

## 60-Second Shout Outs!

A “Got a Minute?” activity from: *The Ten Minute Trainer*

by Sharon L. Bowman, MA

Professional Speaker and Corporate Trainer  
Director, The Lake Tahoe Trainers Group

P.O. Box 564, Glenbrook, NV 89413  
Phone: 775-749-5247 Fax: 775-749-1891  
E-Mail: SBowperson@aol.com Web-Site: www.Bowperson.com



You know what happens when you ask a group of learners: “Are there any questions?” You’re right: most of the time the group looks at you in silence, waiting for “someone else” to talk.

Or you ask a question and then wait - and wait and wait - for one brave soul to speak up with an answer.

And when someone finally answers your question, everyone else breathes a sigh of relief and

expects you to continue your lecture - the heat is off them for awhile longer.

But what if you had a structured way to get all learners involved in answering a question? What if you had a way that would guarantee a lot of participation in a little time? And what if your learners were all thinking and learning, even if they weren’t all speaking?

Here is an activity that will do all that and more. The basic idea was borrowed from corporate trainer and games guru, Thiagi (log onto his web site at [www.thiagi.com](http://www.thiagi.com) for more fabulous training ideas). The idea morphed over time to become a quick activity called a Shout Out - one which you can use in a variety of ways.

**What Is It?** A Shout Out is simply an interactive lecture activity.

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It is a quick way to encourage learners to verbally state information they already know or have just learned about the topic.

**What Does It Do?** A Shout Out accomplishes a number of things:

- \* It is a structured way to elicit quick answers from a group of learners.
- \* It makes the whole group responsible for a specific number of facts or answers - so more learners than just one are involved in generating replies.
- \* It engages critical thinking skills because learners have to come up with more than one right answer - and the answers get harder as the activity continues.
- \* It validates what learners already know about a topic.
- \* It is a quick way for learners to verbally review important information.
- \* It involves learners in the lecture, making it a dialogue instead of a monologue.
- \* It is an easy way to check for understanding (if you see a lot of blank stares, then you know you need to re-teach the information).

- \* It keeps everyone focused and provides a fast energy break.

**Room Set-Up and Materials**

**Needed:** The great part of this activity is that it accommodates any room arrangement and any size group, both large and small. You can also use it with any topic and any age learner. Absolutely NO preparation is necessary!



**Activity Instructions:**

1. Tell your learners to verbally give you a number between 1 - 10 (between any two numbers).
2. When someone in the group has stated a number (7 for example), then say, “We need 7 facts about what we just learned.” Or: “Here is a question about (topic). We need to come up with 7 answers to the question.” Or: “Give me 7 facts about what you already know about (topic).”

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**3.** You can begin the Shout Out by stating the first fact. As learners shout out the other facts, you keep track of the number ("That's 1; that's 2; we need 3 more, etc.").

**4.** After learners have shouted out their facts about the topic or answers to your question, you can add information that the learners didn't state.

**5.** Like any brainstorming activity, you accept ALL answers during a Shout Out. After each answer, you simply say, "Yes" or "That's (number)," or "Great - let's have another one." If the answer is incorrect say, "Hold that thought and we'll come back to it," and go on with the Shout Out. The time to address any misconceptions is when the Shout Out is over.

**6.** At the end of the activity, thank the learners and continue with your lecture or presentation.

#### **Activity Variations:**

**1.** You tell the learners how many facts about the topic or answers to the question that they need to come up with.

**2.** If learners are in small groups, have one small group come up with the facts or answers, then ask the rest of the groups if they

can add to what the first group said.

**3.** Have small groups work together first to gather a specific number of facts or answers, then direct them to shout out what they discussed.

**4.** Have the learners shout out a number of questions about the topic. Direct a volunteer to write the questions on a chart for later discussion.

**5.** Vary the Shout Out with other 60-second activities so you don't "Shout Out" your learners to death! Remember: anything becomes boring with too much repetition, anything becomes boring with too much repetition, anything becomes - well, you get the idea!

**6.** Use the Shout Out at the beginning/opening of your training as a connecting activity (connecting learners to what they already know about a topic).

**7.** Use the activity at the celebration/closing of your training to review what was learned. End the Shout Out by having learners give high-fives to those around them (a high-energy way to celebrate the learning and to close the training).

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**Final Thoughts:** The Shout Out is one of the most versatile 60-second activities around. Experiment with it to make it work for you and your learners. As an interactive lecture technique, it’s tops!

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“60-Second Shout Outs” is an excerpt from Sharon Bowman’s newest book *The Ten-Minute Trainer! 129 Ways to Teach it Quick and Make It Stick*, to be published by Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer in 2005, and printed with permission. Please cite the source when downloading this material. You can contact [www.Bowperson.com](http://www.Bowperson.com) for more information about *The Ten-Minute Trainer*. Read on for a brief description:

**Got a minute?** Choose from over dozens of **60-second activities** to help your learners review, repeat, and remember. Or select a number of high-energy, **5 - 10 minute activities** to move information into long-term memory. Use the **Power Hour** templates with your own training topics. And best of all, discover the most useful training tool around to speed up both design and delivery – **The Training Compass**. The bottom line?

**Create a lot of learning  
in a little time!**

*The Ten-Minute Trainer* is a “grab-it-and-go” book – with loads of back-pocket ideas you can use immediately with little or no preparation. To be notified when the book is published, send your contact information to: [Sharon@Bowperson.com](mailto:Sharon@Bowperson.com). Be sure to log onto [www.Bowperson.com](http://www.Bowperson.com) for selected excerpts of *The Ten-Minute Trainer*.

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Author and traveling teacher Sharon Bowman helps educators and business people “teach it quick and make it stick,” - fine-tuning their information-delivery skills and turning their passive listeners into active learners.

Over 40,000 copies of Sharon’s 6 popular teaching, training, and motivation books are now in print. Titles include: “*Preventing Death by Lecture*,” “*Presenting with Pizzazz*,” “*How To Give It So They Get It*,” and “*Shake, Rattle, and Roll*.”

For more information about Sharon Bowman and her books and training, log onto [www.Bowperson.com](http://www.Bowperson.com), or email her at [SBowperson@aol.com](mailto:SBowperson@aol.com).

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