



# A CASE STUDY OF THE NEW JERSEY TRANSIT BUS OPERATIONS TRAINING DEPARTMENT



## New Jersey Transit Bus Operations Training Department

**E**DSI facilitated a *2.5-day customized train-the-trainer* professional development program to **NJ Transit's Bus Operations training staff**. In total, **41 NJ Instructors** attended the training in two separate sessions.

Both training sessions took place at **NJ Transit's** training facility located in Newark, NJ and introduced important training concepts, which were then applied in an interactive, practical way. **NJ Transit instructors** were guided through the process of applying training to their real work environment through reflection and discussion questions, hands-on activities and demonstrations. In addition, participants received an overview on mirror adjustment and usage that implements all best practices and strategies to use in their own new operator training. The result of this training experience led to more thoughtful, effective, engaging and dynamic methods that focus on new operator learning and application.

SUMMARY



Source: NJ Transit bus. [Digital Image]. (2019) Retrieved from: <https://www.ridewise.org/detour-nj-transit-114-april-14/>

## End of Training Evaluation

A comprehensive, formal **end-of-training evaluation** was used at the conclusion of the second day of the **train-the-trainer**. The end of training evaluation used a **4-point Likert scale** and asked trainees to rate a series of statements from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). The statements focused on the efficacy of the facilitator, the content relevancy and how the much the materials and location contributed to the trainee's learning. Trainees were also asked to rate how effective the training was in meeting the stated learning objectives. The evaluation provided a space for trainee comments or questions.

Overall, the training evaluation feedback for the train-the-trainer was overwhelmingly positive. All **end-of-training evaluation** statements scored a positive rating. Trainees felt most strongly that the facilitator was knowledgeable and that the content delivery was clear and engaging. Trainees also strongly agreed that the training materials (handouts, PowerPoint, etc.) contributed to their learning and that the training activities facilitated the sharing of ideas and work experiences among trainees.

**Training attendees** strongly agreed that the training increased their knowledge and understanding of important training and facilitation concepts and met overall training goals (3.84).

According to verbal feedback, the training encouraged instructors to think about ways to facilitate the training beyond just reviewing the content.



Source: NJ Transit bus boarding. [Digital Image]. (2018)

Retrieved from: [https://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/news/so-far-so-good-commuters-say-on-first-day-without/article\\_8c2fba94-51ff-5ca4-9645-67b33bb1b617.html](https://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/news/so-far-so-good-commuters-say-on-first-day-without/article_8c2fba94-51ff-5ca4-9645-67b33bb1b617.html)



Source: NJ Transit bus parked. [Digital Image]. (2019) Retrieved from: <https://www.nj.com/traffic/2019/05/nj-commuters-we-feel-your-pain-follow-as-we-ride-buses-to-nyc.html>



**NJ Transit Bus Operations** partnered with **EDSI** to develop and deliver a comprehensive train-the-trainer professional development session, which provided essential knowledge and practical skills needed to more effectively facilitate trainings for adult learners.

The first two days of professional development consisted of a training workshop entitled **Keys to Develop and Facilitate a Dynamic and Engaging Training**. The goal was to build instructors' skills and competence to deliver quality, engaging, and participant-focused training in both the classroom and the field. The workshop explored best practices for ensuring fresh and relevant training delivery. Throughout the training, participants had opportunities to apply and practice strategies in an interactive classroom environment that included hands-on activities and self-reflection via small and large group discussions.



## Training topics included in the train-the-trainer session included:

- Adult and Active Learning
- Providing Feedback
- Trainee Engagement and Effective Questioning Techniques
- Learning Styles
- Creating a Motivational Environment
- Presentation and Facilitation Best Practices

## Standard Mirror Adjustment and Usage

To meet the need for additional technical training and practical application, **EDSI** and **NJ Transit** worked together to develop an additional half-day of training to focus on the correct way to position mirrors on buses. This half-day of training included classroom and hands-on components, using a real bus. EDSI and NJ Transit collaborated to both develop and deliver this half-day mirror training session. It incorporated the **concepts and techniques** from the first 2 days in a practical way, using NJ Transit's existing standard operating procedures and training materials related to mirror adjustment. It also provided clear, standardized training messages and materials that could be incorporated into the new operator training classroom and hands-on field training in the future.



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## ISSUES

The **NJ Transit Bus Operations** team was facing several *unique challenges*. The training staff had extensive professional experience operating buses, many with over **20 years of operating experience**. But when it came to providing training to adult learners, their experience was limited. This put them in a unique position of trying to convey the important knowledge and skills, with inadequate knowledge of how to best accomplish this task. Instructors needed to understand basic principles of adult learning, best practices to maximize trainee engagement, and strategies to ensure operator trainees were applying what they learned to safely and effectively perform required job functions.

## TESTIMONIALS

- Very well done, the facilitator is passionate in her work.
- Very good training. Loved the material.
- Very well presented and informative.
- The facilitator kept me engaged and provided me with many real-life examples.
- I will implement as much as I can of what I have learned. Thank you, I really enjoyed the presentation.
- The facilitator was great. The class was enjoyable, educational and informative.



Source: NJ Transit bus driver. [Digital Image]. (2019)  
Retrieved from: [https://www.njtransit.com/mobile/careers/m\\_career\\_busoperator.html](https://www.njtransit.com/mobile/careers/m_career_busoperator.html)

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