classes to where they were forced to seek out another instructor to actually redo the classes to prove to the regulatory agencies that they completed their required education. It's important to process and return the materials that the facilities need as quickly as possible. Some companies I know that provide healthcare facilities contracted education, take as long as a month to two months to process and return their paperwork to the facilities and I hear the frustration from them of how they can't wait until the contract ends so that they can seek another company to replace them due to the slow service.

We are known for our quick turn-around when it comes to processing and mailing out the materials that they need to remain compliant and that quick response shows them that we understand that these things are important to them and in turn, they will reward that promptness with continuing support and contract renewals. Think about creating databases for the records that you'll need down the road, as well as for facilities when they need information on classes and students who attended your classes in the past. We are always getting calls from organizations in order to verify whether or not someone attended one of our classes in the past and the more you can answer their questions and provide them with the information they need, the more they will use you for their future needs as well.

- **Begin on time.** If you start late then the students will become impatient with you and your ability to conduct a class correctly and then your credibility goes way down in their eyes. But at the same time, try not to be too rigid when it comes to the start time for the class either. If the students believe that you are too rigid, they will pre-judge you and turn off their open-mindedness instantly, disallowing for much of a learning process thereafter. Try to become balanced in everything you do and your disposition and rewards will be as balanced as you are in the end. Starting on time communicates to the students that you take this training seriously, even when they themselves may not, but your sense of being in charge will eventually permeate to them and they will end up respecting you much more. I tend to start talking with the students as a group right at the start time to let them know that I am about to begin. That way it gives them a moment to wrap up their conversations without being cut off in the middle, which will allow them to see you in a much better light. Then at five minutes after the start time, I begin the class and at around ten to fifteen minutes after the start time, I close the class off to anyone else trying to arrive.
- **Help your students find the class.** Make it easy to locate your training, especially when those attending are unfamiliar with the facility or location. Use lots of signs to direct people to your classes, particularly when the location is difficult to find. I have laminated 8 1/2" by 11" class signs in bright colors like astro pink, green and yellow with the names of the classes, along with signs with arrows in different directions to help people find the classes so they are not wandering around for a half an hour before storming into your class late and disruptive to the other students and to the class itself. This will save you a lot of hassle in dealing with late people who feel they should be allowed to enter the class late because *you* weren't clear on its location in the first place.

- ***Be firm in your limit setting.*** Sometimes you just have to put your foot down when dealing with individuals who are attending your classes, or those trying to enter well after the cut-off time for coming in. Once the class has been closed off, try to resist the urge to allow those who are late to enter, unless they have made previous arrangements with you, or the facility has made arrangements with you a head of time. Sometimes I will allow for a little extra time if the location is really difficult to find, but I tend to start a little later when that occurs. You don't want to set your students up for failure when the location itself is a nightmare to find. I post signs outside of the door at the cut-off time that inform anyone arriving late, that no one will be admitted after the cut-off time because it disrupts the class too much and to contact either myself after the class, or the facility's designated contact person during the class to find out when the next class will be. This saves you from having to speak with them when they enter, trying to get in.

If you are known for allowing people in well after the cut-off time, then the other students will usually get upset because they worked hard to get to the class on time and when they see people getting rewarded for being flakes, they will harbor resentment throughout the class that radiates into their performance while there, their willingness to learn and their evaluations of you at the end of the class. If a person does try to sneak in, pretending that they didn't see or read the posted sign, try not to be too short with them either when informing them that the class is closed. Instead, try to be apologetic in your understanding of their possible frustration over not being able to attend this class and that you'd be willing to assist them after the class and then direct your attention back to the students so they don't get distracted and the late comer gets the message that they are not getting in. Remember, that same person is most likely going to be in your next class and if you are too abrupt with them, they will remember you next time and won't be very attentive.

- ***Don't get sucked into the drama.*** Try to be as neutral as possible when dealing with problems or negative situations from students and facility staff. Your stress level will thank you for it. The moment you take sides on any issue when dealing with staff in a health facility, is the moment that you will get a reputation for crossing someone and that sort of information spreads like wildfire. Never complain about anyone for any reason, even though you'd love to tell the person that you're speaking with all of the dirt you know on a person, it's a reputation death sentence the instant you do, because no matter how much you trust someone you're telling something to, that information regarding you will be passed around until it eventually reaches the person that you said something about. You don't need the drama and neither does this company. People stopped trying to tell me rumors about other people many years ago because I won't listen, or react and will shut them down instantly, telling them I really don't want to hear about someone else while they are not there to defend themselves. People tend to start leaving you alone after that.

I believe in honor and talking about anyone behind their backs is simply not an honorable act as a person. If someone is venting about someone, whether staff or administration, I will wait until they are finished and tell them that it sounds like they need to talk to that person directly so they can both sit down and resolve the issue. I never take sides and I never talk badly about anyone. I won't even speak badly about other violence prevention programs that are our competitors. I always tell anyone that there is value in any violence prevention program and it's not for me to judge anyone else, or the company they choose to work with or take training from. Keeping one's mouth shut when it comes to talking about other individuals when they are not around is a learned skill, but the sooner you learn it, the sooner your life will feel better from the reduced drama it involves.

