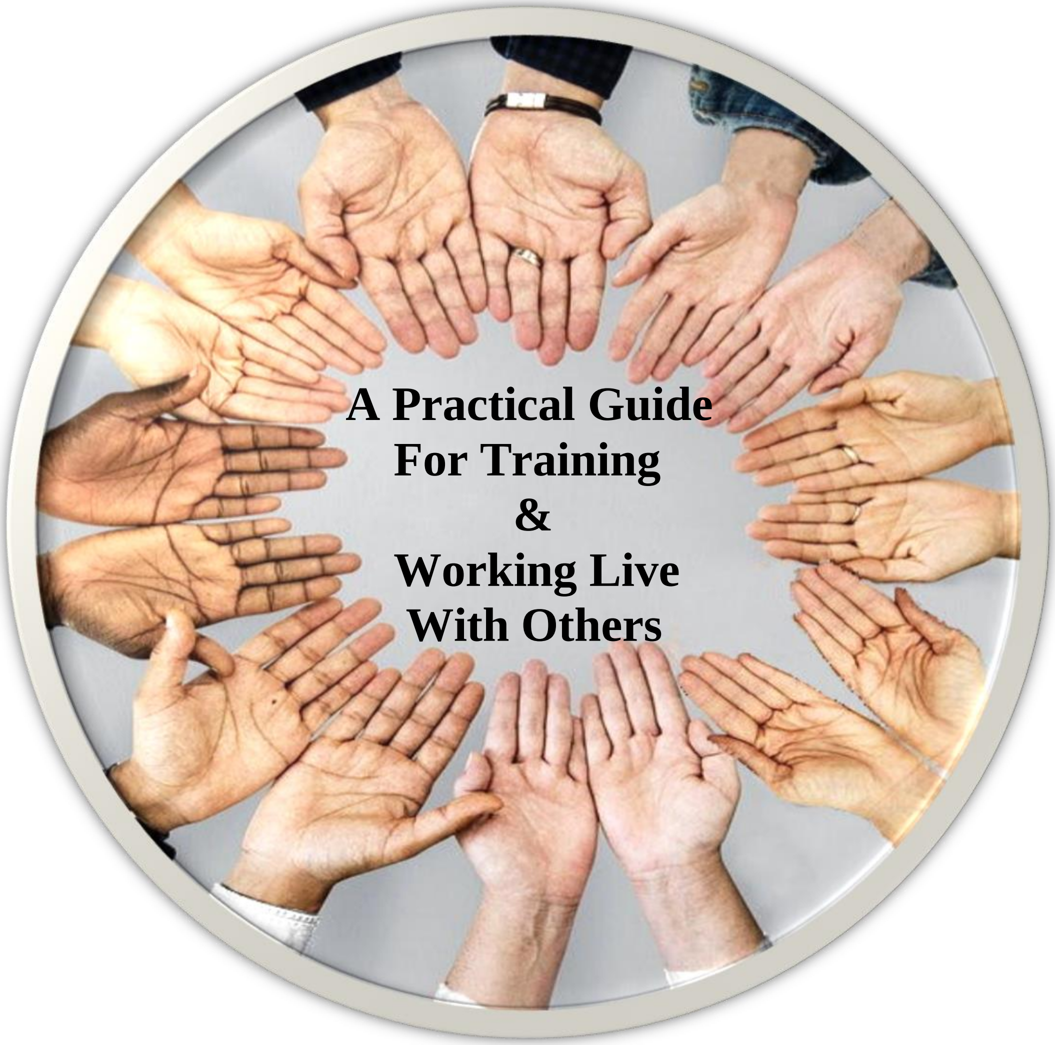
HOW TO TRAIN



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HOW TO TRAIN
A Practical Guide for Training and Working Live with Others

Table of Contents

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Evan Segal is an attorney, originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who has been a full–time international legal consultant since 1994. During this time, he has worked and lived in the Baltic States, Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Caucuses, the Russian Federation, Central Asia, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America (more than fifty countries in total).

Mr. Segal has been involved in a large number of legal, judicial, and legislative reform projects, including senior positions, on behalf of many different international organizations and assistance providers. His counterparts include parliaments, ministries, governmental institutions, courts, professional training institutions, and non–governmental organizations. His work covers rule of law, legal reform, judicial reform, court administration, legislative drafting, institution building, capacity development, project design and evaluation, and raising professional qualifications (particularly of judges, prosecutors, and attorneys).

Mr. Segal has organized major training programs and helped deliver hundreds of events for thousands of government officials, members of parliament, parliamentary staff, civil servants, judges, prosecutors, court administrators, court personnel, attorneys, and NGO representatives. In addition to providing training on substantive legal topics, legislative drafting, and institution building/ management issues, Mr. Segal regularly delivers Training of Trainers, with special emphasis on organizational and communication skills in professional settings.

MODULE I
PROLOGUE – THE PHILOSOPHY OF TRAINING

Learning Outcome: Trainers understand the philosophical rationale for delivering training, and are properly oriented for carrying out their work.

A. Introduction

Teaching and training are interactive processes that transfer knowledge, skills, experience, understanding, and values. They have played a crucial role in human development since our first collective activities, such as hunting, fishing, gathering, planting, cooking, building, and making things (especially tools). When human lifespans reached the point that societies had three generations (grandparents who could spend time with grandchildren), the accrual of knowledge/experience and teaching/training took off. All of the great civilizations and major religions have dedicated significant resources to teaching and training, in order to preserve and disseminate their knowledge and culture. Many of the greatest people in history were mostly or at least partially dedicated to teaching and training. This includes our most prominent philosophers, religious leaders, law givers, generals, scientists, philanthropists, social activists, athletes, and even many entertainers.

Before universities, printing presses, and universal education, knowledge and training were usually the preserve of a select few, or even a "priestly class". Direct transmission was the only way to be "initiated". A major step towards systematization occurred during the Middle Ages, when European guilds trained apprentices in one subject for life (setting the stage for today's professions), while people in monasteries carefully studied, copied, and translated classical literature.

Today, electronic communication and the Internet have created educational possibilities that never existed before, and have expanded access in previously unimaginable ways. Indeed, the modern era is characterized by the constant availability of unlimited opportunities on a global scale to get information and training on virtually any subject. The challenge is not *how to access* information and training, but rather *what to prioritize*, and *how much time it deserves*. And, of course, we need advanced skills in assessing accuracy, reliability, timeliness, and impartiality/bias.

B. What are the Philosophical Principles of Training?

To place the above processes in context, and set the stage for improving training skills, it is helpful to start out by considering some "words of wisdom" on the subject:

1. "Everyone is an experienced Trainer." Everyone is a friend, spouse, parent, manager, guide, facilitator, co–worker, coach, team–mate, neighbor, or pet–owner, at different stages of life and probably many times every day. We start training others at an early age, when we first teach friends our favorite games. And we continue training throughout our relationships and interactions with others.
2. "Everyone is a Self–Trainer." Much of what we learn is self–taught, learned through personal experience and observation. In effect, we are constantly engaged in a process of self–training, which commences at birth (or perhaps even earlier).

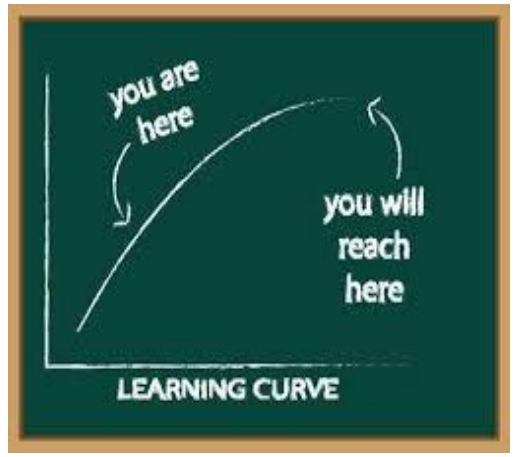
3. "Everyone can benefit from training." Each of us can learn and grow by spending time with someone who has more knowledge or experience in a given area. Indeed, the more mature and curious we are, the more prepared we are to learn about new subjects, and from anyone.
4. "Failing to prepare is preparing to fail." Most training mistakes can be avoided by forethought, planning, and preparation. Insufficient preparation is tantamount to asking for trouble.
5. "Proper Preparation and Practice Prevent Poor Performance." This phrase, with the "Six P's", summarizes the best approach for achieving success.
6. "There is nothing new except what has been forgotten." Technology may change, and knowledge may grow, but the basic skills required for successful training are remarkably constant. They include knowledge of the subject, enthusiasm, training skills, respect for the audience, being able to create a suitable Learning Environment, etc.
7. "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery." When we borrow and apply what others do or teach us, we are in fact complementing them. Applying something in practice is much more sincere than praising someone for doing it. Training need not be original or innovative to be effective.
8. "Good training is enjoyable." People truly enjoy learning about things they find interesting, beneficial, or challenging. And people learn more when they have fun. Fun and enthusiasm go hand in hand. Indeed, people rarely succeed at things unless they enjoy doing them.
9. "Training should be off the record." Practice sessions are the place to make mistakes and learn from them. Maximum benefit is obtained when training exercises are a polite experiment that helps us prepare for the real world. Training should be treated as a serious business, but there shouldn't be any lasting negative consequences for errors.
10. "Training others is a noble task that helps develop human potential." **The benefits from training have a cascade effect.** They multiply over time as Participants practice and share what they gain. Trainers leave a legacy of professional, financial, and personal benefit for others. People always remember their best Trainers and teachers. History also remembers great Trainers and teachers.

11. "Training is crucial for professionals". The cascade effect of training is most pronounced for professions, a group of people who devote themselves to both personal and collective excellence over the long–term. Indeed, adherence to collective service and standards define professions. Len Nadler, a pioneer in the field of human resource development, highlighted this relationship.
12. "Training should always be focused first and foremost on the audience." The prestige and status of Trainers are irrelevant. The objective of training is to benefit the target group.
13. "Always respect the Participants." Learning is enhanced by respect and constructive support. It is difficult for people to learn from someone they consider disrespectful. As Albert Einstein said, "Love is a better teacher than duty".
14. "Participants are entitled to constructive feedback." Feedback is crucial for enhancing skills and improving performance. Silence does not teach. Making feedback constructive and useful, rather than critical, is one of the most difficult but important tasks for Trainers.
15. "A smile is the shortest distance between two points." Smiles are free, universally recognizable, versatile, and incredibly useful. Especially in group settings.
16. "Follow the KISS Principle." Keep It Straight and Simple. Or, Keep it Short and Sweet. Albert Einstein said that he made things "as simple as possible, but no simpler than that".
17. "Education can be an impediment to learning." Albert Einstein also pointed out that education in its narrowest sense can be an obstacle to personal development and achievement.
18. "Andragogy (adult education) is different from Pedagogy (primary education)." Malcolm Knowles made a major contribution to professional formation by defining and emphasizing the distinction. But there are legitimate questions concerning how real the difference is, in practice.

19. "Never let the good be the enemy of the great". Training can be positive without being optimal. Don't settle for second best just because it is the easiest thing to do under the circumstances. Try to make training exceptional.
20. "Never confuse motion and progress." There is no point in moving quickly or being pleased with movement if it isn't in exactly the right direction. Evaluate progress, not motion.

21. "If you do not know where you are going, any road will do." The first real step towards progress is choosing the destination. Training is a form of leadership, and good leaders always help others see the destination and understand the rationale for going there.
22. "When we aim at nothing, that is what we achieve." (David Campbell).
23. "The key to success is doing the right things." It is not enough *to do things right*. True achievement comes from *doing the right things right*.
24. "Repetition is the Mother of Learning." Most of our initial learning comes through repetition. It is one of the most useful tools for reinforcing learning.
25. "Practice is the best teacher." Active learning is best, and practice is the best form of active learning.
26. "The show must go on." Trainers, like entertainers, have to perform as scheduled, regardless of personal challenges or logistics. A great deal is invested in every event. This is why *showing up is ninety percent of victory*.
27. "It's the Trainer's Fault." As the Master of Ceremony (MC) or "show–master", the Trainer has ultimate responsibility for everything. It doesn't matter if someone else caused the problem or could have prevented it, or whether it involves equipment, food, or logistics. Participants expect Trainers to be in charge. In any event, there is little point blaming anyone else.

28. "Practice what you preach." Trainers should serve as a role model by utilizing and following the practices they expect others to adopt and learn. It is important to *demonstrate* how to be a good Trainer. For example, teach time management by practicing it.
29. "Experience is an excellent teacher. It enables us to immediately recognize when we repeat a mistake." Unfortunately, learning is not always a completely linear process.
30. "Life is a cruel teacher. The test comes first, and the lesson comes afterwards." While taking tests is indeed stressful for students, having a chance to prepare for tests in advance is a luxury. Real life is different from school. Challenges arise without warning.
31. "Whether you believe you can or believe you can't, you will probably be right." We make our fortunes and we call them fate.
32. "Successful Trainers are masters of both content and process." It is necessary to know the subject (substantive expertise) and use suitable processes (training skills).



