Making the Most of Your Training:
What to do before, during and after a training session

My name is Jo Robinson. I am the training manager for Administration and Business Practices, Commercial Services and the Specialty Fields for the National Park Service.

Welcome to Making the Most of your Training

OR What to do before, during and after a training session.

**Before Training**

Your supervisor has agreed to send you to training. Now what? You plan your travel, look up the restaurants and thing to do in the area? Naturally. But there’s another step. If you haven’t had the discussion with your supervisor regarding the objectives of the training, do it. Talk about what you expect to learn and how you think you’ll apply what you learn on the job or what challenges or project you believe this training will help you with.

**During Training**

When you arrive at the training you will have this challenge or project in mind as you learn. It will help you focus on what’s in it for you. You’ll find all types of reasons why people are taking this training. Some are vacationers, some are learners, some are prisoners (they’ve been told to go). Almost all will be willing to share experiences.

So, make sure you talk with classmates and the instructors about how you will be applying this new knowledge and ask for suggestions, lessons learned, things to think about as you proceed. I am a firm believer that multiple heads to a challenge are better than one. Your classmates and instructors may have new ways of looking at the issue and even additional information to help you. Most training sessions provide you with a class roster; make sure you get the instructors’ information too. This way you can follow up with your classmates or instructors to tap into the collective knowledge as you proceed into your project or challenge back on the job.

**After Training**

When you return from training set aside some processing time to apply what you learned to the challenge or project. You might consider using your return travel time on the airplane for some processing time, but I wouldn’t recommend it if you are driving home. The temptation when you return to the office will be to jump in to clear out the emails and voice mail messages. Resist the temptation. Put your thoughts in order, set up a timeline or project plan.

Request some time with your supervisor. Share what you learned from your processing time and how you will proceed. Your supervisor may have ideas to add to the mix.
Finally, thank your supervisor for sending you to training or giving you time to take an online course or take on a detail. He or she had to make some allowances while you were gone. Enjoy your training.

You've been listening to Jo Robinson, training manager for Administration and Business Practices, Commercial Services and the Specialty Fields for the National Park Service.