- ***Be careful about the jokes you tell or comments you make.*** One inappropriate or off-color joke while teaching a class can create an instant firestorm of complaints to the administration that continues our financial contracts or writes your checks and you'll forever be labeled as an inappropriate person by those who you try to teach and when your students lose respect for you, you're done as an effective instructor. Resist the urge to let that little joke slip out during the classes, just because you might be feeling uncomfortable at the moment, or feeling that you need to impress your crowd to get them back on track to liking you. I use a lot of humor in the classes I teach, but I always draw from the humor of something that we can all relate to as a group or department and the humor I use usually has a message or lesson attached to it that makes it valuable in some way, instead of using it as a means to elevate myself at someone else's expense. And be very aware of what you say that might offend someone, individually, culturally, sexually, racially and even religiously. You as an instructor have to set the bar high for compassion and tolerance. It says a lot about a person psychologically, when they don't have that self-regulating filter embedded within themselves to allow inappropriate comments and jokes to consciously, or subconsciously slip out and if your students are witness to that behavior, they will harbor negative emotions toward you forever, no matter what you say to try to repair the damage done. I've seen plenty of instructors that have let some side comment slip that made the student's mouths drop open in disbelief of what they just heard. Those instructors don't last long and I sure don't tolerate them teaching for my company.
- ***Know your material.*** It's your responsibility to read the manuals and to have paid attention during the instructor training workshops. Read and re-read the manuals so that you can have the material in your mind and at your beckoned call when it comes to making a point, relating it to the students you teach, or when asked a question. If you've ever attended a training like this in the past, you know that if the instructor pulls out the book to read the pages to the class, you're going to turn that person off instantly. That's what PowerPoint presentations are all about, so you can shoot images and key points up on the screen and remind yourself what it is that you're talking about, so use lots of tools of the trade to help you along after you have studied the material. Also, find articles and read extra material regarding the subjects on the Internet and in books and the Resource Library of the PhoenixTrainingGroup.com website is always a great information source when it comes to studying about the laws and regulations surrounding these topics. I've studied just about everything there is to know about this subject and I'm always learning more each day.

Don't be the instructor that is always responding to questions from the students with, "I have no idea." Be the instructor that has an answer for the students that shows them that you know what you're talking about and that is knowledgeable about the subject. If you're not, they will dismiss you very quickly because your students have spent a lot of time in school learning many things about what they do and if you don't know the answers to their questions, they have no reason to respect you. Your level of knowledge will reflect upon the evaluations that they return at the end of the class. It's up to you if you want great evaluations, or poor ones, so know as much as you can. If you don't know the answers though, also don't even think about BS-ing your students. They will know instantly that you're making it up as you go and they will not only have no respect for you, they will feel that you think that they are stupid and then they will tell everyone else that you're trying to teach a class that you have no business teaching. If you have to, find out the information on a break so that you have some sort of real answer for them so they'll be able to respect that even though you may not have known the answer right away, you were resourceful enough to find it for them and they'll be impressed that you took the time to do it.



- **Keep a positive attitude.** Even when everything has gone wrong before the class has even begun and you have a room full of students who make it clear that they don't want to be there taking this class, stay positive. It doesn't do any good for you to be in a bad mood and it won't help the class go any better either, so find the courage within yourself and decide that you're going to try to stay positive even in the face of adversity. I've found that if I just don't take the self-deprecating bait to spiral into a perpetual lousy mood and instead focus on what I have to do to make it better, that I can actually pull myself out of the hole and make something good out of the day. I feel it's my responsibility as the Instructor to set the tone and mood for the class and if I'm in a bad mood when the students walk in, then they will absorb the negativity you're giving out and only escalate the mood in a worse direction, so establish a positive outlook right away, even when you might not feel like it and your students will often times improve theirs just out of the reaction from yours. Even an angry person can't stay angry when there are people in the room laughing aloud, so set the mood for success instead of for failure.

You can also bring a group's energy level down very quickly when you are too serious or are trying to make a serious point with a sad story, so if you don't want a depressed roomful of students, keep the energy up throughout the class. And if you do make a serious point with a depressing story, make sure you have an ending that uplifts the group, or give them a positive point to counter the depressing one. Otherwise the room will dive into a negative mood that will settle like a fog in the class and often times effect the way the class itself will go for the remainder of the training, which will affect your evaluations and what the students will say about your class. No one likes to be around depressing person, let alone a roomful of them. You are the director of the classroom and so don't underestimate your positive or negative effect on the students.

- **Keep your own emotions to yourself.** When the class isn't going as well as you'd want it to and you have one student who is being a problem child and your tolerance is low for dealing with students who make it obvious that they don't want to be there for the class, resist the urge to react, or even over-react to people who come to your class to disrupt it. If you react to their attempts to get to you, then they instantly feel that they have the power to effect you and that you are weak. Have the strength to not react in the face of manipulation. This is definitely a learned skill and if you learn it, not only will you start feeling the strength evolving within yourself, but your students will respect you more and will tone down the attempts to effect you when they don't get a reaction from you. And if you have a specific person in the class that is really getting to you, resist the urge to pick on them, or admonish them during the class in front of others. It will only intensify the negative dynamics of the individual and take the focus off of the class itself and that can sink a class quickly. Let them believe that you are unflappable and that you are smarter than that to let difficult people have an effect on you. Demonstrate to the class that you are an effective role model for the negotiation process.
- **Be flexible when it comes to opinions.** Even when you know you may be right, still entertain the possibility that the student trying to argue their point might have a perspective that could have some merit. Try not to be the Instructor that makes it known right away that it's their way, or the highway. Have some flexibility when dealing with people who have strong opinions in your class. Even if you feel that you are right, allow the person to state their position and don't argue the point, but instead, thank them for bringing another perspective to the issue at hand. And if the information is obviously the wrong message you want to influence the group, then bring the concept back around to the point that is best for the dynamic you're covering and how it is presented from the curriculum.

