Quantified

PLANNING GUIDE

FOR PHARMA COMMERCIAL TRAINING AND ENABLEMENT TEAMS

How to Get the Most Out of Your NSM

A Practical Guide to Building Readiness Before the Meeting, Protecting Live Time During It, and Reinforcing What Matters After

You are not planning an event. You are building readiness, on a date that will not move, for a field force larger than your trainer bench.

Plenty about an NSM is hard: MLR timing, brand alignment across therapeutic areas, message complexity, manager consistency, and whatever the launch calendar does to all of it. But those problems are solvable with enough planning. What breaks at scale is the ability to turn strong content into enough meaningful practice, feedback, and proof of readiness.

That is why the meeting so often becomes a logistics exercise. Trainers spend three days moving people through breakout rooms instead of developing them. Reps spend expensive hours waiting for a turn. Certification, the thing leadership actually asked for, ends up competing with the coaching and peer practice that would have made the messaging stick.

The way out is to stop asking three days to do all of it. This guide breaks the meeting into three stages and shows what each one gives back. Fix the stage where your constraint lives.

Start by Finding Where Your Hours Go

Before choosing a stage, run the math on your own meeting. It usually settles the debate faster than any argument about tooling.

01 How many reps have to be certified, and by how many trainers?	02 How many minutes does one live certification take, including setup, the attempt, feedback, and the reset before the next rep?
03 Multiply. That is how many trainer hours the meeting owes to certification before a single coaching conversation happens.	04 Now add the other side of the ledger: every rep sitting in a hallway waiting for a room is a rep you flew in and are not developing.

Whatever your all-in cost per rep is, divide it by the hours in the agenda. That is the price of an hour at your meeting. Queue hours are some of the most expensive hours on that agenda, and they are also the easiest ones to buy back.

STAGE ONE

Before the Meeting

Build fluency through practice, and walk in holding a readiness baseline.

The lead-up to an NSM is chaos. Agendas are packed, budgets are set, and the training team is absorbing content changes and logistics at the same time. Pre-work is usually the first thing to get thin, and it usually becomes a deck with a deadline.

The shift that changes the meeting is making pre-work *practice* rather than reading. Reps run the core message on their own time, as many times as they need, scored against your criteria. Nobody schedules anything. Nobody waits for a partner.

Certification can still happen at the meeting if that is how your program works. The difference is that reps arrive fluent, so certification stops consuming the hours it used to, and you already know who is likely to sail through and who is not.

WHAT IT GIVES BACK

→ **Day one starts at fluency.** Live time goes to objection handling, difficult HCP dynamics, and peer learning instead of getting the room to a baseline they could have reached from home.

→ **You arrive holding a baseline.** You know which regions and therapeutic areas are ready and which are not, while there is still time to change the run of show, rather than finding out on day three.

→ **Trainers get their prep window back.** The hours that would have gone into scheduling practice rounds go into designing the sessions only a person can lead.

WHAT THIS LOOKED LIKE AT SANOFI

sanofi

80%	100%	~250
CERTIFIED WITHIN 48 HOURS	CERTIFIED WITHIN FIVE DAYS	TRAINER HOURS SAVED

Ahead of an RSV immunization launch, 500 reps and four trainers made the live math impossible. Practice moved ahead of the meeting, with reps completing sessions on their own time, averaging about twelve minutes each.

SIGNS YOU'RE AT STAGE ONE

- [ ] Day one of your last meeting was spent getting people to a baseline
- [ ] You cannot say today which reps would pass if you certified them tomorrow
- [ ] Pre-work exists, but it is a deck and a due date
- [ ] Practice content has not been submitted to MLR, only presentation content

STAGE TWO

During the Meeting

Certify without the queue, and spend the human hours where they change the most.

Most training teams do not want to skip certification. They cannot afford to let it consume the agenda. When it runs live and sequential, it pushes out exactly the sessions the meeting exists for.

There is also an honesty problem with live roleplay at scale worth naming. A rep with one attempt, in front of a trainer, with a line waiting outside, is not practicing. They are performing. One high-stakes attempt tells you what a rep can do in that moment. It gives them very little room to experiment, fail, adjust, and try again. Lower-stakes practice does.

Scoring consistency is the other cost. Across rooms, trainers, and three days of fatigue, the same performance does not reliably earn the same score. That is not a comment on your trainers. It is what happens to any human rubric under throughput pressure.

WHAT IT GIVES BACK

- → **Certification runs around the agenda, not inside it.** Reps certify on their own schedule during the meeting instead of queueing for a room, so the hours you paid for go to the sessions only a live room can deliver
- → **Scoring holds still.** The same criteria apply to every rep in every region, and the record is consistent enough to stand behind
- → **Trainers stop managing a queue.** Their attention moves to the outliers, the advanced sessions, and the reps who genuinely need a person in front of them
- → **The agenda gets its afternoons back.** Message labs, objection work, and manager-led coaching stop being the first things cut when certification runs long

Where the stages compound. Stage Two stands on its own. If you also have Stage One's baseline, the live meeting can become adaptive: you know before day one which regions need which breakouts, what can be cut, and where your managers and trainers will do the most good.

WHAT THIS LOOKED LIKE AT BAYER

97%	4,500+	500+
MASTERY RATE	PRACTICE SESSIONS	REPS FOR LAUNCH

Consistent scoring meant trainer attention shifted from tracking who had certified to identifying who needed help and where, and the team saved thousands of hours of trainer-led assessment.

SIGNS YOU'RE AT STAGE TWO

- [ ] Your trainers spend the meeting in breakout rooms and see almost none of the general sessions
- [ ] Someone asks on day two why a group of reps still has not certified
- [ ] Two reps who performed about the same received different results depending on the room
- [ ] Coaching and peer practice are the first sessions cut when the schedule slips

STAGE THREE

After the Meeting

Reinforce the message, catch drift early, and be able to show what held.

