


For L&D and HRD professionals

A person in a dark suit is standing in a large, brightly lit, modern architectural space with white, angular structures. The person is looking down and has their hand on their forehead, suggesting a moment of reflection or stress. The overall atmosphere is clean and professional.

# **The definitive checklist for qualifying training providers**

# About this eBook

There are thousands of training providers out there and many promise great things. But how can you really find out if they are the right fit? After all, it's essential that you don't risk wasting your employees' working time or your hard-won training budget!

"The key to assessing potential training providers is to find out how well they fit to what you want to achieve. In this busy world, you just don't have time to talk to the myriads of training providers. It's all about reading between the lines and looking for evidence that they really can do what they say they can do."



**Chris Slattery**  
Target Training GmbH

We want to help you save time and gather the information you need to make the right choices with confidence. To achieve this, we've asked our clients and colleagues for their key questions, and compiled these extensive checklists so you can identify the right training partner.

## Is this eBook for you?

- If you work in L&D / HRD and you need to evaluate potential training providers then yes - this eBook is for you.
- The checklists are also directly relevant to purchasers or line managers who need to evaluate and qualify training providers.

# Note from the authors

## How should you use this eBook?



You don't need to ask all the questions in the checklists – and, quite frankly, you don't have the time. Instead we recommend that you start with the **key questions on page 5**.

We've then grouped the other questions into natural clusters. If you have a particular concern e.g. the provider's experience, their pricing... then jump straight to that section. Feel free to adapt the questions – just focus on open questions for gathering information and closed questions for confirming details.

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# Key questions

1. Can you tell me a bit about your company?
2. What do you know about us?
3. What can you tell me about your trainers?
4. What quality systems do you use?
5. How do you ensure that the training is transferable to the workplace?
6. How will I know that my staff have really improved?
7. How much does this cost?... and how did you come to this price?
8. Are you and your employees prepared to sign a non-disclosure agreement before you start working with us?
9. What happens if we're not satisfied?
10. Can you give me the names of some clients I can talk to?

# Assessing their interest in you

- What do you know about us?
- Tell me 2 things you would like to know about us.
- What challenges do you think we are facing?
- How do you think training will help us?
- Why do you think there's a good fit between you and us?

# Learning more about them as a company

## Collecting the basics

- Can you tell me a bit about your company?
- Which types of training represent the majority of your work?
- Where can you deliver training?
- How do you deliver training?
- How many clients do you work with?
- How long have you been working with your oldest clients?
- Who have you delivered training for that I'd know?

# Learning more about them as a company

## Digging deeper

- How big is your business?
- When were you founded?
- What is your business model?
- Tell me about some of the best projects you've worked on. How did you make a difference?
- What kind of international work have you done in the past? (international clients, culturally diverse participants, training offered in which languages)
- How many trainers do you work with?
- Which institutions do you cooperate with? (business schools, leadership think tanks)



# Learning more about them as a company

## Knowing your contact partners

- What is your role in your company?
- Who will I be working with directly? Can I meet them?
- Who will I work with on the actual design and delivery of training content? (not the sales or account manager, but the trainer who will deliver the content)

## Scalability

- What is the smallest / largest training project you've successfully completed?
- Can you develop a training program for any size of organization?
- What happens if I want to roll the training out to other locations/countries?

# Investigating experience

- Have you done anything like this before?
- Which clients who are similar to us (industry, size, business model) have you worked for in the recent past?
- Can you tell me about similar projects (hierarchy, scope, focus) in the recent past?
- What have you learnt from your experience with projects similar to the one we're discussing?
- Can you give me the names of some clients I can talk to?

# Probing what they mean by quality

- How do you manage quality?
- What quality systems do you use?
- What quality certification do you have?
- What continual improvement processes do you have?
- Are you ISO certified? What ISO certification do you have?
- Are you DIN ISO 29990 certified?
- How has ISO certification benefitted the service you deliver?
- How does your feedback process work?
- How have you reacted to feedback?