- ***Be conscious of favoritism toward specific students.*** When you have student who is a friend, or a member of administration, or even someone you find attractive, try to be very aware of affording them slack or special attention that you may not be providing the other students in the class. The other people in the room will instantly feel the increase in attention for the favored person and the lack of attention that they are all receiving from you. Picking on one person for feedback, or to perform the physical tasks repeatedly, having too much eye contact with them, smiling a lot toward them, spending time talking with them during breaks, or even responding seductively to an attractive student that might be flirting with you will give the other students a feeling of favoritism, disregard and abandonment. Your students will then disregard you in return by being uncooperative and challenging, not to mention that they will tell you their observations on the evaluations before leaving your class and then start the rumors about your unprofessional flirting with your students. And you don't want that sort of drama getting spread around the facility you're trying to remain in good standing with. Like a snowball effect, the rumors will eventually reach administration and they will be compelled to call you in for a meeting because they have to comply with Sexual Harassment laws that apply to hospitals and other companies and they may even have to launch an investigation into the incident. The Phoenix Training group provides companies with Sexual Harassment training and so this is something that we, nor they will tolerate at all.

If the party you're paying too much attention to is part of management or administration and you're trying to impress them, this will backfire as well, as they will know that you're doing it to look good in front of them and they won't respect you, while at the same time, the other students will know the same thing and they will lose all respect for you for trying to be teacher's pet. It's just not worth it, so self-monitor your actions constantly. If you're unaware of this, you'll only realize it when you get called into the administration office. Be a role model of self-discipline and professionalism to your students and they will respect you more and you'll avoid the drama of finding yourself immersed in a completely avoidable incident.

- ***Establish whether or not your students understand what you're saying.*** All the training in the world is useless unless we understand what it is we're being taught. There will be occasional barriers to your information being fully understood by those who you teach, including language, cultural and learning impairments, so try not to take it for granted that your message is getting through all the time. This is why I always ask my students, once I've presented a concept or point, if what I said makes sense to them. People often don't feel comfortable cutting in while an instructor is speaking to ask for clarification, but given the opportunity, they will, so try to provide your students with the opportunity to ask you for clarity. We're dealing with some fairly complex dynamics when exploring the mind and how it works and especially how it doesn't in some cases and not everyone is going to fully understand the complexities that we take for granted, so allow your group the opportunity to answer you back with questions. Ask them if they understand what you've just said from time to time, especially after you've presented something that you think might be challenging to grasp. At the same time, this question to them can sound slightly condescending if not presented in a truly compassionate sounding fashion, so be conscious of how you sound when asking your group if they understand. I've found that this one rule has helped so many people in both understanding the concepts we are presenting, as well as to make them feel that it is important that they actually learn something from the training. A lot of people are used to instructors or teachers who whisk the information past their students, assuming that they grasp it, but that really haven't and the learning process is useless, so be the teacher who they know is actually interested in that they actually learn.

- ***Read and study your crowd.*** Knowing who you are training that day is an important element in being able to teach and control them. Before the class begins, try to watch and listen to your group carefully to read what sort of mood they are in, or whether they worked the nightshift before coming to your class. People who worked the nightshift prior to arriving to your class are sometimes difficult to have in the class. They are commonly too tired to listen well and often nod off to sleep during the class and won't participate actively, so knowing this ahead of time is crucial to your ability to create a positive and productive learning environment. If I identify students who have worked an entire shift right before attending my class, I often times will make a call to the education or HR department, or whomever helps to coordinate the classes to mention to them that they have people who have worked the shift before the class and then ask them if they are aware of that. Many times the facilities will have policies in place already not to have people attending a class directly after completing a shift, either for overtime, or fair work practices reasons, so often they don't want them to attend the class and if they remove the student, then you are not put into a place of having to wake them up, or report their behavior to the facility afterward.

Watch the group during the class and how they interact with each other and particularly with you and then study and listen to them during the breaks when they often times will verbalize what they think of you and the class to others when they don't think you're paying attention. You can learn a lot by pretending not to be paying attention to them, while really, your ears are trying to hear every word they are saying. Listen to identify the students who are there because they want to learn and especially the ones who are there just because they have to be. This will allow you to spend a little extra effort on the ones who are there by force to help them feel more connected to the class and the purpose they are all there in the first place. It's essential to identify the students who have the ability to negatively affect the others in the class and so try to realize who could be a problem early on so you're not blindsided by their attitude later on during the class and so you can focus on them to help make them feel relevant to the training.

I always try to spend a little extra effort on those individuals and allow them the opportunity to exercise their power in constructive ways that relate to the subject. By doing this, they are less likely to act out toward you because I have recognized their importance and so they will feel psychologically satisfied and more apt to listen to what you have to say. Try to gain a sense of your group's strengths and weaknesses so you can capitalize on them during the class. Identifying these elements early can have an influential impact on whether your class goes well or ends up negatively affected by your students and their idiosyncrasies, so it's always a good idea to know what you're up against ahead of time. Otherwise you'll find out during your class and it's more difficult to both teach and put out your potential fires at the same time.

- ***Try not to allow people that enter your class disrupt it until you're ready.*** When someone from the facility enters the class to speak with you, another student, or needs to retrieve an attendee to take a phone call or to return to their department, try not to allow them to disrupt the flow of the class until you are ready, or at least until you've completed your sentence or point. If the flow of the concept is disrupted and you pause for their mission, then sometimes the students seize that opportunity to start talking among themselves and often times it is slightly difficult to get things back on track. Don't feel compelled to allow someone from outside of your class to control it. Don't forget that you are the instructor and possess the control over the class, so don't feel pressured to stop the class when you're not ready to stop. You sometimes have to set limits even with management.

