

# Universal Improvement Skills

## Background and description

*Universal Improvement Skills* teaches participants about improvement for individuals, teams and organisations. It provides an integrated set of skills, tools and techniques that are universally applicable and transferable to a wide range of activities in the workplace. These skills can transform the way people work both on their own and in groups.

Participants learn both hard and soft skills. Methodologies, tools and techniques sit alongside how to involve people and how to run meetings in an integrated fashion. To explain 'why' as well as 'how', a brief introduction of the history and theory underpinning the ideas is provided at each stage.

Continually refined and developed based on real-life experience, *Universal Improvement Skills* has been running since 1994. Attendees find that the application of these powerful but straightforward tools, techniques and methodologies has a dramatic effect on their projects, meetings, planning, day-to-day work and in the way they work with groups of people.

## Duration and who should attend

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3-days

### Who should attend?

- All middle managers
- Leaders of project teams
- Leaders of natural work groups
- People involved in projects
- People who run meetings
- Bright sparks who need a development opportunity
- Improvement professionals

## What participants will learn

### Organisational Improvement

- A brief history of improvement in organisations and six Key Concepts that underpin the thinking and approach
- How to convert organisational strategy and good intentions into real change in the workplace

## What participants will learn

### Projects

- The **UIMPROVE** framework for setting up and running projects  
This can be applied in all organisations and industries.
- Annual Planning - how to identify all the projects that need to be carried out over the next 12 months and how to prioritise the resulting list either individually or with a team. How to set up a Project Steering Grid to monitor and steer the projects on an ongoing basis.
- How to set up individual projects properly with a clear remit
- Different roles in projects:  
Champion, Project Leader, Team Member, Key Player, Specialist, Facilitator
- Tools and techniques for involving people in projects
- How to run a Project Kick-Start  
This is an initial meeting that is highly structured and involves a wide range of people to ensure buy-in and alignment and get the project off to the best possible start
- A set of project methodologies that provide step-by-step guidance from the beginning to the end of any project:  
Planning, Improvement, Problem Solving, major Project
- How to take an individual project and break it down into its component parts, identifying timescales, actions and milestones

### Tools and techniques

- Tools for Planning and Organising  
Brainstorming, Clustering-by-Theme, Must-Should-Could, TPN Analysis, Chronological Clustering and Gantt Charts - participants learn how and when to use each of these
- Techniques for Productive Meetings - straightforward but highly effective structural techniques that will increase participation, variety, productivity and enjoyment of any meeting

### Processes and how to improve them

- The principles of process improvement
- How to use Improvement Methodology to improve a process
- Analytical tools - Ishikawa Diagrams and Deployment Flowcharting

## Style and structure of the course

*Universal Improvement Skills* follows a tried-and-tested approach that is highly participative and practical with chalk'n'talk cut to a minimum.

Participants are asked to apply what they are learning to their own real-life scenarios including projects and meetings. This includes the opportunity to pick the brains of the people running the course. A ratio of two course leaders to a maximum of 12 participants ensures that everyone can have some 1-1 time.

Participants receive **UIMPROVE**'s comprehensive manual, *The Complete Guide to Improvement*. This contains easy to follow, step-by-step guidelines including everything covered on the course and a lot more. Participants can also access other support materials via the **UIMPROVE** website.