

We are now properly into the swing of 2008, so February's top tips will give you plenty to think about on topics linked to courses running over the next four weeks.

50 for over 50s: More FREE Training Places for Kent Trainers' Customers

Due to demand, we have received an increase in our allocation of full grants for over-50 year olds to attend our training. The grant of up to £265 can be applied to make a place on an open course completely Free, or so subsidise an in-house course for up to 12 of your staff.

We now have a total of 50 places (with a fair number already taken). They are available for use by a staff member who is over 50 years old, providing you register by 31 March and training takes place by 1 May (or as near as possible afterwards if there is no course scheduled before).

To book your free training place, call our office now, on 01892 836110.

Well, read this month's top tips first, then call!

Tip 1: Sometimes in the sale process, there is only one obstacle in the way of your potential customer saying **"yes"**. This is the time to close the sale and you can do so by making this the *buying trigger*. Say to your prospective buyer something like: *"If we can provide you with customised marketing material, will you place your order now?"*

Learn more about closing the deal at [Sales - the Client Meeting](#) on 12 March or, if you manage a sales team, don't miss [Sales Team Management](#) on 21 February. For the beginners, try our popular [Sales Essentials](#) on 10 April.

Tip 2: Getting the margins and tabs right in Word can be tricky. First, display the horizontal ruler if it's not on show (View-Ruler). When you want to adjust margins or tabs, the default increments are fairly coarse and snap to a hidden grid. To make finer adjustments, hold down the Alt key and, when you drag the indicator on the ruler, you will see the display changes to give a more precise reading, in hundredths of an inch or 0.01 of a centimetre.

Get started with [Word - Introduction](#) on 4 March.

Tip 3: Do you often find actions don't get done after your meetings? When you send out the minutes or notes after your meeting, attach them to an email. In the body of the email, list each attendee and, under their name, list the actions they agreed to take.

Two valuable courses are: [Meetings - Making them work](#), on 11 March, and [Minute Taking with Confidence](#) on 15 February - **last 3 places remaining**.

Tip 4: When you manage a project that involves contractors, your troubles often seem to multiply. So make it your business to get to know the contractors well and, in particular,

find out what motivates them. They may just value financial returns, but often it's more - awards, pride, status in their profession, company culture, bonuses. Use this knowledge to get the best out of them.

Spend two days learning (or refreshing) your [Project Management](#) skills and come away with an armful of tools to make your projects easier and more robust, on 5 & 6 March.

STOP PRESS: *Last two places:* [Writing Business Correspondence](#) on 26 February

Tip 5: Pictures and other images are a valuable part of a compelling presentation.

Unfortunately, these images often take up a lot of space in PowerPoint. Here are two solutions: firstly turn off Fast Saves so any changes you make will get instantly reflected in the file size. Select Tools-Options-Save and un-tick the Allow fast saves box. Secondly use PowerPoint's picture compression tool - right click on a picture and then press the compress button.

Our next [Presentation Skills - Introduction](#) course (4 March) is **fully booked**, so either join the waiting list or book onto the following course, on 9 July. If we get enough demand, we'll schedule an extra course. If you are ready, our [Presentation Skills - Advanced](#) gets rave reviews - next running on 21 May. To learn more about using PowerPoint, [PowerPoint - Advanced](#) on 10 March.

Tip 6: 92% of senior leaders believe that when they moved into the senior management role, they would have benefited by being able to change the way they think. To make the mental shift, start to see your role as one where your job is to influence other people's thinking. To do that, you need to spend more time developing your own point of view.

Spend two days with other senior managers on our [Leadership Programme](#), starting on 11 March and continuing on 11 April. To support a colleague in entering a new role, try [Coaching and Mentoring](#) on 12 June.

Tip 7: What are your top HR priorities? The major areas where employers look for professional advice are compliance (there seem to be so many areas to get right these days), appraisals and managing performance, developing people to achieve great performance, recruiting the right people in the first place, and getting the right retention strategy in place. How strong is your business on these **Big Five**?

For a survey across your whole HR responsibility try [HR Essentials](#) on 12-13 March. For more in depth, try booking: [Appraisal Process](#) on 16 April, [Training your Staff on the Job](#), on 17 April, [Employment Law Essentials](#) on 17 April, [Recruiting Staff](#), on 28-29 May.

To access **FREE TRAINING** call our office on 01892 836110 and ask for a referral to a Train to Gain advisor.

Have you missed one of our newsletters or tip-sheets?

Don't worry

All of our Newsletters and Tip sheets are now on our website.

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Find out more about these and our full programme,

at www.kenttrainers.co.uk, or call our office on 01892 836110

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