- ***Call people by their names and look people in the eyes.*** Try not to become too busy, distracted or focused on what you're doing or dealing with to really engage your interaction between you and those who have attended your class, or that you encounter when you visit a facility. Try to use memory tricks to remember the names of the students as much as possible, especially those who you might want to call on for examples later in the class. I try to choose those people in the beginning of the class when I have them state their names and what they do at the facility. That way, I can pick out a couple of students right then and remember only a couple of them so I can call them by name when I want to use them for a question or example. When you meet staff, or if someone from the housekeeping personnel come in to help arrange your room, learn, remember and try to call them by their names so they get the feeling that you respect and regard them as a valuable person. Everyone wants to be regarded and we all know when someone else doesn't take the time or effort to respect us enough to look us in the eyes, or remember our names and it makes such a difference to someone when you do. When the food service personnel comes in to bring coffee, take the time to ask them what their name is and introduce yourself and thank them for doing what they do for you. It's amazing how those same people will put a little more effort in doing things in return for you, just from them getting the recognition of their work.

I've found that after I have spent the extra energy acknowledging people with the respect that they we all want, engineering will help out much more when you need more tables and food services will sometimes send a little extra food your way. It's their way of thanking you for regarding them with respect and all too often, they encounter people who come into a facility and do not acknowledge their importance, or even their existence. You shouldn't do this because you might get something in return for your extra effort though. You should do it because it feels right and that you want to be the best person you can be and one of the first rules of that, is to treat others the way that you would want to be treated in return. I believe that we're all just people on the same level in life and who all need validation and the rewards go to those who simply regard this principle as something that we should all do just because it's the right thing to do.

- ***Present examples from your own experiences to make points.*** Many times, the concepts you're presenting and points you're trying to make may be too concrete or complex for the students to truly grasp fully and so when you can, use examples from your life and experiences to paint a picture of how the dynamic you are talking about might relate to them, what they do and what relevance it has to their being there for the class. Often times, people will approach me following the training and comment on how the examples I used helped to understand what I meant and how it related to them individually and that the examples brought a difficult concept to life, so use this when you think it may help clear the fog of understanding when it comes to your class. But at the same time, be careful not to tell too many war stories as this only serves to bore the students unless it relates to the point you are trying to make. They will also feel like you're bragging about your experiences instead of sharing an example that pertains to the class and the subject at hand, so examine within yourself, knowing the difference between sharing in order to create clarity and sharing for no apparent reason other than to communicate to the students that you've been around the block.
- ***Be aware of the temperature in your classroom.*** Have the ability, or have access to the person who has the ability to adjust the temperature in the room that you are training in. If it's too cold, your students will become so distracted over being chilly, they won't want to hear what you're saying and if it's too hot they will be miserable, so give them the ability to tell you if it's too hot or cold.

- ***Read your class evaluations.*** But try not to take them personally. They are a learning tool for you and how you might improve your training. Don't just cast them aside when they don't meet your expectations of how you thought you did while teaching. Always keep an open mind to whether they may have a point regarding something that could need tweaking within your methods or style. No matter how great of an instructor you are though, there will always be those evaluations that cause you to raise your eyebrows and wonder whether they were in your class, or someone else's. You can't take them personally when you know you did a good job. You can only take what you believe is valuable from the evaluations and take the rest with a grain of salt, but don't be in denial of what might need to change within your teaching methods either. There is always room for improvement. It's usually a wise idea to at least listen to the voice of criticism.
- ***If you have to ask someone to leave the class, do it in private and with tact.*** You may never have to perform this task during your career, but if you do have that really disruptive student who is bent on dominating the class and challenging you about everything, then before you ask someone to leave, try to pull them aside at the break first to let them know that you understand that they may not want to be in the class, but that you have a job to do and they need to get their certification to work, so if you both could just get through it and you'll both get what you want from it. You'll get the class done and they will be able to get back to work, but if they are too disruptive, then you'll be forced to make an adjustment for the other student's benefit and they may have to leave the class and that they will not receive their certification. So being cooperative and helping you out would be the best option for you both. That usually persuades the disrupters to behave for the remainder of the class and if they don't improve and are still disrespectful after the warning, then not to take it wrong, but that it's just too disruptive having them in the class and that you're going to have to ask them to leave. Try not to do this in front of the other students though and during a break and with tact. Remember that you are the one in control of your class and they are only behaving badly because they have issues within themselves that just happen to spill out toward you, so you can't take it personally, but at the same time, you don't have to put up with it either.
- ***Time the breaks for the class by your pacing and your student's need for them.*** Try to always watch your crowd to read when the breaks are necessary for them, but don't let the student's requests for breaks intimidate your pacing for the class either. Time the breaks from your ability to know when the point breaks are within the subject matter you're trying to convey to the group. I tend to pace the classes for breaks at every two hours on average, as long as I've finished my point. Breaks at every hour will cause the timing for the class to shorten and you won't be able to cover as much material as you could have. Resist the urge to be the popular instructor because you give lots of breaks. They won't respect you as much in the end and it will get around to management that you take too many breaks and that they are not getting their money's worth with your training. At the same time, scan your class constantly for those who are in need of a bathroom break. They will be impressed that you are so in tune with your students that they will thank you with a good evaluation.
- ***Bring more materials and paperwork than people you are expecting.*** My steadfast rule when planning for a class, is to bring twice as many materials and paperwork for the training than individuals I am expecting. No matter what information you receive from the HR or education department of how many people will be attending your class, there will always be more than they say.

- ***Never make or receive phone calls, e-mails or IMs during the class.*** This is one of the cardinal sins that a trainer can commit, is to make or receive phone calls, e-mails or text message during the class. It's also one of the most difficult rules to enforce among the students you will teach as well and the moment that they see you making or receiving calls and IMs, is the moment that they will get the message that they can do it also and there are few elements within a class that can sabotage it more than your students reading and responding to calls, e-mails and IMs throughout the training. It's distracting for them, you and the other students. It sets a bad example of the trainer if they are checking their phone from time to time and even though I have important calls coming in all the time throughout my classes, I resist the urge to check until a break. That is one of the announcements I make in the beginning of the class, is to please switch their phones to silent or vibrate during the class so that we're not all serenaded throughout the class and if you have to make or receive a call, please do it outside so it won't distract the other students. I even have a small handout that the students pick up with their paperwork that states not to make or receive phone calls, e-mails and IMs during the class, just so they see it in print and have no excuses when I remind them if they are violating that rule. I have very little toleration for it in my classes, and I have no toleration for it by the instructors either.

