Getting started · evidence-based foundations

First Date with SMARTER:
Meet the Seven Principles

Haven't designed a training yet? Or do you have little or no experience with making learning more effective? No problem. Get to know the seven principles and choose the one that lets you make an impact easily.

S M A R T E R

Overview

Who it's for	Goal	Time	Format
Anyone who doesn't have a design yet, or anyone with no or little experience in designing or facilitating training.	Build basic knowledge of the seven principles.	30–45 min	Individually or as a team.

In short

This is the starting activity for anyone who has nothing on paper yet OR has no prior knowledge. You get to know the seven principles through the WHAT cards. Then you choose the principle that is both important and easy to apply in your context: your quick win.

You end up with one principle and one or two HOW cards that you can put to work in your design or while facilitating in front of a room.

Good to know

You don't have to remember everything or read all the cards. This is a first introduction. You can leave the WHY cards aside for now.

What you need

- 1 SMARTER deck (see step 1)
- Optional: the topic or learning objective of the training you want to design (see step 4)

How it works

1 Lay out the principles

Lay out the letter cards in a row so they spell the word SMARTER, with the WHAT card under each letter. Put the HOW cards aside for now, sorted by principle.

2 Read the WHAT cards

Read the seven WHAT cards one by one. Working as a team? Divide the cards and read them aloud to each other.

3 Test yourself

Turn the WHAT cards face down. For each card, explain in your own words what the principle means. Then turn the card back over and see what you already knew and what you missed.

Walk the talk

Explaining without looking at the card helps the principles stick.

4 Choose your quick win

Which principle is both important and easy to apply in your context? Think of the training you want to design or facilitate, if you already have one in mind. Choose one principle.

Tip

Not sure? Choose the principle you can try out fastest. Early success gives you the energy to keep going.

5 Take one or two HOW cards with you

Browse the HOW cards of the chosen principle. Choose one or two you want to use straight away when you start your design. Set them aside or take a photo of them.

Follow-up and next steps

- Start your design with the HOW cards you chose.
- Test yourself again in a week's time with step 3. Which principles do you still remember?
- Got a first design ready? Then continue with activity 03 "Traffic Light Scan".

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