33. "Learning Curves are for climbing up, not sliding down." Learning Curves constitute a perpetual process, and climbing them requires constant effort. The best place to be on a Learning Curve is always on the positive slope. The only time we can coast in life is when we are going downhill.
34. "When all else fails, read the directions." Trainers need to be dynamic and innovative, and creative/ flexible enough to meet any challenges that arise. But they should also stick to the basic principles and do what works. This means giving full consideration to best practices, as described in authoritative sources.
35. "Men must be taught as if you taught them not, and things unknown proposed as things forgot." (Alexander Pope).
36. "You cannot teach a man anything: you can only help him to find it within himself." (Galileo).
37. "When you have seen one star, you have seen them all." (attributed to Galileo's assistant, probably just before being dismissed).

Which of these do you like best? Why?

C. How can a List of Quotations be used as an Opening Exercise?

After the seminar opening (see Module XIII), a list of salient/topical quotations such as those presented above can be used for an extremely valuable warm–up exercise. Naturally, the list of quotations should not be too long. And the focus should be on the quotes themselves, without much explanation, so that the Participants have to think for themselves.

The optimal procedure for the Trainer to follow is:

1) Hand out a concise list of quotations in written form to each Participant
2) Explain that each Participant should read the entire list and then choose a favorite quotation, or one that is extremely appealing
3) Give the Participants a few minutes maximum to read the list and select their quotation
4) Go around the room and give each Participant one minute maximum to read his/her selection to the collective and explain the rationale for choosing it

This kind of opening exercise has a number of significant benefits:

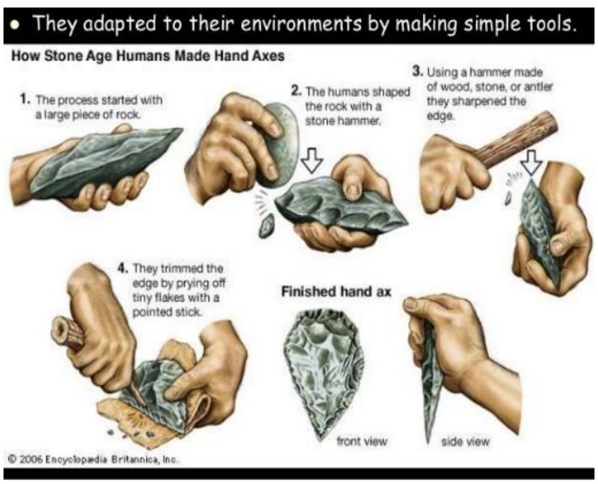
1) It gets Participants thinking and learning about the subject matter of the event, as they read the list and choose their favorite quote
2) When Participants read and explain their choice of quotation, they get experience presenting and communicating their thoughts to others
3) Participants benefit greatly from hearing the quotations read out loud and from hearing the thoughts of their colleagues, and this launches a process of collective learning
4) Everyone has a chance to speak, and the seminar starts with a demonstration of interactivity and inclusivity
5) The Trainer shows respect for the Participants, and an interest in their ideas and perspectives
6) The Trainer can learn a lot about the Participants, as a group and as individuals, from their choices of quotations and the explanations for their preferences

7) The Trainer can refer back to the selections during the course of the event, to reinforce learning and show respect for the Participants

Finally, this is an easy exercise for Trainers to manage, and an excellent segue to the actual training.

C. <u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

Training (as a specialized and advanced form of teaching) is one of the most important activities that we can perform, and it makes a significant contribution to the development of others and our society. Indeed, training is the constant companion of human history.



- Systematic and focused training and learning are what first set humans apart from other species
- Regular training probably originated with the development of tools, starting with stones, ropes, and wood (only stone tools stand the test of time and remain as evidence)
- Humans who trained each other and engaged in effective collective learning had a distinct evolutionary advantage
- Training skills and communication skills go hand in hand, and reinforce each other, so training developed language and made it much more sophisticated
- Every aspect of human civilization and everything we do to survive has been developed and shared through training
- In addition to survival, training and communication are crucial for culture, including singing, dancing, music, drawing, painting, sculpture, writing, etc.
- Modern technology has changed the parameters and possibilities for training, but not the fundamentals

Without training and collective learning, humans would not be where we are today.

When we sincerely dedicate ourselves to training, we continue a long–standing and noble tradition. But we also assume a major responsibility. Participants give Trainers their most valuable and most irreplaceable resource, namely their time. In response, Trainers need to do the best job possible in the shortest amount of time. This Manual is dedicated to helping Trainers meet their responsibilities.

MODULE II
INTRODUCTION TO TRAINING

Learning Outcome: Trainers understand the basic nature and general importance of the training process, and are prepared and able to develop the required skills.

A. Introduction to Training

As mentioned in the Prologue above, training is an interactive process that transfers knowledge, skills, experience, understanding, and values. It takes place in a specialized setting, or Learning Environment, which is dedicated to and appropriate for the process. The format has a great effect on the process. Therefore, Trainers need to be masters of a variety of techniques.

Nonetheless, the same basic principles apply whether training is live or delivered through electronic means (videoconferences, distance learning, virtual courses), and whether the group is large or small. Trainers must be masters of their subject, must know the optimal means for meeting their objectives and delivering their services, and must have the key personal qualities (such as dedication and patience) required for their tasks.

B. What Do Trainers Do?

Trainers are skilled professionals who help their colleagues learn and develop skills that enable them to work better or more effectively handle important tasks in life. Trainers manage and provide educational services in accordance with the Training Cycle. Understanding and applying the Training Cycle is key for everything that Trainers do, and it is the main requirement for effectively and efficiently carrying out their work.

Some Trainers practice this craft full–time, while others combine professional activities and training and perform the latter on a part–time basis. Some Trainers specialize and focus on a few clients, providing extremely specific and personal services over longer periods of time. Other Trainers provide universal skills to diverse audiences of different sizes on an *ad hoc* basis. Some Trainers travel frequently to meet different audiences, while others cover a limited geographical area. Some professions and enterprises arrange for their own dedicated training services, through a specialized institution, professional association, or in–house human resources department. The work of Trainers is extremely varied, and must be adapted to many different contexts and circumstances.

Nonetheless, all Trainers share one thing in common. They have a profound duty to provide the highest quality services to Participants and clients during a very limited time period, and often during working hours. This requires high standards of education, dedication, and organization, significant preparation, and considerable delivery skills. Trainers who serve a specific target group or profession also need to be highly involved in its work, and keep their knowledge and practical skills completely up–to–date. Such Trainers can make a major contribution to the professional and personal development of their colleagues. In this context, training is noble and rewarding work. Those who train their colleagues are performing a great service for their profession, for their society, and for their country.

C. What is the Most Appropriate Terminology for Training?

It is useful to start out by clarifying some of the principal terms used with training:

TRAINING TERMINOLOGY	
Trainer? Teacher? Facilitator? Presenter? Instructor?	• "Trainer" is traditionally used, to highlight the process of "transmission". But some professionals, like doctors, members of parliament, and judges, find the concept of training to be demeaning, since they are already highly skilled. • "Teachers" are associated with highly structured and imposed learning. Teachers have students, making this term less appropriate for adults/professionals. • "Facilitators" serve as catalysts and guides. They achieve results that are largely within the province of others. But they may lack authority and leadership, and play a more neutral/reactive role. • "Presenter" is a more specific term. Presenters perform for others. This term emphasizes the direction of interactions, from presenter to audience. • "Instructors" have special knowledge and positions, often in academic settings. Instructors" have prestige, and perhaps special status compared to their audience. **With the understanding that good "Trainers" must also be good "Presenters" and "Facilitators" when required, and must creatively combine these skills, we will use the term "Trainer"** (with all due respect to sensitivities of certain professions).
Trainee? Learner? Participant?	• "Trainee" is awkward, and has negative connotations for adults and professionals. • "Learner" is also inappropriate for adults and professionals ("learned people"). • "Participant" is a neutral term, simply connoting attendance in a seminar or event. It implies involvement and being part of the event, and the process of training. **Therefore, we will use the term "Participant".**
Training? Workshop? Seminar?	• "Training" sounds active, and conjures images of sports and activities. But professionals who don't want to be trained don't want training events. • "Workshop" is a positive term that is quite useful for certain kinds of events. Workshops are usually convened to achieve specific and concrete objectives. They may have a smaller and more defined audience, who know each other. They may focus on specific topics or skills, and utilize targeted exercises. • "Seminar" highlights an interpersonal approach, as Participants work together. Seminars may involve discussions and exchanges of information and experience. In a seminar, everyone has an equal chance to contribute. **Therefore, we will use the term "seminar".**
Education? Formation? Development?	• "Education" or learning, in the strict sense, is not necessary for professionals. Professionals are already qualified for their tasks, and learn as part of their work. • "Formation" is always beneficial and useful, even for experienced professionals. • Development enables professionals to more effectively practice their craft. **Therefore, "formation", "professional formation", and "professional development" are more appropriate than "education".**
Initial? Continuing?	• "Initial Professional Formation" is high–level, specialized *preliminary preparation.* It lasts for a defined period and is required to qualify for prestigious professions. • "Continuing Professional Formation" and "Continuing Professional Development" are for the members of a profession, even when highly qualified and experienced. They are ad hoc, periodical and cover important information and developments. **The concept of "Raising Professional Qualifications" is also useful.**

To a certain extent, the specific term we select is not as important as having a common understanding of what that term actually means. In fact, disputes about terminology usually result from a failure to carefully define terms and agree upon their meaning. The above terminology, as it is defined and explained, will be used consistently in this Manual. The terms Trainer and Participant will be capitalized throughout, in order to emphasize their importance and show respect.

D. What is the Training Cycle?

The primary duty of Trainers is to carry out the **Training Cycle**.

The Training Cycle is a regular sequence of steps/stages associated with designing, preparing, delivering, and evaluating training. It is an established methodology that Trainers follow, step by step, and it forms the basis for everything they do.

There are several different iterations of the Training Cycle. They usually follow a basic pattern, with small variations or additions that highlight specific tasks required under the context. A standard and generic format of the Training Cycle, with five stages, is summarized by the acronym "**ADDIE**":

THE TRAINING CYCLE

1. Assess and Analyze Needs

Learning about and consulting the target group, performing Training Needs Assessment (TNA), and identifying the needs or problems to be addressed

2. Define and Design Objectives

Formulating goals, objectives, and Learning Outcomes, planning the seminar, and identifying and outlining/documenting the specific results that are to be achieved through training

3. Develop/Prepare Training

Preparing and organizing the seminar content, Lesson Plans, and Agenda, selecting methodologies and activities, drafting materials, setting up documentation and evaluation systems, making logistical arrangements, setting up the venue, and practicing

4. Deliver Training

Delivering the seminar or course in the most effective and efficient manner, using interactive techniques, and managing time well, with an optimal Learning Environment, and all due attention to practical issues and the needs of Participants

5. Monitor and Evaluate Results

Quality control, tracking and monitoring what has been done, obtaining and utilizing feedback, evaluating achievements, determining what works best and what does not, and making improvements/plans for the future

Another iteration divides the Training Cycle into four stages:

1) Design. This includes Training Needs Assessment, setting objectives, and the formulation of Learning Outcomes.
2) Develop. This includes preparing Lesson Plans, materials, and agendas, selecting methodologies, and arranging logistics.
3) Implement. This includes all aspects of delivering the training.
4) Analyze. This includes assessment of feedback and results, quality control, and future planning.

It is crucial to understand that the Training Cycle is not a one–time event. It is a long–term and continuing process, which repeats itself and builds on previous work. The evaluation of results from one cycle leads into and establishes the foundation for TNA during the following cycle. Training that is performed as a one–off event can still be useful, but it does not achieve long–term benefits, such as the development of a profession. Therefore, the best approach is to treat the Training Cycle like a spring or coil, which progresses forward in regular circular patterns that flow from previous work.

E. What are the FOUR KEY QUESTIONS to Answer via the Training Cycle?

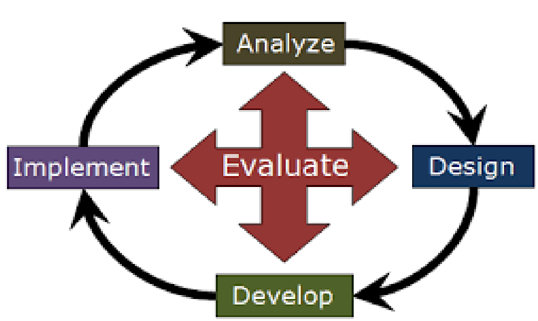
To carry out the Training Cycle, Trainers need to answer FOUR KEY QUESTIONS in a sequential, systematic, and methodical fashion:

1) **Where are we?** (Assessing and analyzing current status, Step One above)
2) **Where should we be?** (Defining objectives, Step Two above)
3) **How will we get there? (**Designing and delivering training, Steps Three and Four above)
4) **How will we know if/when we arrive? (**Monitoring and evaluating results, Step Five above)

Training Needs Assessment helps Trainers answer the first two questions.