Even if we're viewing a video and it's dark and I'm sitting at a table watching the video with them, or doing paperwork, I won't check my calls, voice mails, e-mails or IMs during the time that the students can see me. I'll always do that on breaks so that it sets a standard for the students to follow, because if you tell them that they can't use their phones and they see you using yours, your credibility is over with them and they'll do what they want after that, despite what you say. This action of checking calls, e-mails and IMs during the class actually has a psychological term for it that we sometimes talk about during the class, called, a Micro-Message. Even if they are being very secretive about the action, subconsciously they are creating a power struggle between them and the class and the instructor. They may be pretending to pay attention, but the Micro-Message is that "You're really not important enough to provide my full attention and my messages are much more important than you or this class and I'm going to do it even when you've made it clear not to because nobody is going to tell me what I can or can't do, especially within a silly hospital class that I am required to be at and don't really want to be attending in the first place, so deal with it." That's a lot of dialogue, but that's the basic message within the action, so know that this is the dynamic that they are exhibiting when you encounter it. If a student has heard and read the warning and still feels the need to read their calls, e-mails and IMs during the class, then don't have any hesitation in asking them to ask them to take the actions outside because it's just too distracting for the class.

- ***Be appreciative of people's efforts when they help you and class out.*** I know that the classes often times are fast and furious and we have little time to process the dynamics of the day, but just don't forget to thank people for their help when they offer or perform it. When someone helps out within the physical portion of the training, or contributes to the lecture section, I always thank them for their help and shake their hand in appreciation so they know that they played a part in the success of the class. Offer a sincere thanks to those who help make the class possible for you to teach there, like the HR department, education, management and administration. If it weren't for them, you wouldn't be teaching and cashing the training paychecks, so go the extra effort to thank them. I often times send cards and notes to facilities during holidays, but also during the year, thanking them for the opportunity to teach for them. This will endear them to you and your longevity of providing services for them, so try to incorporate this practice into your routine.

- ***Give your group time to adjust before hitting them with too much activity.*** Often times, your students are dragging in and just waking up to attend your class, especially in the morning, so if you barrage them with too many questions or interactive activities, it may shock their systems and they will shut down on you and become uncooperative and sometimes even resistant to participating. Try to start out slowly and give them some lecture time in the beginning of the class to allow them the opportunity to wake up and become alert before they are expected to participate fully. This element depends completely on the class dynamics, but as a rule, try to work up to the invitation for them to contribute actively. I usually give the class until the first hour to zone out a bit and allow their coffee or energy drinks to kick in before I step up the expectations of their participation. They will usually start participating more naturally then, instead of forcing them into it.
- ***Speak clearly and loudly enough for them to hear you.*** There's nothing worse that students that turn to each other during the class and ask, "Are you understanding *anything* this person is saying?" If they can't hear or understand what you're saying, they absolutely won't learn anything from you or from the class and in most cases, they will actually become so distracted at the fact that they can't understand you, that they will sometimes start chuckling to themselves and others in the class, so if you don't want your students to make fun of you under their breath, try to be conscious of how your voice projects and whether your speech is clear and understandable. People have different speech patterns and this pattern changes dramatically when we are thrown into a stressful situation and if you're not used to speaking in front of people, then the tone, speed and volume of your voice will change sometimes to the point where you're not being heard or understood, but inside our heads, we hear our voices no differently, so we're not going to notice that change until someone mentions it to us after the fact. I recommend that you video tape yourself teaching a portion of a class, even if it is in private with no one around, but it helps even more if you record a live class, because then you'll catch the subtle or obvious differences in your speech patterns to where you'll realize what you actually sound like when you're teaching in front of people. Then you can practice speeding up, slowing down, raising and lowering the volume, or speaking more clearly. This is one of the most important elements to being a great instructor and once you master this, the rest is all about style and content. Remember, they can't learn from you if they can't understand you.
- ***Know your audience.*** Try to establish ahead of time what environments your students are from so you'll know what direction to take the class and the dynamics that will make sense for your target audience. Whether your crowd operates within the behavioral health field, emergency department, education, social services, adolescents, children, geriatrics, developmentally disabled, autistic, corrections, law enforcement, etc., in order to make the material relevant and important to their learning process, they will have to relate to what is being taught to them, otherwise they will switch you and the class off as a whole and will quickly become bored and restless that will create a unproductive dynamic for the class. Nothing will lose a class quicker than material that has nothing to do with how it relates to their world. If your students are all from the emergency department and you spend too much time and emphasis on behavioral health issues, they will close down and find reasons to not listen to what you're saying and if your crowd cares for adolescents and you focus on general adult psych issues, they are going to wonder why you are there at their facility talking about something that they don't understand or that they can't relate to. If for some reason you can't find out ahead of time what environments your students are working within, then take some time in the beginning of the class to get an understanding of what their worlds are about by listening to the issues that are important to them and how it relates to the class. They will respect you and listen to the material more effectively.