The meeting ends, reps go back to territory, and momentum drops. Manager follow-up varies by manager. Within a few weeks the new messaging is competing with everything already on a rep's plate, and by the next cycle you are left asking whether any of it stuck, with no way to answer.

The learning science here is directionally clear. Distributed practice retains better than a single concentrated block, and recalling a message under realistic conditions builds more durable skill than reviewing it does. An NSM is structurally a massed-practice event: three days, high volume, low retrieval. That is not an argument against holding one. It is the argument for what has to surround it.

WHAT IT GIVES BACK

- **Repetition while it is warm.** The longer reps go without retrieving and applying the message, the more of the meeting's learning begins to decay. The first weeks back are the cheapest place to protect the investment
- **Managers coach from something real.** Instead of a general reminder to reinforce the messaging, each manager can see where their own reps are slipping and coach that
- **Drift becomes visible.** Adherence by region and therapeutic area tells you where to intervene rather than emailing everyone equally
- **You can answer the ROI question.** Practice and certification data tied to field performance turns next year's budget conversation from a request into a case

What to Measure After the Meeting

- **Completion and certification.** Did every rep practice and demonstrate the standard? Below 90% completion usually points at a design problem rather than a motivation problem
- **Continued practice.** Are reps still running scenarios in the weeks after, or did activity stop the day the meeting ended? This is the earliest signal that reinforcement is real rather than nominal
- **Message adherence by segment.** Is the approved language holding across regions and therapeutic areas, or fraying in specific pockets? This is the measure most teams cannot produce, and the one that separates a compliance checkbox from something that reduces risk
- **Manager coaching coverage.** Which managers are following up, and which teams have gone quiet? Uneven coaching shows up here before it shows up in the field
- **Business outcome.** Ramp time for reps who joined after the meeting, and performance on the messaging the meeting was built around

SIGNS YOU'RE AT STAGE THREE

- [ ] Nobody owns the ninety days after, or the owner has no budget line
- [ ] You cannot show whether the messaging is being used in the field
- [ ] Manager follow-up depends entirely on which manager
- [ ] Last year's meeting is hard to distinguish from this year's starting point

Choosing Where to Start

You do not have to do all three. Pick the stage that is costing you the most.

IF YOUR BIGGEST CONSTRAINT IS	START HERE
Reps arrive underprepared and day one is remediation	**Stage One.** It needs the most runway, so decide early.
Certification is eating the agenda and your trainers are buried	**Stage Two.** It changes the meeting on its own, with or without pre-work in place.
You cannot prove anything stuck	**Stage Three.** The cheapest to start and the easiest to add late.
Leadership is asking what the meeting returned	**Stage Three** for the measurement, then **Stage One** next cycle.
You are inside eight weeks	**Stage Two or Three.** Stage One's practice content needs MLR runway you may no longer have.

Each stage delivers on its own. Run two and they reinforce each other: Stage One's baseline is what lets Stage Two make the live meeting adaptive, and both feed the measurement in Stage Three.

ON TIMING

At roughly twenty weeks out, all three stages are still open to you. Stage One needs the most runway, because practice content has to clear MLR review alongside the presentation content and that review rarely compresses on request. Stages Two and Three stay open later.

ALREADY A CUSTOMER?

You may already have much of what you need to apply this model to your NSM. Talk with your customer success lead about your current setup and what it would take to extend it to pre-work, certification, or reinforcement.

The Twenty-Week Runway

Work backward from the meeting date. The gates below are ordered by what becomes irreversible first.

WKS 20–16	What every rep must be able to do, and what certified means for this message set. The split between event spend and the cycles after. First MLR wave submitted, with practice content included, not just slides.
WKS 16–12	Dates and venue confirmed. A one-page design intent covering theme, audience, behavioral target, and measurement. Three to five first-line managers brought into the design.
WKS 12–8	Agenda drafted against the behavioral target. Presenters briefed to open with how their session serves it. Practice scenarios built from approved language.
WKS 8–4	Dry runs with a small manager audience; anything that does not survive gets cut. Reinforcement plan staffed and funded, not just sketched. Certification mechanics tested end to end.
WKS 4–0	Pre-work practice runs. Readiness compiled by region and therapeutic area. Live time reallocated to where the data says it is needed. The final week protects the design rather than revising it.

Where Quantified Fits

Much of the above is planning discipline and needs no vendor. The part that is hard to do at field-force scale is giving several hundred reps unlimited scored practice without adding trainer hours, and that is the part we do.

Practice that scales past the trainer bench	Roleplay and Readiness Coaching let every rep practice the approved message as many times as they need, on their own time, with feedback after every attempt
Scoring that holds still	Sessions are scored against your own MLR-approved criteria and exemplars, consistently across regions, with an audit-ready record. We do not write your rubric; the score reflects your definition of a good conversation
Readiness you can see before you travel	Insights and Reporting show fluency and gaps by region and therapeutic area, so live hours go where they will pay
Reinforcement through the first cycle	Field Coaching keeps practice running when manager bandwidth is thinnest and drift is fastest
Content into practice in days	Self Authoring turns approved material into practice scenarios and rubrics without a services engagement for every update

Built for regulated environments, not adapted from horizontal AI.

Bring Us Your Meeting Math

Tell us how many reps, how many trainers, and what date will not move. We will show you which stage gives you the most back and what the readiness view would look like on day one.

Request a Demo

Related: the general planning model in How to Run a Sales Kickoff or NSM, how teams get reps ready before the meeting, message pull-through after it, and sales meetings and kickoffs.