The design, preparation, and delivery of seminars is the Trainer's answer to the third question.

Unfortunately, monitoring, evaluation, and assessment are often under–emphasized, leaving the fourth question somewhat neglected. This results in wasted time and energy, and inefficiency. Indeed, training is reduced to a "best faith effort to help" when there is insufficient attention to whether and how well objectives and Learning Outcomes are being met. Furthermore, insufficient attention to the fourth question undermines subsequent training and the next Training Cycle.



To be effective, evaluation needs to be treated systematically as a regular practice, and it has to be fully integrated into all stages of the Training Cycle. As discussed further in Module XV, both the analysis of results and preparations for the next Training Cycle are compromised when evaluation takes place exclusively after delivery, at the end of the Trainer's work, or in a pro forma style.

Good Trainers never lose sight of these four key questions, and never stop trying to answer them. The more often these questions are asked and the better they are answered, the better the training will be.

F. <u>What Skills Do Trainers Require</u>?

In order to prepare and deliver training effectively and in accordance with the Training Cycle, Trainers require a number of important skills and traits. Trainers should have:

- Substantive knowledge regarding their areas of expertise
- Practical knowledge of current/actual issues and challenges in their areas of expertise
- Teaching, didactic, methodological, and pedagogical/andragogical skills. This includes knowledge of training and personal development theories and techniques, and methodologies to apply them. It also includes understanding why and how adults and professionals learn.

- Communication skills. This includes the ability to work with audiences, pose and answer questions, interview, provide and obtain feedback, practice Emotional Intelligence, and deal with difficult Participants. Trainers also need to be able to correctly utilize and interpret non–verbal communication (Body Language).
- Speaking skills, including the ability to make dynamic presentations and public speeches
- Lis/tening skills, and willingness to accept different perspectives
- Ability to work in groups and teams (organize, lead, delegate, motivate, cooperate, share, negotiate, counsel, etc.). This includes facilitating group learning.

- Knowledge of psychology, and the ability to work effectively with all different kinds of people
- Organizational skills, and the ability to handle logistics, facilities, and equipment
- Time Management skills, and the ability to adhere to schedules and agendas
- Information Management skills
- Monitoring and Evaluation skills
- Writing and reporting skills
- Positive personal traits such as enthusiasm, dynamism, congeniality, flexibility, adaptability, ability to work with others, independence, self–reliance, respect for protocol, and sincere desire to help others to help themselves

In addition to these practical skills, Trainers must be able to monitor and assess their own performance. The best way to do this is by constantly asking themselves questions about key parameters, such as:

- Are the Learning Outcomes properly designed and in line with the needs of Participants?
- Are the content and methodologies conducive to the objectives and Learning Outcomes?
- Is the Learning Environment positive and suitable? Are Participants comfortable and inspired?
- Are interactions (between Trainers and Participants and between Participants) sufficiently numerous, cooperative, constructive, businesslike, and focused?
- Is there a proper balance between achieving results and following sound methodology?
- Is there appropriate balance between the interests of individual Participants and the group?
- Is the work on schedule? Is the pace appropriate? Is the agenda being followed?

The fact of the matter is that each training seminar and audience is different. And these differences derive from numerous factors, which are often beyond the direct control of Trainers. Still, good Trainers constantly keep track of what they are doing, how well their planning is being implemented, how effectively they are meeting objectives (Learning Outcomes) and the needs of Participants, and what needs to be done to stay on the right track and move faster on that track.

Reactions from Participants provide valuable guidance in these matters. Especially for Trainers who are skilled in picking up their signals. This include both verbal signals (through active listening) and non–verbal signals (through careful observation).

However, cultural factors and differences in personality may make it difficult to know what Participants really think and want. For this reason, honest self–assessment is an extremely valuable skill for Trainers.

G. Summary and Conclusion

Training is a noble and rewarding endeavor that can make a positive contribution to the lives and work of many people. To do so, it must be a) designed, b) prepared, c) delivered, and d) assessed in an effective and efficient manner, in accordance with applicable best practices. In other words, success depends upon understanding what Trainers do and how they should do it, and on following the stages and principles of the Training Cycle.

During this process, Trainers need to constantly ask and answer four key questions: 1) where are we, 2) where do we want to go, 3) how do we get there, and 4) how will we assess whether and how well we have arrived. Regular attention to the fourth question, which is often overlooked or under–emphasized, is one of the keys to successful training, and to building upon results during subsequent Training Cycles. This is largely because human resources development is a constant process, especially for professionals. Simply stated, the process of professional development can never be considered fully complete.

However, because of the numerous variables involved, training is always a challenge. A large number of positive professional and personal skills and attributes are required, including creativity and adaptability. This obliges Trainers to constantly dedicate themselves to their own development and to the refinement of their skills and techniques.

MODULE III
THE NATURE OF ADULT EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL FORMATION

Learning Outcome: Trainers understand the general principles of adult education and professional formation, and can successfully apply them to their work.

A. Introduction

Adult education is a special discipline. It is much more than presenting information. In fact, “traditional” teaching methods are not always best suited. In order to be effective, Trainers must understand the special principles and practices that are applicable to adult education. In addition, they should appreciate the nature of professional formation for specific target groups.

B. What are the General Principles of Adult Education?

Why is adult education special? Why is it a separate discipline? Here are some general principles:

- Adults learn something because a) they want to learn it, or b) they need to learn it. Note that if learning is obligatory, this fits into the second category.
- Adult learning takes place over time. Adults play an active role in their own learning, so it is a process as well as an event. Adults want Trainers to facilitate/accelerate their learning process.
- Adult learning is cyclical. Adults engage in a continuous process of accessing information, processing it, utilizing it, and reflecting on the results. Adults learn more when all facets of this learning cycle are activated.
- Adult learning is focused. While many adults enjoy learning for the sake of learning, they are unlikely to seek special training for this purpose. When it comes to training, adults usually want to learn what they need to know for specific purposes. Therefore, adults want training to focus on what they consider most relevant and useful, from their own perspective.
- Adult learning is most effective when collective. Adults have experience teaching themselves. However, they derive special benefit from working with colleagues, sharing the learning process, and teaching each other. Adults learn differently and more when they work together.
- Adult learning requires a suitable methodology and environment. Adults are particularly affected by the way learning takes place (methodology) and the ambience (Learning Environment). Trainers need to pay careful attention to both of these issues.
- Adult education is different from traditional teaching.

Teachers choose the subject (or follow a mandatory curriculum). Teachers have students, who are obliged to learn, and who must demonstrate (through tests) that they have learned what the teacher specifies. Students in formal education are generally more passive than adults, and may be obliged to be receptive or tolerant. Adults are not students, and they need to learn in their own way.

Careful consideration of these principles helps Trainers better tailor their work to their target groups.

C. **How do Adults Learn?**

As indicated above, adult learning goes beyond obtaining and memorizing information, particularly when it is work–related. Adults seek training in order to develop special knowledge and skills that help them reach specific goals or handle significant challenges. This is especially the case when adults (or their employers) pay for training, and it takes place during or in relation to their work.

Adult learning and skills development are part of a process. With regard to information, that process involves processing and utilization, in order to generate competence, and make it second nature. With regard to skills, that process involves practice and application. In either case, results need to be assessed, and remedial measures (as appropriate) need to be taken.

In order to apply learning and develop through experience, adults need their training to be based on well–defined Learning Outcomes, and to utilize customized techniques directed towards concrete results.

Depending on the specific subject matter and the actual circumstances, adults can go through seven general stages of problem solving:

THE SEVEN STAGES OF PROBLEM SOLVING		
1	**Awareness**	Awareness of the problem can arise from assessing real life situations, engaging in concrete activities, trying to achieve specific objectives, or analyzing knowledge and skills requirements
2	**Information Gathering**	Information concerning facts, circumstances, or inter–relationships can be accessed through research, consultation, or collaboration
3	**Planning**	This is an initial determination of what measures should be employed to address the problem, situation, or challenge
4	**Preparation**	Before taking action, it may be necessary to generate skills (perhaps through practice or training) and assemble resources and tools
5	**Pre–Implementation**	New knowledge, skills, and/or resources lead to greater appreciation of what needs to be done and how. Analysis can lead to adjustments in approach or attitude. Analysis is deductive (from general to specific) or inductive (from specific to general).
6	**Action**	This involves application of new knowledge, skills, and/or resources to address problems, situations, or challenges
7	**Reflection**	The final stage is evaluation of the results, to see if the approach has been effective. Depending on the conclusions, this leads to either a) continuation of the approach, b) modification of the approach and a return to planning (stage three above), or c) complete re–assessment of the problem (return to stage one above).

To be successful, Trainers (perhaps serving as Facilitators) should employ methodologies that take Participants through as many of these stages as required or possible.

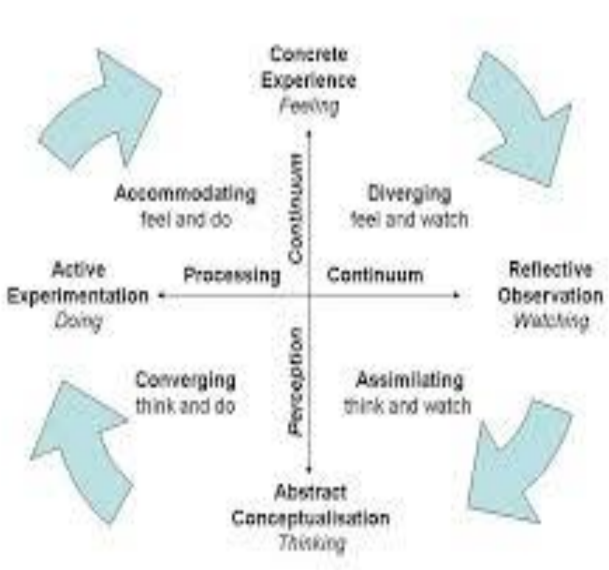
It is interesting to note that the seven stages of problem solving outlined above largely mirror the Training Cycle, discussed above in Module II Section "D". This is because problem solving and training for results are closely related, and involve similar dynamics.

There are many theories and models concerning how learning takes place. It is not practical or necessary to go into them in great detail for present purposes. Instead, brief mention will be made of two prominent paradigms, specifically David Kolb's theory and Neuro–Linguistic Programming. Considerable further information about each of them, and others, is available on the Internet.

David Kolb's experiential learning theory works on two levels: a four–stage cycle of learning and four distinct learning styles. The focus is mainly on internal cognitive learning processes. The four stages of the learning cycle are: concrete learning, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. Learning is most effective when it progresses through the cycle, in order.

1) Concrete Experience – a new experience or situation is encountered, or a previous experience is revisited
2) Reflective Observation – the experience is assessed, with emphasis on inconsistencies between experience and understanding
3) Abstract Conceptualization – the process of reflection creates new ideas or modifies existing perspectives, as part of learning from experience
4) Active Experimentation – the application of new ideas or approaches to the real world, to test their efficacy

Kolb's learning theory sets out four distinct learning styles, which relate to the learning cycle. The basic premise is that people have different characteristics, which lead them to prefer/adopt different learning styles.



Personal preferences are delineated according to two pairs of variables or choices, which can be represented as lines of an axis, with alternative modes at each end. There are different iterations, but usually the east – west axis is called the Processing Continuum, and refers to how people approach a task, and whether they prefer action or reflection. The north–south axis is called the Perception Continuum, and refers to how people respond emotionally to a task, and whether they prefer to think or to feel.

This schematic leads to four different combinations, or learning preferences. They are a consequence of a) innate characteristics like cognitive structure, and b) external factors such as education, social relations, experience, etc.

The four categories are:

1) Diverging (feeling and watching). Sensitive people who accept different perspectives, are interested in people, tend to be imaginative and emotional, like to listen and learn, appreciate the arts, and welcome feedback. They tend to gather information and use their imagination to solve problems, and like brainstorming and participating in Working Groups.
2) Assimilating (thinking and watching). Logical and reflective thinkers, who appreciate sound theories and a concise and organized approach with clear explanations and structured formats. They focus more on ideas and concepts than on people, and are effective in the sciences. They tend to prefer lectures, exploring analytical models, and taking time to think things through.
3) Converging (thinking and doing). Problem solvers, who apply learning to the search for practical applications and solutions to challenging situations. They focus more on technical tasks than social issues or interpersonal relations. They are strong with technology. They tend to prefer demonstrations and simulations, and having a chance to experiment with new ideas and to try out practical applications.
4) Accommodating (feeling and doing). Hands–on people who are attracted to new experiences and challenges, and value/follow intuition as much as logic. They are willing to use information or analytical work or the experience of others, and develop their own analytical or practical approach in order to carry out plans. They tend to be less prevalent in the professions.

Naturally, these general categories overlap, and most people exhibit a multitude of traits.

