

The Top Ten Things You should Demand of Raiser's Edge Training

Ongoing education is important. Regardless of the level of skill and knowledge of a Raiser's Edge user, all users can benefit greatly from ongoing training. When staff are well educated and are comfortable using the database, the overall integrity of the data is the result. Your organization will benefit from clean data, accurate reporting, less time cleaning up data, data tracked in one source rather than multiple places, and most importantly, more money raised for your cause.

What makes for an interesting, informative and comprehensive Raiser's Edge training session? We recommend some straightforward and simple goals: training is customized with specific training sessions tailored to meet the specific needs of the organization.

What makes for an ineffective, uninteresting training? When it is provided using general information and generic sample data. Your data and your database are unique, and one size fits all training will not optimize you or your team's time. An instructor should use examples from your live database, providing relevant and real time examples during the sessions.

Here are ten things you should demand for your Raiser's Edge Training

1. Use of your database for the training session

Your trainer should use data examples that the participants recognize and are relevant and meaningful to them. The trainer should connect directly to your Raiser's Edge and present from there, thus showing you your actual data and the information in your specific drop down menus.

2. Encourage conversation, questions and feedback

Trainers should customize each training session to ensure your specific priorities are being met. We recommend that all Raiser's Edge users are surveyed in advance of the session, to gauge their needs. The trainer should also send a follow-up survey once the training is completed to ensure the information presented was meaningful and relevant.

3. Demonstrate how users can be more efficient

A trainer should ensure the participants can see how the information presented will make their daily tasks easier and more efficient. The goal should be to give the participants a deeper appreciation for the capabilities of Raiser's Edge and to ease their apprehensions regarding the complexity of the database.

4. Divide diverse topics into separate sessions

Whether the desire is to learn about mailings, queries, security, record management, or any of the optional Raiser's Edge modules, sessions should focus on the users' needs. This will ensure the content is engaging and relevant to the user; no one should have to sit through content that doesn't apply to their job duties.

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5. Keep the sessions manageable and not too lengthy

Generally, we recommend a training session does not exceed 90 minutes. The information should be parsed in such a way that people have plenty of opportunity for discussions and questions without feeling overwhelmed with too much information.

6. Training should be a process, not an event

Training is best helpful when provided often. Refreshers and follow-up sessions should be regularly scheduled, and it is helpful to have someone to reach out to for ongoing questions and support, to counter any difficulties you may face.

7. Accommodate different levels of skill and knowledge

Appreciate that different people have different learning needs and not everyone is a computer wizard. Never assume the participants have an in-depth working knowledge of Windows or related software, such as Excel. Keep the training sessions simple and easy to follow and offer real-world examples whenever possible.

8. Know the participants' role in their organization

In this way, the sessions are prioritized and the participants are gaining access to information that is specifically relevant to their daily work needs.

9. Keep the sessions light, stress-free, and interactive

People can sometimes be a little nervous if they're being asked to openly participate in the session and are sometimes afraid to admit what they don't know. A trainer should encourage active questions and ask for specific examples of where they've run into trouble or confusion. An open and engaging environment maximizes learning, where the participants feel comfortable interacting with the presenter.

10. Have fun!

Enthusiasm is contagious!

Don't be shy in demanding the most out of your Raiser's Edge Training. It is an investment, and you need to ensure the return on your investment is knowledgeable, efficient staff, cleaner data, and more funds raised for your organization.

Here's a case study of an organization that has mastered Raiser's Edge training: Kid's Help Phone.

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About Kids Help Phone

Since 1989, Kids Help Phone's professional counsellors have been providing help and hope to young people across Canada. Regardless of the problem, Kids Help Phone is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with professional support for young people from 5 to 20 who reach out for help. A number of events take place across the country including two national events: Walk for Kids Help Phone and Boo-La-Thon, the Halloween-themed bowling fundraiser held in over 45 communities across the country.

The Problem: Keeping Several Staff Trained and Up to Speed: from Coast to Coast

This national organization has Raiser's Edge users spread out all across Canada – all with various levels of training needs. Training a variety of users, both new and experienced, across the country is a challenging task; Emma Zicher, Senior Database Programmer with Kids Help Phone, understands the importance of ongoing training and also realizes the need for consistent training throughout the organization.

The Solution: Affordable and Professional Training on Demand

With staff situated across the country, Kids Help Phone requires a training solution that is easily accessible while remaining consistent throughout the various divisions of the organization. With the RESolutionsTECH unlimited Raiser's Edge training package, Kids Help Phone staff can get connected with the information they need while learning from their own Raiser's Edge database.

The Results: Knowledgeable, Efficient Staff and Reliable Data

Since implementing unlimited training, Emma says the Kids Help Phone staff is more confident in their daily use of Raiser's Edge and is able to complete tasks that they were unable to achieve before. RESolutionsTECH assists Kids Help Phone in improving their Raiser's Edge knowledge through:

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- **Using Kids Help Phone Database during Training** - Training is provided using the Raiser's Edge database the staff use on a daily basis, making training practical and relevant to the organization.
- **Encouraging Interaction** - Web conferencing allows staff to view the trainer's screen while the live component ensures constant communication and encourages questions and discussion.
- **Ongoing Training** - Regularly scheduled training sessions are provided for a variety of skill levels, with refresher courses available as needed. Training can be booked as required, in advance, for a special event or upcoming project. Frequent 60-90 minute sessions have proven to be the most successful.
- **Specific Training Sessions** - Kids Help Phone staff has varying needs, so by dividing sessions into topics (ex. reporting, queries, events etc), staff can attend sessions relevant to their needs. Shorter training sessions also allow for flexibility in scheduling and manageable training lengths.

Emma comments on how all Kids Help Phone staff benefited from Raiser's Edge training:

"RESolutionsTECH were flexible and worked with our schedule, and allowed us to train staff across Canada, affordably. The training curriculum was comprehensive, customized to our needs, and made our Raiser's Edge users comfortable with the database. Even the most experienced users were highly satisfied with the knowledge and experience of the trainer."

Contact us to Discover how we can Help you!

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