# Measuring your ROI

## Transferability

- How will your training improve my staff's performance at work?
- How do you ensure that what you do is relevant to my staff's needs?
- How do you ensure that the training is transferable to the workplace?

## Measurability

- What outcomes do you set out to achieve?
- How do you measure progress?
- What evaluation tools would you use apart from a happy sheet?
- What happens in your training to make sure my staff have really learnt something?
- How will I know that my staff have really improved?

# Examining their approach to training

## Understanding their training methodology

- What training methodology do you use?
- Why have you selected this methodology?
- How will the methodology you use help my staff learn?
- How do you make the training interactive and engaging?
- Tell me about your blended learning approach?

## Uncovering their approach to training and material design

- How do you create a new solution for a first-time client?
- Tell me how you will learn about us and our business?
- How do you integrate the 70-20-10 model into your training?
- What do you mean when you say “customization”?
- What level of customization are you willing to provide?
- What does “pilot” mean to you?

# Examining their approach to training

## Uncovering their approach to training and material design

- How do you normally go about creating a new solution for a first-time client?
- Tell me about your approach to learning about us and our business?
- How do you integrate the 70-20-10 model into your training?
- What do you mean when you say “customization”?
- What level of customization are you willing to provide?
- What does “pilot” mean to you?

# Evaluating their trainers and staff

## Evaluating their trainers

- What can you tell me about your trainers?
- How much relevant training experience do they have?
- Are they qualified? What qualifications do they hold?
- What additional certification do your individual trainers have?
- Can I see their certificates?
- How international are your trainers?
- Do they have relevant professional experience?
- Can you give me some examples of how they have helped their clients?
- How do you ensure the same quality in all your trainers?
- Can I see the profile of trainers I'll be working with?
- Can I speak to the trainer I'll be working with?

# Evaluating their trainers and staff

## Assessing their approach to trainer deployment

- How will you select the trainers who will work with us?
- How can you guarantee that trainers will not change for the duration of the program?
- What is your policy should a trainer be unavailable at the last minute i.e. through sickness, holidays? (replacement? back-up? cancel and reschedule?)
- Can you provide us with profiles of selected trainers who could provide the services we are interested in?

## Looking at trainer turnover

- What is your staff turnover rate?
- How many of your trainers are employed as opposed to freelance?
- Are the employed trainers full time? And what does “full time” mean in your company?



# Evaluating their trainers and staff

## Understanding more about their recruitment policy

- How do you recruit your trainers?

## Testing if they live what they sell: trainer development

- How do you develop your own staff?
- What formal and informal training measures do you have in your own company?
- How do you make sure your trainers are up-to-date with the most recent trends in methodology?

# Scrutinizing the financial investment

- How much does this cost?
- What is included in the price? What is not included in the price?
- How did you come to this price?
- How have you priced the design, preparation and delivery rates?
- How can we reduce the price? How can we adapt the service to reduce the price?
- What payment terms do you work with? (timing of invoices, partial/full)
- What is your cancellation policy?
- What happens if we need to reschedule a training date?
- What happens if we have fewer participants than expected on a certain day?

# Demanding confidentiality

- Are you (or your employees) prepared to sign a non-disclosure agreement before you start working with us?

# Getting a final reassurance

- Could I visit a training session you're already running?
- Could we try it out before committing?
- What happens if we're not satisfied?

# About the authors



## □ FIONA HIGGINSON

Fiona's corporate career in human resources started in 1997, and is characterized by her focus on the design and/or delivery of high-quality HRD measures and instruments.

She's worked in multinational corporations in both manufacturing and service industries, from DAX-30 listed global players to medium-sized organizations. Fiona is a certified trainer and coach and has degrees in Developmental Learning and International Affairs from Ireland, Germany and the UK. She speaks fluent English and German, as well as Spanish and French. She recently established her own consultancy: [www.fionahigginson.com](http://www.fionahigginson.com)



## □ KATE BAADE

Kate has worked in training since 1995, and in HR since 2005. She is a trainer, teacher trainer, materials writer and published author. Today Kate manages Target Training's largest project - an in-house Business English solution for Robert Bosch GmbH in Stuttgart, using the [InCorporate Trainer model](#)