Neuro–Linguistic Programming (NLP) is a psychological and behavioral approach to thinking, learning, communicating, and personal development. It places great emphasis on the subconscious and the ways that people think and process information. With respect to training and coaching, it distinguishes three modalities for learning: 1) visual, 2) auditory, and 3) kinesthetic (sensory).

Visual learners prefer to see in order to learn. They like pictures, illustrations, diagrams, films, and colorful demonstrations. They benefit from written documents and instructions that are dynamically formatted, and learn less from lectures that are not accompanied by audio–visual aids such as PowerPoint.

Auditory learners prefer to hear in order to learn. They like debates, discussions, audiotapes, interviews, panels, and Working Groups. They do not want excessive reading, and benefit from spoken explanations and instructions. For auditory learners, it is important to keep written documents concise and well–organized.

Kinesthetic learners prefer physical movement and hands–on activities. They like learning via motor skills, particularly using their hands. This includes building things, making models, fixing/arranging items, etc. They dislike passive methodologies based on observation. Kinesthetic learners benefit from demonstrations and any kind of learning by doing exercises.

These three categories show that people learn and process information differently. Therefore, to work more effectively with Participants, it is useful for Trainers to understand how learning takes place, and be able to accommodate different learning styles. This information is particularly helpful for designing and utilizing training methodologies, and creating the most suitable Learning Environment.

Unfortunately, however, most groups contain a mixture of different kinds of learners. This makes it difficult to personalize training modalities. And theories of learning can only go so far. Nonetheless, Trainers can still be attentive to the general characteristics and preferences of their target groups, and the specific makeup of each audience, as they utilize an array of techniques. Naturally, direct experience with a specific target group is usually the most helpful way to determine what works best.

D. How do Adult Learning and Child/Youth Learning Differ?

The following chart summarizes the differences between how adults learn and how children/youth learn. Direct comparison of different parameters is helpful for understanding these differences.

LEARNING STYLE AND PREFERENCES	
CHILDREN/YOUTH (Pedagogy)	**ADULTS (Andragogy)**
Are accustomed to teacher–led learning that is focused on content, which is often pre–selected	Want training to be Participant–oriented and focused on real problems and practical needs
Are expected to accept learning as obligatory	Want to know why they should learn
Accept the agenda as a requirement, generally agree to defer to others concerning learning goals	Want to influence the agenda, prioritization of subjects, and timing and manner of coverage
Customarily accept the validity of information when it is presented by authority figures	Need to validate new information on the basis of their own knowledge and experience
Expect what they learn to be useful in the long–term	Want what they learn to be immediately useful, often in their specific job setting
Are willing to learn for the sake of learning, if material is reasonably interesting	Are likely to question the value of what they are learning, even if it is interesting
Do not fully understand the difference between knowledge and skills	Can obtain knowledge on their own, but are very motivated to develop important skills with others
Place less emphasis on self–understanding and actualization	Regard self–understanding and actualization as highly as learning (are self–motivated)
Limited personal experience to draw upon	Significant personal experience to draw upon
Cannot serve as a major resource, rely heavily on the teacher to contribute expertise	Have significant resources (knowledge and experience) to offer Trainers and other Participants
Do not rely excessively upon others to learn	Benefit greatly from cooperative group learning
Do not require task–oriented learning	Prefer task/experience–oriented learning
Require a teacher who has greater knowledge and can share it	Require a Trainer to facilitate learning and contribute knowledge that compliments their own
Are required to accept the Learning Environment, and are accustomed to obligatory attendance	Are highly reactive to the Learning Environment and level of comfort, and reject coercion
Can be called “students”	Want to be treated as respected “Participants” in an event, not students or trainees

Many of these traditional comparisons are overstated. Depending on their background, age, maturity level, and motivation, many children/youth prefer collective and Participant–centered learning, and are skeptical of authority, just like adults. Indeed, many principles of adult education can and should be applied to children/youth, and there is a definite trend in this direction.

The best approach is to treat these differences as a matter of degree, perhaps derived from the fact that teachers have more authority and power than Trainers, rather than being an inevitable result of inherent differences between people due to their age or status. But in any event, there are definitely distinctions between pedagogy and andragogy, and every target group presents special features that need to be considered, particularly when it comes to training professionals.

E. What Special Principles Apply to Professional Formation?

Professionals are a special category of target group distinguished by a common career or calling and extensive and specialized educational and training requirements. Although they compete with each other on one level, professionals also have an interest in the performance of the collective, and thus the competence and ethical standards of their colleagues.

The defining features of professions include:

a) Specialized education at an approved institution
b) Passing a qualifying exam and/or an internship or apprenticeship process
c) Membership in a representative body, such as a union or association, with a leadership structure
d) Official status recognized through mandatory licensing by a duly approved authority
e) Obligatory continuing education or professional development requirements
f) Collective interests and mutual obligations
g) Deontological/ethical obligations, and
h) Ethical accountability, through the licensing authority and/or the legal system

This last feature deserves special attention. Performance standards are an important and defining feature of professions. They are usually a) set forth in a code of conduct or ethics, b) supervised and enforced through an obligatory oversight regime managed by the licensing authority, and c) sanctioned via established and documented procedures in cases of alleged violations. These procedures can include evidentiary hearings and appeals, subject to the right to due process. Depending upon the profession and jurisdiction, there can even be legal liability, through litigation and the court system.

These ethical and legal obligations create special requirements for training, making it a pre–requisite for continued membership in and exercise of the profession.

Trainers who work with groups of professionals must take account of their special considerations:

- Professionals are interested in "professional formation". Professionals have finished their general education and specialized education. They already have specific knowledge, skills, and experience that are valued by others, and which they use to generate revenue. They know how to teach themselves, and have experience doing so, often under challenging and competitive circumstances (think of lawyers in court). Thus, professionals are self–directed and active learners, who look to training to strengthen their skills and performance. While subject matter presentations are well–received up to a point, professionals are most interested in Trainers who can facilitate their learning and skills development, so they can succeed.

- Professional formation is the art of meeting practical/concrete needs, goals, and challenges. It needs to focus on real world problems and the actual experience of Participants. Therefore, Trainers need to have an excellent understanding of and significant experience with the profession. They must base their work on sound Training Needs Assessment (see Module IV).
- Professional formation is a process. Professions change, and professionals need to continually upgrade their skills in order to serve their clients and stay ahead of the competition.
- Professional tasks demand both intellectual prowess and practical acumen. Professional formation should combine intellectual development and practical application. This is best achieved by varying methodology and technique. For example, Trainers can alternate between short presentations and interactive exercises, and build in concrete examples or case studies.
- Professionals should have significant input into their formation. Professional formation succeeds when target groups help set the agenda and influence the choice of methodologies. Also, professionals should be told in advance what they will learn, and why it is important.
- Trainers should have and demonstrate both substantive expertise and training skills. First and foremost, professionals expect and respect substantive expertise. But their overall experience is greatly diminished by deficiencies in training skills, particularly imprecise Learning Outcomes and suboptimal methodologies.
- Trainers should provide intellectual challenges and encourage debate. Professionals expect Trainers to listen extremely carefully to their input and respect it, and provide opportunities for them to learn from each other. They prefer multiple communication channels to one–way discourses from Trainers, and like to discuss experiences in addition to receiving information.

By following the above principles, Trainers can more effectively meet the needs of professionals.

F. Summary and Conclusion

Trainers who work effectively with adults and professionals can provide highly valuable services. To fulfil their obligations, they need to understand how adults and particularly professionals learn, and how this contrasts with children/youth. This affects all stages of the Training Cycle, including design, preparation, delivery, and evaluation. It is especially relevant for formulating Learning Outcomes, designing/utilizing methodologies, and creating a suitable Learning Environment.

Work with professionals, in particular, requires highly developed didactic skills and significant preparation. It is necessary to understand exactly what constitutes a profession in general, and the particular attributes and requirements of the specific target group.

Professionals need training to help meet challenges, not just obtain information. Performance standards and ethical requirements are particularly critical, and are a recurring theme for their training seminars.

It is important to understand and apply theories of adult learning. However, humans learn in comparable ways, no matter their age or status. And there is no substitute for practical experience with and direct knowledge of the target group.

MODULE IV
TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (TNA)

Learning Outcomes:

1) Trainers understand the nature and importance of Training Needs Assessment (TNA)
2) Trainers are able to evaluate the training requirements for their target group(s)
3) Trainers can utilize TNA to make training as effective as possible

A. Introduction

The objective of training and the first rule is to meet the needs of the Participants. Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is the main tool for determining what those needs are.

TNA is the first stage of the Training Cycle. While it starts a new Training Cycle, it also builds upon previous Training Cycles. The process is cumulative, because Trainers can and must utilize results from their previous work and the previous work of others. And Participants constantly add to what they have already learned and done. In other words, even though training initiatives start with Training Needs Assessment, the overall process is continuous and cumulative for both Trainers and Participants. This is particularly true for in–house training regimes and the formation of professionals.

To perform TNA, it is necessary to determine and compare:

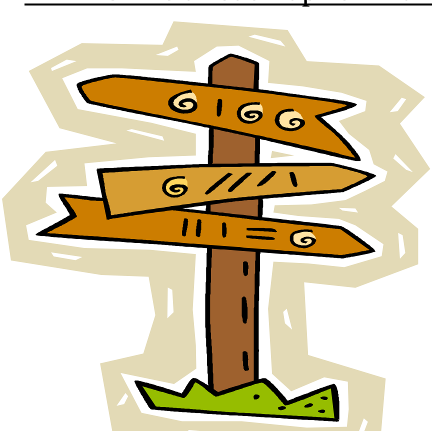
1) The *current situation* (the actual status of the target group)
2) The *goal situation* (where the target group should get to)

TNA can be treated as a diagnosis of the objectives and requirements for training events. Trainers are like physicians, trying to a) determine what is wrong with the patient's health and b) identify ways to improve it. In this sense, TNA is a comparison between what exists and what should be.

B. Why is Training Needs Assessment Important?

TNA is the foundation for training. Only by identifying needs is it possible to determine how to best meet them. TNA must be performed during the design phase, before training is prepared. Devoting extra attention and energy to TNA makes training more effective and efficient. Short–changing TNA reduces the effectiveness of training, and puts Trainers at risk of finding themselves in an uncomfortable position in front of the Participants.

TNA is like a roadmap for Trainers. It is the optimal way to:



- Learn about the current situation/conditions of the target group
- Identify their challenges, problems, and requirements
- Determine the root causes of their problems
- Define the results that should be achieved through training
- Delineate the type(s) of training required (scope and content)
- Start designing the Lesson Plans and methodologies
- Establish baseline data for assessing the results of training
- Develop contacts with the target group, and build rapport

Without this information, Trainers are wandering along a road without signposts.

TNA is also the only way to determine a) if training is necessary in the first place, and b) if so, what other interventions should accompany it. After all, *training is only one of many means to solve problems*. Solutions may be found through a) improved management, b) functional analysis, c) business re–engineering, d) Information Technology, e) on–the–job assistance, f) more personnel, etc. Further, it may be necessary to supplement training with some of these other measures. *The most appropriate combination, balance, and timing of measures can only be determined through TNA.*

TNA is particularly important for professionals. As discussed above in Module III, professionals have special needs, and tend to be sensitive about how and how well those needs are met. But *TNA is more difficult with professionals*, because:

- Professional excellence is more of a process than a goal. Ultimate professional objectives can never be completely met. Humans are imperfect. No matter how good they are, professionals must always strive to be better. Professional excellence can never be achieved "once and for all". Even the best professionals need to keep learning and sometimes make mistakes.
- Professions are dynamic, not static. There are constant changes in a) laws and regulations, b) institutional arrangements, c) policies and procedures, d) technology and equipment, e) personnel/personalities. These changes create a never–ending stream of challenges.

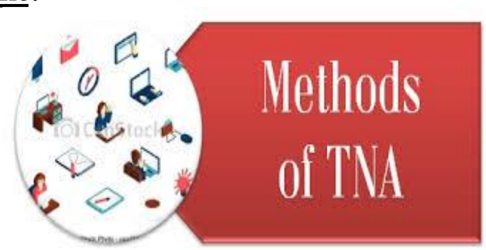
An additional complication arises from the fact that professionals tend to underestimate their need for professional formation. Indeed, they may deny any need, and try to avoid training altogether.

When Trainers successfully perform TNA, they can better *inspire* professionals by:

- Demonstrating the dynamic nature of professional excellence
- Highlighting the lifetime commitment required for developing professional skills
- Showing that professional formation meets aspirations more than it redresses deficiencies
- Showing that even colleagues with less overall experience can contribute
- Clarifying why training should be based on roles (knowledge, skills, and functions) rather than rank (formal position of authority in a hierarchy)
- Illustrating how sharing knowledge strengthens the profession as a whole
- Encouraging Participants to become Trainers and contribute to their profession

Finally, TNA is useful for determining whether Participants require a) professional development (learning about important topics), b) assistance meeting specific or parochial needs (for promotion or advancement), or c) credentialing (degrees, certificates, or licenses).

