

**GUIDE TO CHOOSE A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDER**

*This guide is designed to assist you with selecting an effective early childhood professional development (PD) provider who has experience and expertise in Virginia’s Competencies for Professional Development Providers. As you interview prospective trainers, ask the questions in the left column and look for responses (based on recommended best practices) similar to those suggested in the middle column. Follow up questions will allow you to further probe the individual’s level of knowledge and skill. PD providers likely will not mention every suggested response, but should demonstrate an overall level of knowledge and skill in each area of competency. Place a check in the box to indicate whether the individual has the skill (meets most of the best practice responses). Add any relevant comments in the notes section below each question.*

| **Question** | **Recommended Best Practices Responses** | **Has Desired Qualification?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **KNOWLEDGE OF ADULT LEARNING PRINCIPLES** |  |
| 1. What is your knowledge of adult learning?How is teaching adults different from teaching children? | * Knows that adults:
	+ Bring rich life experiences and knowledge to PD
	+ Desire information that is relevant and practical
	+ Are goal-oriented and internally motivated to learn meaningful information; want to know “why”
	+ Learn best through interactive, participant-centered instructional strategies with positive encouragement
	+ Remember information they hear at least six times
* Has training in adult education methods such as all four modules of *VCPD 101: Becoming an Effective Early Childhood Professional Development Provider*, the VDSS/CCWA Adult Education course, or the equivalent
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
|  | **EXPERIENCE** |  |
| 2. Describe your educational and employment background.How does it prepare you to provide PD in your area(s) of expertise (formal education, certifications, past employment, etc.)? | * Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in child-related or specialty field
* 18 child-related college credits
* Other relevant credentials, certifications related to training topic
* Three or more years of experience working with or on behalf of young children and their families
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
| 3. Please describe your past experiences as a PD provider.* What topics have you delivered?
* What level was the content (entry, intermediate, advanced)?
* Who are your typical participants?
* Average number of participants?
* How long is your average training?
 | * At least 24 hours of delivering professional development to adults
* Training or documented research within the past two years on the proposed topic
* PD provider’s past experiences align with the proposed training to be offered
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
|  | **PROFESSIONALISM** |  |
| 4. How do you remain current on laws, regulations, policies, and evidence-based practices in your area of expertise? How do you further your skills as a PD provider? | * Completes annual continuing education in the topic area, training delivery skills, and/or adult education
* Reads professional journals, articles, blogs, state and national information, and current research
* Participates in professional organizations
* Interacts with other PD providers, discussing effective training techniques and/or problem-solving
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
|  | **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE** |  |
| 5. Describe your knowledge of:* [Virginia’s Milestone’s for Early Childhood Development](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/cc/provider_training_development/intro_page/publications/milestones/milestones_one_document/Milestones_Revised.pdf)
* [Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/cc/provider_training_development/intro_page/publications/competencies/chapters_as_one_document/dss_competencies.pdf)
* Licensing standards
 | * Demonstrates understanding of developmental stages from birth to age eight
* Possesses broad knowledge of Virginia’s Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals
* Demonstrates knowledge of Virginia licensing standards for early care and education settings
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
|  | **INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN** |  |
| 6. What steps do you take to develop the content of your PD sessions?  | * Gathers information about the participants including language spoken and accessibility needs, the environment, available technology, time frame, expected content, and goals
* Designs instruction based on a needs assessment of the, participants including prior knowledge, experiences, and challenges with the content, as well as the training goals
* Incorporates a variety of interactive, participant-centered instructional strategies including openers, closers, refreshers, and rechargers to increase engagement, retention, and application
* Chunks content into blocks of information, participation, and reflection and/or application; plans a change of pace at least every 20 minutes
* Includes multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement
* Plans the use of a variety of instructional methods (individual, small and large group, hands-on, humor, storytelling, case studies, role plays, videos, music, projects, manuals, handouts, technology, and other training tools)
* Prepares instructional materials including agenda, outlines, scripts with essential content, handouts, electronic media, learning games, and other tools
* Incorporates feedback from subject matter experts**,** as well as participant satisfaction surveys, pre-/post-test results, and/or long-term follow-up feedback from previous trainings
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
| **Question** | **Recommended Best Practices Responses** | **Has Desired Qualification?** |
| 7. What resources do you use to develop your training content? | * Uses current, quality research on the topic; cites sources
* Uses local, state and national data as relevant
* Incorporates cross-sector information from partners on programs and services available in Virginia
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
| 8. What strategies do you incorporate to assess the knowledge and skills of your participants after PD to determine if your training was successful? | * Gives pre- and post-tests to gauge knowledge transfer.
* Assigns interactive games or group projects to gauge application of concepts

.* Observes demonstrated skills.
* Organizes peer reviews or coaching sessions
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |  |  |

| **Question** | **Recommended Best Practices Responses** | **Has Desired Qualification?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 9. What organizational steps do you complete to address training logistics? | * Secures a training site; ensures accessibility; confirms details of room set-up, technology, etc.
* Advertises the PD event
* Registers participants, and maintains communication by sending a confirmation, reminders, directions, etc.
* Prepares sign in sheets, handouts, nametags, etc.
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
|  | **INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY** |  |
| 10. How do you structure the learning environment? | * Customizes room for comfortable and active participation (lighting, table arrangements, technology, fidgets)
* Ensures that accommodations for individuals with disabilities/special needs are in place
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |

| **Question** | **Recommended Practice Responses** | **Has Desired Qualification?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 11. Describe how you address the needs of diverse groups of participants (e.g., speakers of English as a second language, participants with low literacy levels, individuals with disabilities or special health needs)?What steps have you taken to ensure you are culturally competent of others? | * Demonstrates awareness of own assumptions, values, and biases and how they influence interactions with participants
* Communicates clearly; shows respect for all participants
* Modifies strategies, pace, schedules, and materials to meet participant needs
* Uses multiple teaching strategies; collaborates with interpreters
* Uses examples that are relevant, meaningful, and culturally-appropriate
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
| 12. In the past, how have you handled challenging participants? | * Moves close, asks a direct question, and/or asks if everyone can hear when side conversations are disturbing others
* Assigns a task; requests assistance
* Changes activities, groupings, and/or seating
* Holds a private conversation
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
| **Question** | **Recommended Best Practices Responses** | **Has Desired Qualification?** |
|  | **USE OF TECHNOLOGY** |  |
| 13. What technology do you use to provide professional development?  | * Skillfully uses electronic media/equipment to enhance the learning experience
* Uses technology to support participation in PD and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
| 14. What back-up strategies do you put in place if/when the technology fails? | * Provides handouts
* Plans alternate activities
* Saves presentation on multiple platforms; saves videos and website information to computer in case Wi-Fi fails
* Brings extra bulbs, cords, batteries, etc.
* Identifies onsite technology support prior to the session
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |

| **Question** | **Recommended Best Practices Responses** | **Has Desired Qualification?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 15. In observing the PD provider during the interview, judge the skills in the second column. | * Presents a professional demeanor including appropriate dress/appearance, spoken language, and body language
* Displays confidence and competence in ability to train
* Communicates clearly, logically, and effectively
* Maintains appropriate confidentiality, privacy, and self-disclosure
 | * Yes
* Somewhat
* No
 |
| **Notes** |
| **General Summary/Overall Thoughts Would Hire 🞎 Yes 🞎 No**  |