- ***Practice what you preach.*** Part of what we teach within the negotiation portion of the training is not to demand the compliance from the patients when there is an issue, but rather ask for it. Instead of telling them what to do, request their cooperation when you would like them to do something for you or themselves. It is no different when trying to ask people around you to comply with directions for the class. Examine how you give directions to your students and listen if you are telling them what to do, instead of asking for their compliance. When instructing them to fill out the initial forms for the class, try to ask them to complete the paperwork instead of telling them to. The same rules apply to everyone you would like to have work with you cooperatively. When beginning a class, I always provide the seeds of demonstration when teaching. I offer examples of what works and why, without even trying, in that I use the principles within the dialogue and then point out later in the class of why I said what I said and why it works. As I direct the students to fill out paperwork in the beginning the class, instead of saying that they need to fill out this and do that, I state; "If you haven't done it already, if I could get you to print your name at the top where it asks for it and then if you could please write the date and time and then if you could sign your name at the bottom," etc. Then, when we come to the part of the class where we examine the dynamics of asking for a person's compliance instead of demanding it, we revisit the beginning of the class where I ask them to complete the paperwork, as opposed to telling them what they need to do to fill it out.

Throughout the class, I choose my words carefully to provide evidence of what works when it comes to getting people to want to cooperate with your requests and so to be credible to your students when trying to teach them about negotiation, it's always best to practice what you're trying to teach them. Otherwise, the lesson has no merit and the students will even point out that even though you're trying to tell them what works best, you yourself are using the terminology that creates a non-negotiation instead of a successful one. This is also something that you will find necessary to examine and try to change in your daily conversations, by trying to use dynamics and terminology that promotes people who want to cooperate with your requests instead of follow your demands before you're going to be effective in teaching the concept. This isn't easy though and will take a fair amount of practice to achieve, but once you master this, not only will you demonstrate what your students will strive to accomplish, but you'll start to witness a change within your own life, recognizing how people begin to comply with your more effective methodology of communication with them and that's a large part of what this training is all about. You must learn what you teach before being able to teach it.

- ***Take the class seriously, but try not to take yourself too seriously.*** I expect everyone who decides to work with The Phoenix Training Group to take their work, what we do and the classes they teach seriously. If they don't, then that lack of commitment will resonate throughout their work ethic, as well as their ability to train effectively, but no one likes anybody who takes themselves too seriously either. It takes time for instructors to develop the ability to settle into the balance of taking the job and their influence over other people seriously to the point where they become focused and effective, while at the same time, having the ability to project an attitude of someone who doesn't take themselves and their mission here on earth too seriously. Try to remember, it's just a class and the students are just other people like you who need this training to stay compliant within the facilities or organizations that they work for. Be able to laugh at yourself. It's not quantum physics, but it does deal with a subject that involves life and death decisions, so even if the people who are attending your class may not quite appreciate the scope of its value, just know that you are performing an important service to people who place themselves in high-risk environments in order to care for people and even though we can't take ourselves too seriously, the message and methodology is.



- ***Have patience with the long-talkers and know when to re-direct the focus.*** You'll invariably run into the students from time to time who have a lot to say while attending your class. As in all successful negotiations, the first step to solve the situation, is to understand what, or who it is that you're faced with and in this case, it's no different when it comes to people who at times end up monopolizing the class time with their points of view, either because they may need to try and control the environment that they might feel uncomfortable within, or because they simply may not realize that the outpouring of thoughts, ideas, perspectives and personal experiences during the class might not be as interesting to others as they believe it is to them. Either way, there is always a reason why people do what they do and so try to remember that the individuals who sometimes share too much, even to the point of becoming distracting, may not feel that people take them that seriously and just need to talk a bit and be validated for their perspectives and experiences.

It takes a dynamic and patient instructor to find the balance and utilize effective timing enough to allow those students to gain some self-appreciation and esteem by letting them talk for a bit before being able to refocus them and the rest of the class back to the original concept and even finding an important and relevant lesson from the time spent on it. One of my favorite lines to the class at this point to redirect them back to the concept at hand is to ask; "And so how does this possibly relate to what we're talking about?" Challenge your students to use their problem-solving skills to link the dialogue to something that everyone can learn from. That way, you don't lose the momentum of the topic and you're able to tie in some sort of relevancy to the class while the individual has receive some positive feedback for their efforts, even though it might not have seemed relevant to the rest of the class at the time and in turn, those talkers are much less likely to feel the need to continue to interject as often as if they hadn't received any validation at all. If you feed a roaring lion, they will generally stop the roaring to feast on their meals.

- ***Keep the material fresh every year.*** If you keep presenting the same material in the same fashion year after year without updating the content or the way you deliver the dynamics, then both the students become tired and frustrated over having to sit through the same class every year and the administration of the facilities that employ your services will become aware of this when the employees complain about how boring the class is every year. People always need change when it comes to education. One of the important dynamics of learning is to keep the material fresh and ever-evolving, otherwise it ceases to be "continuing education" and that's what these class were designed to be, is continuing and a good instructor will find a way to present the same purpose and methodology in a different way each year so the students leave having learned something new and not frustrated over having to suffer through the same material as the last year. Also, if the facilities keep hearing how boring and useless the class is, then they often times start entertaining the idea of contracting another person or violence prevention program to come in and teach their staff new material that is more relevant to their needs. So if you want your students to return to your class again and again, happy to see you and leaving positive evaluations that reflect their appreciation for actually learning something new, even if they were there last year, then spend the time and effort of always finding ways to present the material in new and creative methods. It will help to evolve your teaching skills in a positive direction of growth and professionalism while accomplishing what you have hopefully set out to do in becoming an instructor in the first place, which is training people within facilities in helping to develop their own critical thinking skills of confronting and managing situations that can become potentially violent. That will never happen if they start becoming bored of what you're saying. They will only be thinking of when the class is going to be over.