C. What are the Different Kinds of Training Needs Assessment?



There are many variations of TNA. They can be customized for specific professions or target groups. They can focus on groups, individuals, or institutions. Trainers must be familiar with the most salient forms of TNA, and know how to adapt them to specific circumstances. Generic forms include:

1) Context Analysis. This focuses on the overall situation and objective circumstances. For example, context analysis for legal professionals would look at the justice sector or court system. For context analysis, there is usually a great deal of information from many sources.
2) Performance/Work Analysis of Target Group. This focuses on the specific challenges and requirements for target groups, and how well they meet their responsibilities. Performance

analysis for professionals considers their job duties and necessary skills, and how well they are actually doing. The target group itself is the best place to obtain this information.

3) Client Analysis. This focuses on end users and their experience. For businesses, institutions, and professionals, it includes the recipients of products and services. For example, lawyers always have opinions concerning the training priorities for judges. Indeed, clients and end users are often the optimal place to learn about training needs, but there can be resistance.
4) Audience Analysis. This focuses on the actual Participants in the seminar, and their exact needs, objectives, background, etc. Unfortunately, detailed information about the audience can be difficult to obtain in advance, and sources are limited. But there are ways to address this issue at seminars (see Section "I" below).

A combination of approaches is usually best. The exact combination varies according to the target group, context, and objectives. Therefore, flexibility, adaptability, and perseverance are required.

D. What Questions Should be Answered During Training Needs Assessment?

TNA answers the first two questions of the Training Cycle (discussed in Module II Section "D"):

1) **Where are we?**
2) **Where should we be?**

These answers set the stage for everything that is done by Trainers and at seminars. If Trainers cannot accurately assess the actual situation and establish the goals to be achieved, then it will not be possible to identify Training Gaps and ameliorate them through the achievement of Learning Outcomes, and it will not be possible to successfully carry out the Training Cycle.

E. What are Training Gaps?

Training Gaps are the difference between where we are and where we should be or want to be. They are the distance between the first and second questions posed above. Training Gaps are like an open bridge between the current and optimal conditions. *Effective TNA empowers Trainers to design professional formation that fills Training Gaps and builds bridges towards desired results. Criteria for those results are denominated "indicators".* The first task for Trainers is to identify the Training Gaps. Until there are answers to the first two questions posed above, it is not possible to answer the third or fourth questions, and determine how we can get where we want to go, and how we can determine when and how well we have arrived.

Benjamin Bloom, a pioneer in this field, originally defined three categories of Training Gaps: Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes. Trainers often refer to them as "KSAs". He also defined three distinct educational domains, namely 1) cognitive skills (mental development and knowledge), 2) affective skills (emotional development), and 3) psychomotor or sensory skills (manual or physical development). Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive skills is discussed below in Module V.

There are many different formulations of "KSAs". Some Trainers develop their own.

For present purposes, **we will identify <u>five categories of Training Gaps</u>:**

1) **Knowledge/Information**
2) **Skills**
3) **Experience**
4) **Understanding**
5) **Values**

Experience can be identified as an additional and separate category. Although difficult to provide through training at events, some useful techniques are available, and it is an important element of professional development. Understanding and values are related, but in many respects, they are distinct factors inherent to attitudes. Understanding can be increased through facilitation and mediation. Values (deep seated or long–standing principles and beliefs) are very resistant to change, and require specific approaches and techniques. For purposes of categorizing Training Gaps, it can also be helpful to distinguish **substantive knowledge/skills** related to the subject matter and more general **"soft skills"** related to communication, leadership, problem solving, emotional intelligence, ethics, etc.

F. <u>Why are there Training Gaps</u>?

<u>Training Gaps are a natural characteristic of human development</u>. They result from many different circumstances. The most basic distinction is whether they relate to the individual (subjective), the system (objective), or a combination of both. <u>The primary sources of Training Gaps include</u>:

- *Personal* needs (requirements for handling professional responsibilities)
- *Institutional* needs (objectives and functions of legal persons, organizations, and institutions)
- *Systemic* needs (functions and operations of a sector – legal, banking, insurance, etc.)
- *Societal* needs (policy objectives relating to general welfare)

By finding the sources of Training Gaps through TNA, Trainers can analyze their causes and assess their importance. This makes it possible to prioritize training subjects, and determine how to address them and what kinds of expertise should be provided. Trainers can also identify additional initiatives that should accompany and complement their training, to make it more effective and sustainable.

G. <u>What are the Main Sources of Information for Training Needs Assessment</u>?

TNA can be based on information from many sources, gathered through independent investigation and/or consultations. Information for Context Analysis can be obtained through research and investigation. Performance Analysis is best obtained through observation/analysis based on objective criteria, perhaps supplemented by questionnaires, and can potentially contain confidential information. Client Analysis is obtained from statistics, surveys and interviews. Audience Analysis can be obtained from organizers and at the event. For all of the categories, organizers or sponsors of training are responsible for ensuring that Trainers have all of the information they need to make training effective and meaningful. If such support is not fully adequate, Trainers have no alternative but to do as much as possible at the start of the event (see Section "I" below).

<u>The primary sources of specific information for TNA include</u>:

- <u>Documentation</u>. Background and analytical materials regarding the target group and sector.

- Parties who know the target group. Supervisors, clients, recipients of services, academics, government officials, and civil society organizations can provide solid details about training requirements and how to meet them.
- Other Trainers. Other or previous Trainers can explain how to work with the target group and meet its needs. Information about prior events (subjects and results) is particularly valuable.
- Performance data. This is most useful when the criteria are clear and the data is complete. Performance data can be misleading if there are unidentified variables or external factors.
- Tests and examinations. These are most useful for identifying gaps in knowledge, and designing knowledge–based training.
- Answers to questionnaires. If correctly designed, questionnaires can elicit useful information from a target group, and support statistical analysis. However, the process is time consuming, and there is little flexibility or room for exploring results. Furthermore, there are always limitations inherent in “self–analysis” of deficiencies or training needs.

- Consultations with members of the target group. Interviews are an excellent way to gather in–depth information and generate commitment to training. However, they are labor intensive, difficult to document, and the results may not be fully representative of the target group.

Focus Groups. This involves meetings or group interviews with members of the target group, users of its services, or knowledgeable parties. Focus groups enable Trainers to reach more people than one–on–one interviews. Furthermore, there are benefits from group dynamics, exchanges of information, and interactive feedback. However, if the group is not well managed, some individuals may dominate the encounter, or discussions may get side–tracked. Issues can arise regarding documentation and confidentiality.

- Direct observation. Direct observation is an excellent way to get in touch with reality on the ground, and to identify behaviors that need to be changed. It can involve members of the target group or users of its services. However, it may take a long time to set up and carry out, and can be labor intensive. And it may not shed light on root issues or causes of behavior.

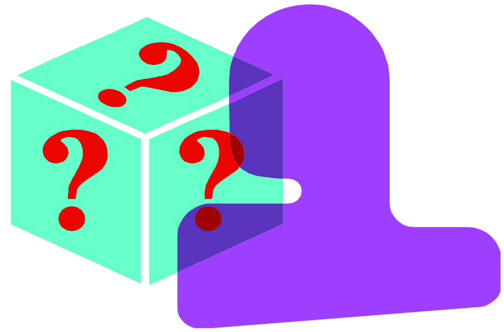
How should Trainers choose between these sources of valuable and important information?

The following factors influence data collection during TNA:

- The amount of time available
- The financial resources available, and the relative cost of different activities
- The Trainer’s location and distance from the target group
- The size of the target group, and its accessibility
- The nature and culture of the target group, and particularly its level of openness
- The possibilities and logistical obstacles for observing and interacting with the target group
- The degree of detail and specificity required

After prioritizing sources of information based on their anticipated value and relevance, Trainers should consider financial and logistical obstacles, and create an action plan for carrying out TNA.

H. <u>What Should Trainers Know About Participants</u>?



As discussed above, <u>TNA is all about getting to know the Participants, and understanding their needs and interests</u>. Clearly, it is a valuable investment of time and energy. The more Trainers know about the Participants, the easier it is to arrange and deliver targeted and effective training. While protocol is important, results are enhanced when answers can be obtained to probing questions, such as the following:

WHAT SHOULD TRAINERS KNOW ABOUT PARTICIPANTS?	
1	What are their specific positions, levels of responsibility, job duties, and challenges?
2	Why are they attending the seminar? Will it help their career? Do they need credentials? Did they choose to attend? Or is attendance compulsory? Were they able to influence the agenda? Are they genuinely interested in the seminar?
3	What kind of regular training program do they have? Have they attended similar events before? Have they dealt with the subject before?
4	What expectations are their supervisors placing on them? What kinds of follow–up or assessment will they face when back at work?
5	Are they missing work for the seminar? Does it count as a working day, or is it time off?
6	Where are they from? Is the location and timing convenient for them? How far do they have to travel? Is there anything special about the training location?
7	What kinds of methodologies and activities do they prefer? What kind of Learning Environment do they require?
8	Are there significant variations in their levels of knowledge and skills?
9	Are there any protocol issues? What level of formality do they prefer?
10	Do they have any predispositions, sensitivities, cultural biases, or personal baggage?
11	Do they have inter–relationships or personal histories which will affect the training?

Trainers may find it helpful to structure TNA by documenting these issues. The following chart presents a sample format for identifying and categorizing information about Participants and determining how to obtain and use information. It can be customized for each training exercise.

INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS FOR TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT			
Key Issues and Factors		**Level of Importance**	**How to Obtain and Utilize Information**
For Participants	**For Trainers**		
Professional Status (position, job description, responsibilities, obstacles, challenges, etc.)			
Training Subjects (knowledge of subjects, experience, approaches, prior training, etc.)			
Motivation (reasons for attending, credentialing, value for work/career, value for personal life, etc.)			
Approach to Learning (preferred methodologies, training materials, Learning Environment, etc.)			
Logistical Issues (Location, facilities/services required, scheduling, agenda, etc.)			
Resources (sponsorship, kinds of support, etc.)			

This kind of information about Participants, and most particularly their levels of knowledge and skills, enables Trainers to:

- Identify and prioritize actual needs, interests, subjects to be covered (content), and thus Learning Outcomes
- Select the most effective methodologies and activities
- Prepare useful materials
- Create a highly favorable Learning Environment
- Establish the appropriate level of difficulty and novelty
- Effectively build upon existing knowledge and skills
- Ensure that training is Participant–centered

Depending on the nature of the Training Gaps, Trainers can choose whether to take a *Deep Approach* (serious consideration of difficult issues, ideas, relationships, and the application of principles, in order to build understanding and change attitudes and values), or a *Surface Approach* (focusing on information dissemination and concepts, in order to enhance knowledge and recognition.

Trainers need to recognize that Participants often assess their priorities differently than they do, and consider gentle measures that encourage them to modify their approach. The following chart can be used to highlight and assess the differences, and decide on means to address and ameliorate them.

PRIORITIZATION OF TRAINING OBJECTIVES			
Training Gap Objective	**Level of Importance**		
	Perception of Trainers	**Perception of Participants**	**Explanation**
Knowledge: a) b)			
Skills: a) b)			
Experience: a) b)			
Understanding: a) b)			
Values: a) b)			

Finally, it is important to carefully consider what is really motivating the Participants. In this context, Trainers can distinguish subjective (personal) and objective (professional) incentives. *Subjective motivations* include intellectual development, personal growth, and self–actualization. *Objective motivations* include professional advancement, titles/credentials, status, meeting requirements (such as continuing professional formation), and enhancing reputation or recognition.

Naturally, each Participant responds to individual motivational paradigms. Nonetheless, Trainers should understand the primary motivations for different target groups and specific Participants, and tailor their training to account for differences.

I. <u>Can Training Needs Assessment be Performed *at* the Seminar</u>?

The previous sections have focused on how to perform TNA *in advance* of the seminar. But what if this is not possible? What if the results are incomplete? What if the actual Participants are not fully representative of the target group? What if some actual Participants have special needs or requests?

<u>**Audience Analysis** is a valuable TNA exercise which can be performed *at* the seminar</u>. Indeed, no matter how much time and attention are devoted to TNA in advance, it is a good idea and best practice to survey actual Participants *at* the event. Circumstances may have changed, or there might be particular priorities. And every group is different. <u>The time to do this is at the start of the seminar</u>.

Of course, it will be too late to change the agenda or materials. But it will still be possible to adjust several aspects of delivery. The allocation of time between subjects can be modified, to focus more on priority issues and de–emphasize others. Additional subjects can be covered, albeit briefly. The methodologies or training approach can be modified. And the information obtained can be put to excellent use, to establish rapport with the Participants and monitor their progress. In short, *information from the actual Participants helps Trainers discover their real needs and achieve more positive results*.

<u>To clarify training needs and better meet Participants' expectations, use **Audience Analysis** to conduct a "mini–TNA" at the start of the seminar</u>. The following procedures are recommended:

1) <u>Identify expectations</u>. Get Participants to state what they expect or hope to receive from the seminar. This can be done as part of the personal introductions, during the opening. If the Participants are doing Introductions by Pairs (see Module XIII Section "E"), this can be part of their presentations. Listen carefully to what is said, and ask follow–up questions.

