Room Layouts
for
Meetings and Training Events

Setting up your training or meeting room
• So you are having a training session or meeting – have you considered what layout would be best for you?
• Have you ever had a meeting in a room that was in a different configuration from your usual format? Was the meeting more or less effective than normal?
• This guide can be used when you ‘book’ or hire a training or meeting room.
• Remember to state the layout and the number of participants required.

Importance of Room layout
• Room layout should not just be set by the number of people required, but by the purpose of the event.
• Key factors:
  – Where is the centre of attention
  – Do people need to interact with each other?
  – Do you want people in groups without moving people around?

‘U’ Shape or Horseshoe for 12
- Nonverbally encourages participation by allowing eye contact between the trainer and all the learners
- The trainer is able to move closer to each learner
- Works well when all learners must be able to see a demonstration
- Works good when learners will be involved in large group discussions

Circle or Square Shape for 16
- Nobody can see all the faces of the other participants
- Depending where visual aids are placed, one side may become the “head of the table”
- A solid table seems to encourage conversation
- With a hole in the middle of the table, some people do not speak at all, and some who do speak tend to talk for longer periods of time
- Limited use if PowerPoint is required

Board Room Style
- The seats at the short dimensions of the table are often seen as leadership positions
- If used, the learners should be forced to take distinctly different positions every now and then
- Fewer people can communicate face-to-face
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theatre Style</th>
<th>Modified Theatre Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Theatre Style Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Modified Theatre Style Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Best used for short lectures to large groups  
- Communication tends to be one way  
- Trainer cannot see the learners in the back | ![Theatre Style Diagram](image3) | ![Modified Theatre Style Diagram](image4) |
| ![Theatre Style Diagram](image5) | ![Modified Theatre Style Diagram](image6) |
| Conference or Classroom Style for 12 | Herringbone Style for 12 |
| ![Conference or Classroom Style Diagram](image7) | ![Herringbone Style Diagram](image8) |
| - Good for IT training  
- Allows the trainer/presenter to see all the learners  
- Reduces space between trainer and learners as trainer can move up the aisle  
- Best used for sessions that require a lot of note taking | ![Herringbone Style Diagram](image9) |
| ![Conference or Classroom Style Diagram](image10) | ![Herringbone Style Diagram](image11) |
| Cabaret Style for 24 | Cabaret Style for 36 |
| ![Cabaret Style Diagram](image12) | ![Cabaret Style Diagram](image13) |
| - Learners can work in small groups on exercises and projects  
- Communication between trainer and learners is more difficult  
- Trainer must move between groups during lectures and activities  
- Good for courses that require a lot of group work | ![Cabaret Style Diagram](image14) |
| ![Cabaret Style Diagram](image15) | ![Cabaret Style Diagram](image16) |

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