- ***If you've committed to teach a class, don't find a reason why not to.*** When you made the decision to take on this challenge of teaching the VIP program, you accepted the responsibilities that go along with it and we expect you not to take that lightly. Once you accept the opportunity to conduct a class, you're expected to follow through on that commitment. We understand when circumstances arise that prevent a person from completing that assignment, but there is a distinct difference between dealing with a personal emergency and coming up with an excuse to avoid having to go in that day to teach a bunch of people when you'd rather go to the beach or attend a party. The thing that you must keep in mind when thinking of cancelling a class because you're just not feeling up to it, is that when you don't show up to a class and those people fail to get their certificates that day, then those individuals often times instantly get taken off of their work schedules until they obtain their annual certification or re-certification, whether with you or with some other company that provides the service.

Many times, people taking the classes are attending the training close to the anniversary dates that the facilities that they work for have sent them to, so a time delay in their attendance can affect their work schedule and paychecks, so it's not just a matter of you choosing not to teach a class. It's a matter of people's livelihoods and if you get a reputation of flaking out on classes, the facilities that you train for, as well as our company, will stop assigning you to teach them and get someone else who is more reliable. Also, if for some reason you don't show up for a class and it is too late to cancel and people show up for the training before the facility can tell them not to, this will cost the facility a significant amount of money because the facility must pay everyone who showed up, their salary for that day whether they attend the class or not, plus they have to then pay them an additional day of pay to make up the class that they didn't have the chance to attend. If this does occur, then we generally will offer to teach the makeup class for no charge, so if we have to offer the makeup class for free, then we, nor the instructor doesn't make any money for that job. If you make the commitment to be there, people are counting on you and if you want to teach this program, you'd better show up for the challenge, or not wait to last minute to decide otherwise.

- ***Have someone available to take over for your class if something happens to you.*** If it's possible, have another instructor available to replace you if for some reason you cannot teach your scheduled class. It should be someone who knows you, the material and what the facility you train for needs in the way of policy and structure. This applies whether you're employed by a facility, or working with The Phoenix Training Group as one of our contracted instructors. It's just good planning to reduce some of the potential problems by spending some time developing a relationship with at least one other instructor, showing them the material you teach and the way you want it taught. This way, if you call them late one night with the flu, unable to teach your class first thing in the morning, they'll know the details of what to do the next day so the facility doesn't freak out over not having an instructor for the twenty-five employees that they must pay for coming in, sitting in a classroom waiting for their instructor, or that we are not scrambling to futilely call anyone who can fill your assignment. Just think of it as Class Crisis Insurance.
- ***Help your class to understand it's important to write clearly on their paperwork.*** There's nothing more frustrating or time-consuming than paperwork from a class that you or the facility can't read the names of to complete the compliancy requirements, or to process the database records and certificates. This is why when I teach, I always mention to the students to be sure and write clearly on all of their paperwork if they wish to have the correct names on their certificates.

- ***Teach for the sake of educating and not simply for compliancy.*** Some healthcare facilities offer Violence Prevention training because it's simply a State regulated mandatory training that they must provide and regard the class as method of compliancy rather than being committed to offering the best education possible for their employees to keep them as safe as possible. The reason for this primarily is that those facilities just haven't been introduced to the high standard of training that they need to help them to develop the expectations of quality that we at Phoenix Group are committed to delivering every day. Most healthcare facilities have had some less than positive experiences when it comes to violence prevention programs, or from instructors who were either poor trainers, mediocre trainers or ineffective trainers and so they have come to regard the classes as a necessary evil that they have to offer their employees because they have to, so try not to take it personally when your administration sometimes might not take you or the class as seriously as you do.

To help enlighten them of the importance of the class as well as you and your ability as an instructor, you have to really invest yourself in demonstrating with single every class that you are teaching the material for the sake of truly educating people in improving their facility's ability to maintain a high level of safety for themselves as well as the clients they care for instead of just providing the class to satisfy the regulatory agencies. This concept is one of the most important elements to our training program and we at The Phoenix Group expect every instructor to help convey this message to not only every facility and organization we provide training for, but every person who attends our classes. We have worked hard to build a solid reputation for providing this education excellence and heightened sense of purpose of changing the misconceptions that are sometimes attached to this type of training. And until every facility or organization realizes the value and significance of Violence Prevention training and how it helps to keep their staff safe, we won't stray from our goal of convincing them that it is done for the sake of raising the standards of education, rather than simply for compliance requirements and you have a lot to do with whether that message is conveyed or not. So whether you're returning to your facilities to train the staff there, or conducting class for us, be sure to teach all of your classes for the purpose of truly educating instead of just fulfilling a State required obligation.

- ***Become familiar with the PhoenixTrainingGroup.com website.*** We have spent a lot of time and effort helping to provide facilities and individuals with resources and information regarding Violence Prevention and other topics within the scope of what we will be offering on the new Phoenix Training Group website. In order for you to become as credible as possible when teaching a class, it's important to know what you're talking about and be able to answer those complex questions that people in the healthcare, emergency departments, behavioral health and law enforcement fields often times ask when attending these classes. There will be many resources for the facilities and their employees to understanding the reasons why they must and should attend these types of training, as well as the laws and regulatory agency requirements for compliance that govern the subjects and these all will be found within the website. So, if you want to become the person who is known for having the correct answers to tough questions, it's a good idea to study the website's library of resources that have been provided for you, as well as any other laws and pertinent information from other websites and resources that might help you to become the wealth of information it takes to be an invaluable instructor.
- ***Stay focused.*** One method that your students will sometimes use to not have to cover the material, to make the time pass quicker, or even to shorten the class, is to distract the instructor with issues that don't relate to the class like sports, so be aware of this and stay the focus on the topic.