2) <u>Document expectations</u>. List all of the expectations on a flipchart, or have a Participant or assistant do this for you. Place the name of the person by the expectation if appropriate. If an expectation cannot be met at least in part, explain why (see below) and avoid placing it on the list. Transcribe the information into electronic format at the first suitable opportunity, so you have it for future use.

3) <u>Assess expectations</u>. If an expectation is outside the scope of the seminar or cannot feasibly be met, state this right away, and explain why (as politely as possible). Be realistic and honest, to avoid misunderstanding. Then either a) offer to address the subject separately, outside the seminar or later, or b) indicate how to obtain further information. In other words, explain why the expectation cannot be met, and indicate what the Participant(s) can do about it.

   <u>Be patient when assessing expectations</u>. Don't worry about taking extra time for the process. It generates valuable information that helps Trainers meet objectives. It shows that Trainers are genuinely interested in the Participants, and want to orient the seminar towards actual needs.

4) <u>Use the results during the seminar</u>. To the extent possible, modify delivery to meet Participant expectations. Focus more on areas of interest, while downplaying less salient topics. Modify

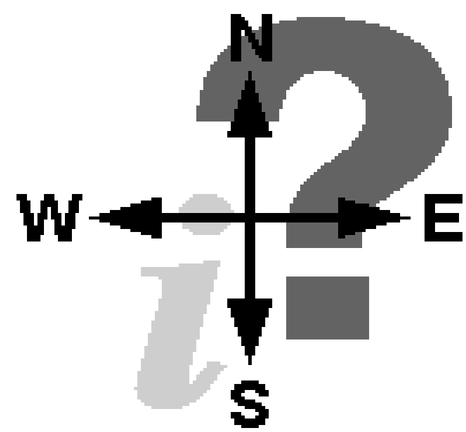
the training approach if appropriate. Also, refer to expectations during the course of the seminar, and take a moment to discuss whether and how they are being met.

5) Use the results during the seminar closing. At the end of the seminar, review how well expectations have been met, using the list. Frankly assess achievements, letting the Participants comment, and graciously accept any shortcomings. If an expectation has only partially been met, try to determine why this is the case. Use this process to convince Participants that the seminar has been successful, and to identify future steps.

6) Use the results for Monitoring and Evaluation. After the seminar, use the list of expectations and the comments provided during the closing to evaluate the results achieved. Prepare conclusions that set the stage for TNA at the start of the subsequent Training Cycle. See Module XV.

The above procedures help Trainers turn a "mini–TNA" at the seminar into an effective tool for making the seminar more valuable for Participants, establishing rapport with them, and identifying what needs to be done in the future.

J. Summary and Conclusion



Training Needs Assessment is like a compass which gathers and processes crucial information for the Training Cycle. It helps Trainers assess the actual situation and decide how to make improvements through effective seminars that meet the needs of Participants. By conducting TNA in a systematic and organized fashion, Trainers can identify Training Gaps, determine what steps are necessary to overcome them, delineate and prioritize their training content, and set the stage for monitoring and evaluation (through the preparation of indicators/criteria for measuring success). In fact, successful TNA is crucial for sound implementation of the rest of the Training Cycle.

But despite best efforts, TNA carried out prior to training seminars can never fully account for inevitable variability in the composition of the group that actually attends. In other words, the needs and expectations of the Participants can diverge from the needs of the target group in general. For this reason, it is an excellent idea to include a mini–TNA at the start of seminars, to match prior analysis with the status of the actual Participants. It is always possible to use this information to make minor adjustments in focus and delivery, document how actual needs and expectations are being met, and evaluate the results of the training as part of the seminar closing.

The key point to remember is that time spent on TNA (both before and at the seminar) is an excellent *investment*. When performed properly, TNA pays large dividends.

MODULE V
LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
FOR TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL FORMATION

Learning Outcome: Trainers can formulate Learning Outcomes for their target groups, and utilize them to better design, prepare, deliver, and evaluate their training.

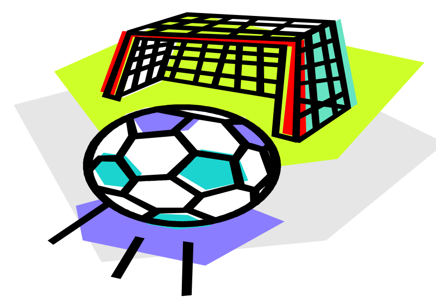
A. Introduction

Learning Outcomes are Specific Objectives and results that Trainers work to achieve. They are a concrete and practical answer to the second of the four questions addressed by the Training Cycle, namely: "**where should we be?**" Sometimes they are called Learning Objectives, but Learning Outcomes is preferable. "Objectives" are goals, whereas "outcomes" are actual/concrete results.

Learning Outcomes are usually only one part of the answer. Learning Outcomes are comparable to *Specific Objectives*. *Specific Objectives are a partial contribution to achieving Overall Objectives, which are full answers to the second question, taking into account the big picture and long–term.* Overall Objectives cannot normally be achieved through a single seminar or training initiative.

Learning Outcomes are determined through TNA, which identifies the ways to bridge Training Gaps. Everything done at training events and covered in materials should help achieve Learning Outcomes. For this reason, every module in this Manual starts with at least one Learning Outcome.

Learning Outcomes are:



- The goal of training
- The concrete benefits for Participants
- Based on and responsive to Training Gaps identified by TNA
- The structure for Seminar Plans and Lesson Plans
- Guidance for the substance of training and methodologies
- Guidance for the content for training materials
- Conceptualized and formulated as "Participants can…" or "Participants will be able to…"
- Time–oriented (capable of completion during an allotted time frame, at or after the seminar)

Good Trainers constantly focus on their Learning Outcomes, and make them the centerpiece of every stage of the Training Cycle. Good Trainers understand that the correct identification and precise formulation of Learning Outcomes is a pre–requisite for effectively performing every aspect of their duties. Good Trainers share and use their Learning Outcomes regularly, in order to guide others and improve results.

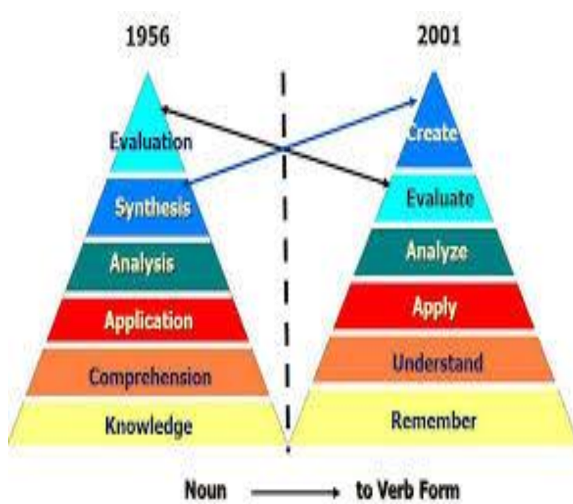
B. What are the Principal Categories of Learning Outcomes?

Learning Outcomes correspond to training "**KSAs**". We will divide Learning Outcomes into five general categories: Knowledge, Skills, Experience, Understanding, and Values. But these categories can overlap occasionally, and there are multiple variations within them. Much depends on the subject matter and the needs of Participants. The following chart categorizes different Learning Outcomes:

LEARNING OUTCOMES		
1	**Passive Knowledge**	Factual or intellectual knowledge for background or general purposes, generally unrelated to a specific task. Can be achieved through listening, reading, and memorizing. Involves recognition skills.
2	**Active Knowledge**	Information for actual/specific tasks, which sets the stage for performing them. It is most functional when accessible, applicable, and subject to verbalization.
3	**Analytical/ Cognitive Skills**	Mental activities such as reasoning, classifying, strategizing, problem solving, and distinguishing circumstances or events. In contrast to passive or active knowledge, cognitive skills involve managed thinking, critical analysis, and justifying positions through the correct application of principles and rules.
4	**Practical Skills**	Tasks and activities, handling concrete situations and problems. Skills are built through practice, and retained through regular use due to necessity.
5	**Teamwork Skills**	Ability to work with others and in groups, to understand and achieve collective goals. Teambuilding exercises are often included in seminars to improve operations of departments, companies, and institutions (particularly at retreats).
6	**Managerial Skills**	Ability to organize business practices and resources to achieve results. This includes human resources, financial resources, information resources, time, etc.
7	**Planning**	Capacity to define objectives, see the big picture, know what to do and when.
8	**Experience**	Familiarity and practice which help handle situations and address problems.
9	**Under–standing**	Ability to comprehend situations and behavior, appreciate what is taking place and why, and put ones–self in the position of others.
10	**Values**	Personal belief structures, references for choices. Changing values and mental processes by raising consciousness alters behavior and responses to situations.

Bloom created a hierarchy of the ordering of cognitive skills, which is widely used as a learning tool in many disciplines. It was first published in 1956, and modified in 2001. There are a number of different iterations. This taxonomy serves as a classification of Learning Outcomes, which can be applied in any training activity. It is usually constructed in the form of a pyramid, with the more challenging cognitive disciplines at the top. The pyramid normally has six categories/stages:

1) Remember. Originally knowledge. Memorization of facts, recall of data or information, learning of formulas.
2) Understand. Originally comprehension. Interpretation, classification, differentiation, finding meaning.
3) Apply. Originally application. Using concepts in new situations, use information in a new manner, selecting designs, using formulas to problem solve.
4) Analyze. Originally analysis. Identifying steps in a process or elements of a system, determining the origin of problems, take information apart
5) Evaluate. Originally Synthesis. Critically examine information and make judgments.
6) Create. Originally evaluate. Produce novel/original work. Design new processes/solutions. Patent. Create art.



This differentiation of Learning Outcome can be applied to most subjects and target groups.

C. How are Learning Outcomes Formulated?

Soundly structured Learning Outcomes have three main components:

THE THREE COMPONENTS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES			
1	WHO	=	The *target group*
2	WILL DO WHAT	=	The *skill or behavior*
3	UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES (How, When, etc.)	=	The *conditions*

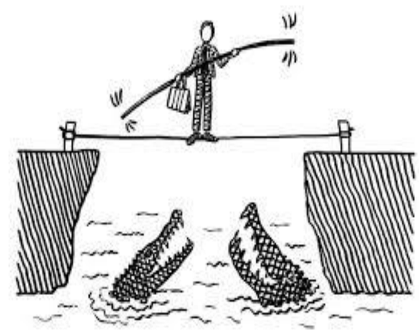
Use the following formula:

The [target group] will be able to [perform an action] under [specific circumstances]

WHO
(Target Group)

WILL DO WHAT
(Skill or Behavior)

UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES
(How, Where, When)



For example:

- The Participants in this seminar (Human Resources Managers) will be able to prepare an accurate and comprehensive job description for all new employees
- The Participants in this seminar (Human Resources Managers) will know how to publish and publicize job announcements, in compliance with all applicable regulations

The time element for achieving the Learning Outcome should be clear. If it is not apparent from the context, it can be specified at the beginning:

- *By the end of the seminar*, Participants will know how to…
- *By the end of the fourth quarter of the calendar year*, Participants will have achieved…
- *After completion of this course*, Participants will be licensed to serve as official mediators

If appropriate add a fourth part to the equation, indicating quantity or degree (how well). This is particularly the case when results are measurable, or involve percentages, time elements, etc.

- At the end of this training, Participants will be able to answer customer telephone inquiries with an *eighty percent accuracy rate* and *an average call duration below five minutes*
- After this seminar, Participants will be able to process at least *thirty customer orders per working day*
- By completing this two–day training course, Participants will meet their continuing legal education requirement of *twelve class hours* for the current calendar year.

All of these examples comply with the first and most important rule for Learning Outcomes:

THE GOLDEN RULE OF LEARNING OUTCOMES:

A sound Learning Outcome should be one sentence, no more.
And it should be a concise, succinct, and precise sentence.

When we understand something well, we can state it succinctly.

When a Learning Outcome needs more than one sentence, or is too long, this indicates that it is actually two Learning Outcomes combined, and/or that it is best separated into two parts.

Leonardo da Vinci said: "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."
Albert Einstein said: "If you can't explain something simply, you don't understand it well."
C. W. Ceram said: "Genius is the ability to reduce the complicated to the simple."

In addition, it is important to comply with these corollary rules:

* Make Learning Outcomes clear and grammatically correct
* Make Learning Outcomes inspirational and motivational for the Participants
* Draft Learning Outcomes with a focus on achievement and evaluating results
* Keep in mind that clearly defining the goal is an excellent start towards meeting it

D. How are Learning Outcomes Prepared?

The best overall approach is to treat Learning Outcomes as a bridge that overcomes Training Gaps, and leads us from where we are to where we should be or want to be. The Trainer serves as a guide, leading Participants on the path of progress.