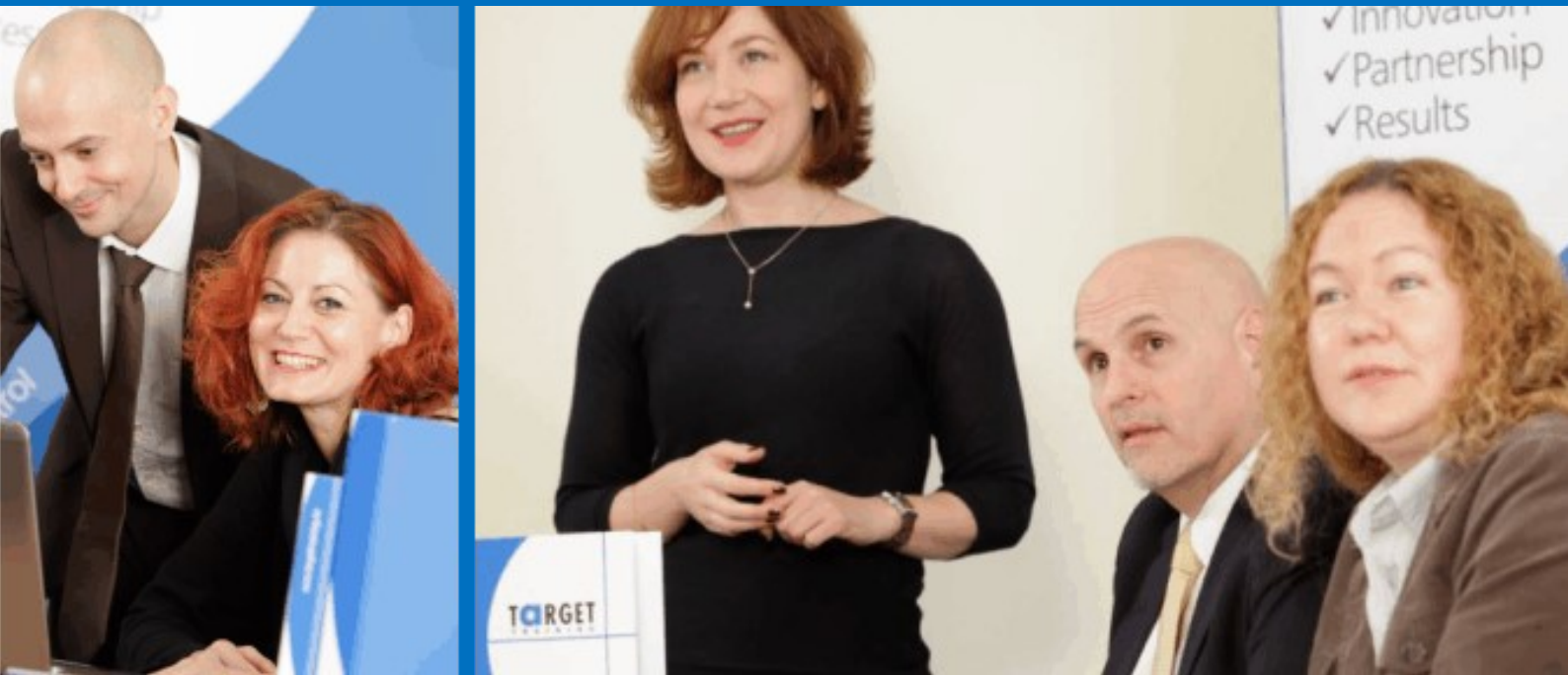
Kate and her team of 15 meet the training needs of approximately 1,550 engineers, specialists and managers through on-the-job support, groups, seminars and virtual learning platforms.

## A HUGE THANKS

GOES TO OUR CLIENTS AND CONTACTS IN L&D AND HRD FOR THEIR INSIGHTS, SUGGESTIONS AND FEEDBACK.

# A final word from us, Target Training

Training is about people – and no matter how good a potential supplier's intentions, materials or processes are, having the right trainer makes a real difference.



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