- ***Try to become as self-sufficient as possible.*** It's an invaluable gift to administration, HR or the education departments that are responsible for providing these type of classes that they don't have to hold your hand every time you teach a class for them. It's a smart individual who enters into this process with the goal of becoming as self-sufficient as possible in order to both make things much easier for the facilities you're training for, as well as for you. This will take time to accomplish as you will discover what you and the facilities need over the coming months and years in order to create a well-oiled system of planning and providing the classes for them. We have created a lot of resources for you to pull from in terms of information, methods of teaching, lists of materials needed for the classes as well as pointers of what works and what doesn't when taking on this kind of position. The rest is up to you when it comes to becoming an instructor who doesn't rely too heavily on the facility or even us to do everything for you. You instead are trying to strive for self-reliance so that the departments, or we who help set the classes up don't have to think too much or constantly having to help you with equipment or materials or little things that you should learn how to do on your own.

Yes, they and we are there to help you and the facility in providing the classes and there should be a certain amount of assistance that they provide you with, in order for you to do your job well and effectively, but there can sometimes be too much in the way of expectations. Learn how to work the classroom electronics and write out cheat sheets for this if it's helpful and have extra materials on hand just in case the facility prints them out incorrectly or forgets to make copies for you. And if you're working for us as a contracted instructor, then it might be helpful to you to over time, try to and find deals on equipment like computers, projectors and other items that help make the classes run smoothly and so you don't have to always be travelling to us to check out and return the equipment. The Internet has become a great source for items like this when it comes to paying a fraction of the retail price for something that will in the end help you to become a lot more independent. The more self-reliant you are in the eyes of the facilities you train for, the more valuable, essential and irreplaceable you become to them as a part of their team, so for your benefit and for the benefit of the facilities you provide services for, becoming an independent thinker who is known for being very low-maintenance is like solidifying your importance to everyone who employs you.

- ***Always smell good.*** This is one of those common sense-type topics that some might feel is unnecessary to mention, but you might be surprised of how often staff encounter an instructor who approaches them to practice the physical portion of the class and then knocks them over with their odor. It's always a good idea to keep a small kit of items like a toothbrush, toothpaste, mouthwash, mints, deodorant and cologne or perfume. There have been so many times I've seen an instructor arrive at their classroom fresh and ready and something unforeseen occurs like the air conditioning fails in a stuffy, small, non-ventilated room with no fans available, or you end up having to move heavy tables and chairs around a large space quickly before the staff get there in two minutes, either of which will heat you up and you'll work up a sweat that will wash away any ability you may have had to smell and look presentable. Our great intentions and preparedness are often times derailed by the sudden smack-down of mayhem and the unexpected, so if you don't want to go through the day now, worried about what your attendees are going to think of you when they get close, or see those looks of horror to one another when you're trying to show them the correct and safe methods of self-defense, you might want to carry along a little emergency mayhem kit to help you maintain your fresh and fragrant presence among those who have come there to learn from you, not about you. The opposite also applies where someone will have too much perfume or cologne on, so try not to overpower them either.

- ***Stay away from hot or sensitive topics that don't have relevancy to the class.*** If it doesn't relate to the class, then don't bring it up and if someone else does, be creative and prepared enough to re-direct the issue away from the potential firestorm and back onto the topic at hand, or one you may have to come up with to overpower the destructive ones. Issues like religion, politics, sex, drugs, sexual or physical abuse and even sports can quickly turn a class from a learning environment, into a volatile one with just one heated point of view that collides with someone's passionate or sensitive feelings and views. These classes are not pulpits for people's criticisms and personal outrage, or getting in touch with what everyone else should feel. It is a place where we gather as a way to work together in order to develop methods of staying safe and understanding ways to create a more therapeutic environments for us as well as for the clients we care for. This is why instructors have to often see several steps ahead of their students, the topics and where they might be headed if not properly guided correctly. It takes forethought and experience to conduct a class linearly from beginning to end without allowing potential distractions or derailments to degrade the power and purpose of the class. Teaching a class of individuals who come from all walks of life and experiences is harder than it looks and so know ahead of time that part of your job is to keep the subject on track and flowing smoothly all the way from the beginning to end without helping to add fuel to the fires of opportunity when it comes to encountering or creating those volcanic situations.
- ***Try to create a safe environment for the people who attend your classes.*** When setting up for the training, be aware of any safety issues that might pose a physical threat to your students like electric cords lying unsecured across the floor that someone might trip over, low sitting shelves, loose carpets, broken chairs or slippery floors. If someone in your class falls, trips or injures themselves in any way, there are several directions this will most likely go. Number one, they will have the opportunity to file a workman's comp case instantly and in most cases, they will be taken off the schedule, or they will take themselves off schedule and go out on medical leave. Number two, the administration of the facility will get involved now and wonder why someone got injured in your class. They will also examine the future likelihood of you being able to conduct a class without another employee getting hurt. If you are training for us and an employee becomes injured while coming into their facility, then they will question our ability to keep their staff safe while training them. Number three, they will file an injury lawsuit case against you and/or The Phoenix Training Group for being negligent and this is why we have liability insurance and why you should as well. One thing we at The Phoenix Training group do not want to contend with are injury lawsuits from individuals who attend our classes. We have a zero tolerance for not keeping our students safe and if you wish to build your reputation as an effective and safe instructor, you have to see your class and surroundings with a critical eye of "What could go wrong?"

The same aspect exists especially when demonstrating the physical portion of the classes. The risk of injury is extremely high when expecting people to perform physical moves. Some of the individuals who attend the classes are uncoordinated, some are not aware of their surroundings when it comes to watching where and how the walk and some are older and unsteady and have the potential to move, turn or bend the wrong way and all it takes is one unbalanced move to have one of your students fall and twist their ankle, or even break a hip. We are placing ourselves in a high risk environment by teaching this class and so your ability to keep your students safe is one of the most paramount expectations of conducting and teaching a training, whether it's for your facility or ours. The training itself is all about safety and risk assessment, so we don't want to convey the opposite message to anyone by causing the very element that we're trying to prevent in the first place.