The following strategies and practices apply to the preparation of Learning Outcomes:

1) Learning Outcomes should be based on Training Needs Assessment

- Learning Outcomes are interventions designed to address needs identified through TNA
- Learning Outcomes bridge Training Gaps, which can only be identified through TNA
- Learning Outcomes which accurately correspond to the results of TNA are more likely to achieve results and be valuable for the target group

2) Learning Outcomes should be designated early, and used to prepare the training

- It is appropriate to start preparing Learning Outcomes as soon as there are concrete results from Training Needs Assessment
- The preparation of Learning Outcomes should flow naturally from assessment of the competencies and requirements of the target group

- Learning Outcomes are the first step in preparing Seminar Plans, Lesson Plans, agendas, and materials, and for selecting optimal training methodologies
- Learning Outcomes enable Trainers to communicate and consult. As soon as they are formulated, they can be shared with other Trainers and parties who are knowledgeable about the target group, in order to gather feedback. They can be used to obtain advice from representatives of the target group. This gives them a role in training design, and a sense of ownership of the process. Such consultation is most useful during the design phase of the Training Cycle, before preparation gets fully underway.

3) Learning Outcomes should be SMART

The **S.M.A.R.T. acronym** is a good tool for remembering the key elements of a sound Learning Outcome. Specifically, it should be:

- ***S**pecific* (detailed, focused, precise, concise, a single objective)
- ***M**easurable* (capable of assessment and verification)
- ***A**ttainable/**A**chievable* (manageable, and within the control of the Trainer to realize)
- ***R**elevant* (Realistic and Results–Oriented for the target group)
- ***T**ime – Oriented* (designed for a specific, concrete, and defined time period)

4) Learning Outcomes should fit into the big picture

- Learning Outcomes should focus on *Specific Objectives*, but contribute to *Overall Objectives*
- Learning Outcomes should reflect training needs for both substantive matters and **"soft skills"** relating to communication, leadership, problem solving, emotional intelligence, ethics, etc.
- Learning Outcomes should complement each other, and take advantage of synergies and linkages, to generate a comprehensive training initiative
- Learning Outcomes should be placed in the correct order, so that they build upon each other, effectively develop skills in a progressive fashion, and maintain the interest of Participants

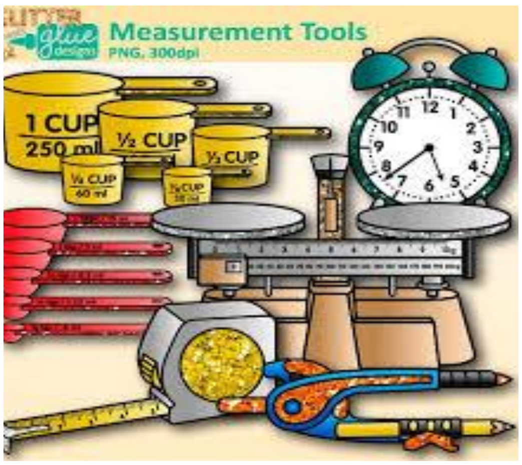
5) Multiple Learning Outcomes should be prioritized and placed in the optimal order

Learning Outcomes can be categorized into re *three general levels of importance*:

1) What **MUST** be achieved. These are *imperative* objectives that absolutely have to be realized completely through the training. They could relate to mandatory qualifications for a profession, indispensable skills for a business, etc.
2) What **SHOULD** be achieved. These are *important* objectives that deserve major effort, but perhaps do not absolutely need to be completely realized. They could relate to useful knowledge or skills that are developed over the long–term rather than a single training.
3) What **COULD** be achieved. These are *ancillary* objectives, ideally to be advanced, depending upon constraints. But they cannot detract/distract from higher priorities. They could relate to beneficial but not crucial knowledge or skills.

6) <u>Learning Outcomes should be measurable</u>

Precise measurement is often difficult. Some skills (and especially soft skills) are general in nature and not easily quantified. Statistics are not always available, representative, or completely accurate. Many extraneous factors can affect the results of training, particularly in complex operational environments. And results from training are often manifested over time. For example, improved job performance can only be ascertained well after Participants return to work. Nonetheless, measurement is extremely important. And <u>the process of measurement begins with the formulation of sound Learning Outcomes that incorporate or facilitate the identification of relevant parameters (indicators)</u>.



- Learning Outcomes which are specific and well–formulated enable and facilitate monitoring and evaluation of results
- The most objective way to measure results from training is through "before and after" assessments. For example, results from intake and final examinations based on the Learning Outcomes can be compared. But professionals are reluctant to take examinations, even anonymously. And examinations measure knowledge, not skills enhancement or practical application.
- Evaluation Questionnaires based on Learning Outcomes can provide important information concerning results, even if they are more subjective than empirical.

For more on this subject, see Module XV.

7) <u>Learning Outcomes should be carefully drafted, with action verbs and specific applications</u>

The following chart lists action verbs that correspond to select categories of Learning Outcome:

Learning Outcome	Action Verb	Application
Knowledge	Define, recognize, delineate, state, provide, identify, list, write, recall, calculate, record, transcribe, label, locate	Information, such as facts, figures, dates, locations, conditions, rules, regulations, characteristics, trends
Analytical/ Cognitive Skills	Assess, distinguish, categorize, classify, compare, contrast, differentiate, relate, examine, review, interpret, investigate	Circumstances, situations, relationships, causes, consequences, events
Evaluation Skills	Judge, appraise, ascertain, justify, defend, challenge, determine, prioritize, value, assess, rate, score	Situations, products, strategies, outputs, performance, activities, proposals, tenders, workplans
Practical/ Application Skills	Organize, plan, design, construct, create, demonstrate, combine, employ, predict, instruct, schedule, compute, use, perform, implement, solve, arrange, summarize	Achievement of results, such as plans, initiatives, activities, arrangements, re–organizations, solutions
Experience	Be familiar with, know how to handle, be aware of, be prepared for	Dealing with situations, being able to apply knowledge and understanding
Understanding and Values	Explain, describe, discuss, express, acknowledge, appreciate, indicate, illustrate, formulate, empathize	Problem solving, dealing with situations, ideas, concepts, principles

Some action verbs can apply to different categories. This is because the categories are not entirely mutually exclusive, and their differentiation depends partially on the context. Therefore, the chart of action verbs above should be considered illustrative, and should not be applied in an overly rigid or deterministic fashion.

<u>Various combinations of action verbs can be used to make Learning Outcomes more dynamic and descriptive</u>:

For example:

Combinations of action verbs:

"Compare and contrast"
"Design and implement"
"Formulate and utilize"
"Understand and employ'
"Assess and document"
"Distinguish and explain"
"Prepare and disseminate"
"Select and apply"

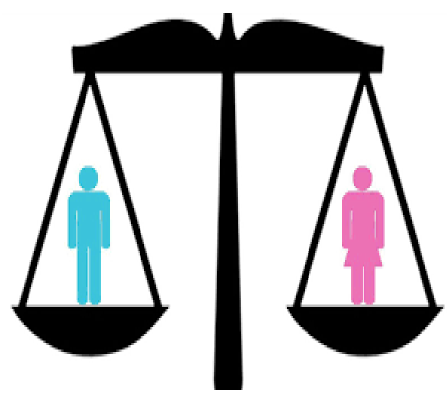
The chart and list above demonstrate how selecting and combining action verbs is a key element of designing effective Learning Outcomes.

8) <u>Learning Outcomes should be gender–neutral and non–discriminatory</u>

Learning Outcomes should promote and ensure gender neutrality and/or gender equality, and be non–discriminatory. This is not a common issue, since Learning Outcomes are normally general and do not distinguish between members of the target group. Attention is warranted, nonetheless, since any sign of insensitivity or unfairness can severely undermine the training and the credibility of the Trainer.

There are several ways that discrimination can be manifested:

1) <u>Wording</u>. This involves the insensitive use of pronouns and possessives. Issues are language specific. In English, pay attention to he/she, him/her, his/hers, them/their/one's, etc.
2) <u>Categorization</u>. This can occur with regard to the gender insensitive terminology for professions (policeman or police officer, fireman or firefighter, chairman or chairperson, salesman or salesperson, foreman or supervisor), etc.
3) <u>Substance</u>. This involves policies or procedures which have a disproportional effect on one gender or minority



The obligations of Trainers in this regard are real, but they depend upon the specific socio–economic, legal, and linguistic context.

E. <u>How are Learning Outcomes Used</u>?

<u>Learning Outcomes are tools that help Trainers define and achieve results</u>. Good trainers choose the right tools to achieve the desired results. Accordingly,

Which tool is best for the job?

- Learning Outcomes guide training design and preparation
- Learning Outcomes structure training modules, and provide guidance for materials, methodologies, and delivery
- Learning Outcomes are a point of reference during consultations with seminar organizers and target groups
- Learning Outcomes orient training when they are clarified at the start, and guide training by serving as a point of reference throughout delivery
- Learning Outcomes structure *assessment* at the end of the seminar and preparations for the next Training Cycle, as the frame of reference for defining Key Performance Indicators
- Learning Outcomes direct Monitoring and Evaluation

The importance of Learning Outcomes for identifying and designing the optimal methodologies for delivering training cannot be overstated. Training methodologies are covered in greater detail in Module IX.

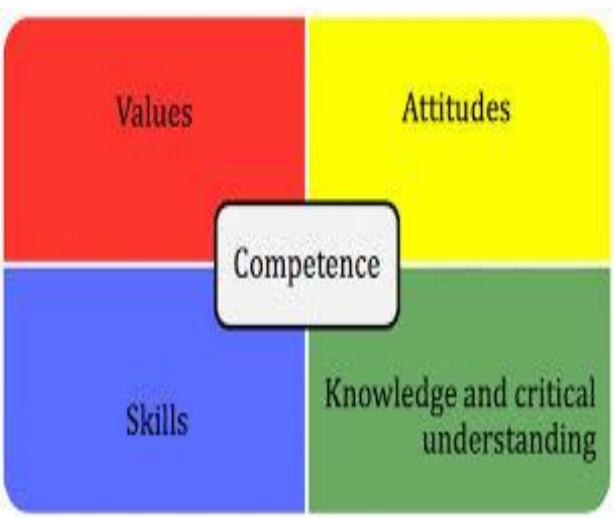
For present purposes we can summarize a few examples:

- Knowledge is enhanced by providing information
- Skills and Experience are gained through witnessing and carrying out activities
- Understanding and values are changed by being placed in a situation, actually or vicariously

Thus, for example, one cannot change values through lectures that provide information. A role–play or a video with interviews would be better suited to creating feelings that change values.

F. <u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

Sound Learning Outcomes based upon precise Training Need Assessment and the correct identification of Training Gaps enable Trainers to effectively perform all aspects of the Training Cycle, including design, preparation, delivery, and evaluation.



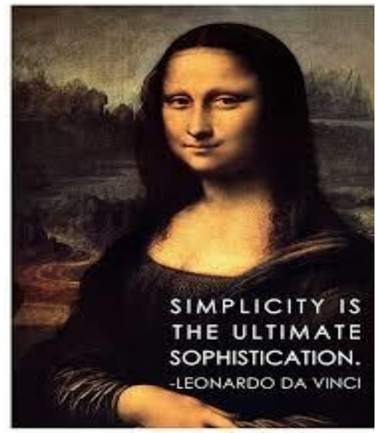
It is very important for Trainers to understand the major categories of Learning Outcomes, how to distinguish them, and the different techniques which apply to their utilization. Systems for differentiation vary slightly.

For present purposes, <u>we are identifying five different categories: Knowledge, Skills, Experience, Values, and Attitudes</u>. The rules for formulating Learning Outcomes, however, do not vary on the basis of category.

<u>Learning Outcomes should indicate who will be able to do what, and under which circumstances</u>.

By stating the Learning Outcome in *one concise and precise sentence*, Trainers demonstrate clear thinking and exceptional ability to specify their goals. They also make it easier to inform others about the goals, and motivate them to collaborate.

It is worth repeating what Leonardo da Vinci said: "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

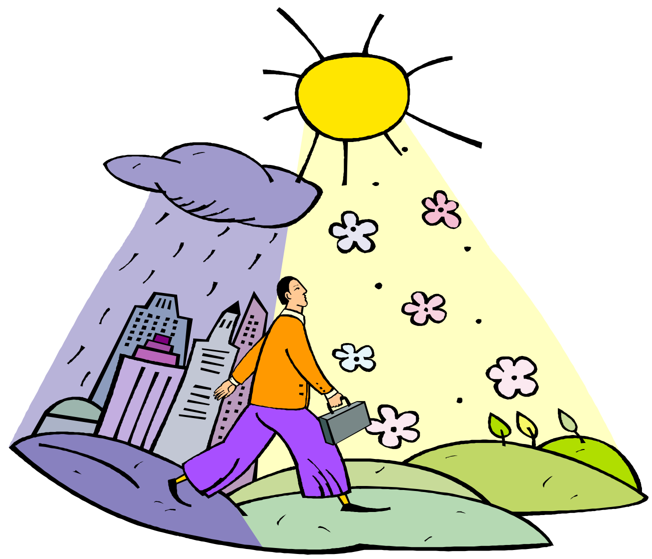


Learning Outcomes are the fulcrum for successful training, because they set the objectives and results to be achieved. They are the key to meeting requirements identified in the Training Needs Assessment, and thereby overcoming Training Gaps.

If properly delineated, Learning Outcomes create a master plan for what to do and achieve at the seminar.

They provide structure and guide preparations, including Seminar Plans, Lesson Plans, materials, and the design of methodologies. They form the basis for Monitoring and Evaluation, as the yardstick for measuring success and determining how well the needs of Participants are being met. Finally, they set the stage for the next Training Cycle.

In short, Learning Outcomes are the main tool Trainers use to get Participants where they should be, need to be, or want to be.



<u>MODULE VI</u>
<u>SEMINAR PLANS, LESSON PLANS, AGENDAS, & EVENT DESCRIPTIONS</u>

<u>Learning Outcome</u>: Trainers can prepare and use accurate and informative Seminar Plans, Lesson Plans, Public Agendas, and Event Descriptions, and thereby optimally structure and facilitate the delivery of excellent training.

A. <u>Introduction</u>

Once the Training Needs Assessment is complete and the Learning Outcomes have been formulated, Trainers are ready to design and prepare the seminar. <u>Seminar Plans</u> provide a comprehensive *overview* of what will be done and how long it will take, in order to deliver organized training and achieve specified results. <u>Lesson Plans</u> provide the *details* concerning exactly what will be done when and how it will be done, in order to realize each Learning Outcome. Lesson Plans are the detailed "game plans" for delivery. Lesson Plans should be clearly delineated according to Learning Outcomes. They are divided into distinct sections, to correspond directly with Learning Outcomes, and keep things organized. Finally, basic information from the Seminar Plan and Lesson Plans is synthesized into a concise <u>Public Agenda</u>, for distribution to the organizers, Participants, and other relevant parties, and is used to formulate an Event Description to publicize the seminar and inform key parties.

Many Trainers and training programs use the term "**module**" to describe the key elements or building blocks of seminars. For example, this Manual is divided into sections, denominated as modules, each of which deals with a separate and specific subject. It should be noted that each module in this Manual contains and is defined by one or sometimes more than one Learning Outcome. In this sense, <u>modules are subject headings</u>, and they function as the fundamental/major topics covered in training. However, the term module is sometimes used in different ways, and this can cause confusion and undermine the organization of training. <u>The most straightforward and productive approach is to divide Lesson Plans into modules which are dedicated to one or more Learning Outcomes</u>.

Armed with the Seminar Plan, Lesson Plan, and Public Agenda, Trainers can deliver well–structured and highly organized training.

B. <u>What are Seminar Plans</u>?

Seminar Plans are like a master plan that combines all of the modules and Learning Outcomes for the seminar, in the most appropriate order, and indicate their approximate expected duration. Learning Outcomes are grouped together into modules, which are the principle building blocks for the seminar. In this sense, modules are like subject headings, or chapters in a book, and they are important for seeing/understanding the big picture.

<u>Seminar Plans that list modules or Learning Outcomes are comparable to the major bones of a skeleton, upon which everything else in the body is placed</u>. They serve the same purpose as the frame and support walls of a house. They should fit on one page, like a blueprint, but do not require nearly as much detail.

The structure, length, and contents of Seminar Plans depend upon several factors that are specific to each training initiative. This includes the number and nature of the modules and Learning Outcomes, how many different methodologies/activities are required, the duration of the seminar (days and working periods), and Participants' existing knowledge and skills, work habits, and learning culture.

As a valuable organizational and planning tool, Seminar Plans need to be methodically and meticulously formulated. This ensures that they can be implemented correctly, and can facilitate communication and cooperation amongst all of the parties involved in seminar delivery. It also makes them an excellent investment in time. Unfortunately, errors in Seminar Plans, whether they concern content, order, timing, or the assignment of tasks, end up being greatly magnified during training delivery.

C. How are Seminar Plans Prepared and Used?

As indicated above, Seminar Plans serve as an overview of the seminar, and a general roadmap for Trainers, which tie everything together in a summary. Therefore, they are comprehensive yet concise, and must be highly accurate. Ideally, a Seminar Plan can fit on one page. Here is a model format for a two–day event with four modules:

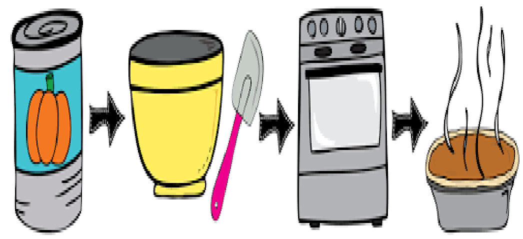
<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">MODEL SEMINAR PLAN</th></tr>
<tr><th>DAY</th><th>MODULES
(SUBJECT
(HEADINGS)</th><th>LEARNING
OUTCOMES</th><th>LESSON PLAN
(BY LEARNING OUTCOME)
(ACTIVITIES, MATERIALS)</th><th>TOTAL
TIME
REQUIRED</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">ONE</td><td colspan="3">Seminar Opening</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">I</td><td>A</td><td>1) Presentation 2) Role Play 3) Question & Answer session</td><td>60 Minutes</td></tr>
<tr><td>B</td><td>1) Handout 2) Working Groups
3) Interviews 4) Debriefing</td><td>75 Minutes</td></tr>
<tr><td>C</td><td>1, 2, 3</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">II</td><td>D</td><td>1, 2, 3, 4</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>E</td><td>1, 2</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">TWO</td><td>III</td><td>F</td><td>1, 2, 3</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">IV</td><td>G</td><td>1, 2, 3, 4</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>H</td><td>1, 2</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Seminar Closing</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

The steps for preparing a Seminar Plan are relatively straightforward:

1) Finalize and list the Learning Outcomes. Make sure that the list is comprehensive. Perform an overview to make sure that no Learning Outcome is excessively broad, or should be broken down into more manageable units. If a Learning Outcome requires too many methodologies or activities in the Seminar Plan, this is an indication that it is a hybrid.

2) Arrange and prioritize the Learning Outcomes into the most logical sequence. This can be based on:

– The natural order of information
– The steps in a process
– The cumulative nature of topics
– Chronological Order
– Categories
– General to specific
– Basic to advanced
– Well–known to less–known
– Tools needed to design solutions



3) Determine how much time each Learning Outcome requires or deserves. This involves balancing priorities and determining the relative amounts of attention necessary for different Learning Outcomes. The objective is to optimally allocate the total amount of available time.

4) Summarize the methodologies, activities, and materials which will be required to realize each Learning Outcome. This helps complete the Seminar Plan and establishes parameters for the Lesson Plan(s).

5) Group the Learning Outcomes into modules. This builds the framework for the Seminar Plan.

6) Review the results. Make sure that the Seminar Plan is logical, consistent, and correct. Share it with the organizers, a colleague, or a trusted representative of the target group for feedback.

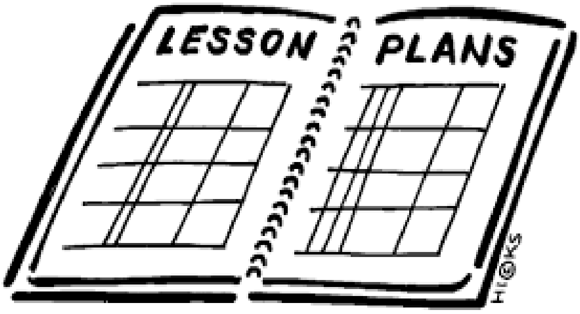
It is possible and acceptable to include ancillary subjects, which may be covered if time permits. Following the typology previously set forth for Learning Outcomes, this means considering what *could* be done, after taking care of what *must* be done and then what *should* be done. In order to indicate priority and distinguish categories on the Seminar Plan, different fonts or color codes can be used.

As can be seen from the above, the Seminar Plan is the Trainer's most important overall management tool, and it is the key to controlling the delivery of training. It helps ensure that a) all subjects are covered, b) the appropriate order is followed, c) the correct amount of time is spent on each subject, and d) the optimal methodologies for implementation are identified. It also sets the stage for preparation of the Lesson Plan(s) and the Public Agenda. Finally, it is a best practice to review the Seminar Plan during training, at least at the end of each day of a multi–day seminar, in order to be sure that things are on–track, and make any adjustments which might be required.

At first glance, the Model Seminar Plan above and description of how it is formulated may seem complicated. In fact, Seminar Plans are often not prepared at all, in lieu of a more detailed "Internal Agenda". This might be sufficient for experienced Trainers, short seminars focusing on specific topics, or seminars where different Trainers each have a single module dedicated to Learning Outcomes under their own remit (and are responsible for a Lesson Plan covering only their own respective contribution to the seminar). For a multiple day seminar covering several topics delivered by one Trainer, however, Seminar Plans can be very helpful. And Trainers can always control the level of complexity of their Seminar Plans, depending upon the overall objectives and the specific nature of the training initiative.

D. What are Lesson Plans?

Lesson Plans cover the content of the training. They provide details concerning exactly what will be done to achieve each Learning Outcome. Whereas Seminar Plans can be considered primarily *prescriptive* (content–oriented, focusing on achieving objectives), Lesson Plans are more *descriptive* (process–oriented, focusing on *how* things will be done). Therefore, they are crucial for promoting the smooth delivery of training.



Lesson Plans should provide all necessary details concerning exactly what will take place at the seminar, when, and for how long. This includes presentations, other categories of methodologies and activities, the use of materials and handouts, etc. Details should extend to the content of presentations, the scenarios for role plays, the questions for discussions or interviews, the parameters for simulations, etc. Important notations should be made concerning necessary supplies, logistical requirements, etc.

E. <u>How are Lesson Plans Prepared and Used</u>?

Lesson Plans come in many varieties, and some Trainers create their own models. The level of detail varies greatly. Experienced Trainers discussing a subject they know well might be satisfied with a general outline, indicating topics and basic timing. Trainers having less experience with a subject should spell out methodologies and activities in greater detail.

Specificity regarding timing also varies greatly. Some Trainers use Lesson Plans as a time management tool. They may even include notations on how to accelerate a methodology if time is short, or what topics/activities can be skipped if necessary.

In any event, <u>effective Lesson Plans focus upon and amplify the fourth and fifth columns of the Seminar Plan</u>, covering content and timing.

<u>This results in what amounts to a detailed Internal Agenda for the seminar</u>. Agendas are discussed in Section "F" below. In the current context, and for practical purposes, it is useful to distinguish between <u>two different kinds of agenda</u>:

1) **<u>The Public Agenda</u>**. This summarizes the content and timing, providing basic/limited outline information which Participants and organizers truly need to know. It covers time periods and subject headings. It is a best practice to include short biographies of the Trainer(s).

2) **<u>The Internal Agenda</u>**. This is actually the detailed Lesson Plan, with specific information concerning exactly what will be done, when, by whom, and the anticipated time requirements. It is for the exclusive use of the Trainer or Trainers, and perhaps assistants who are supporting delivery. A detailed Internal Agenda is extremely valuable, and probably indispensable when there are multiple Trainers.

For example, the Lesson Plan for one Learning Outcome may consist of a presentation, a role play, a Working Group activity, reporting on results to the plenary, and a general discussion with Questions & Answers. The time requirements for each activity should be determined (or at least estimated). Following this example, the presentation may require twenty minutes, the role play ten minutes, the Working Group activity thirty minutes, and the reporting and discussion thirty minutes. This totals ninety minutes, and corresponds nicely to one Working Period. Therefore, it will fit nicely in the

Seminar Plan and Public Agenda. Once this general outline for achieving the Learning Outcome is complete, it is possible to expand the Lesson Plan to cover details concerning delivery, including the content of the presentation and role play, instructions for the Working Groups, questions for discussion, etc. It is also possible to highlight required materials/supplies, and timing issues.

It is helpful to format Lesson Plans as a chart. The following chart details the example above:

LESSON PLAN FOR ONE LEARNING OUTCOME	
TIME	**ACTIVITY AND REQUIREMENTS**
From – To	**<u>Presentation</u>** on [subject]. The presentation utilizes a PowerPoint. It covers [list of topics]. Include an update on recent developments [list]. The PowerPoint needs to be printed in advance, so copies can be given to Participants at the beginning. Include spaces for Participants to add their notes. A computer and projector are required. The PowerPoint should be on a USB drive. If time is short, skip [subject]. **<u>Role Play</u>.** Leave up to ten minutes for showing the video of the role play.
From – To	**<u>Working Group Exercise</u>.** Three Working Groups with different tasks [describe tasks]. Tasks are documented in a handout with instructions. Working Groups are formed by [describe selection process]. Working Groups select their own Moderators and Rapporteurs. Each Working Group fills out a different questionnaire, covering [list of subjects]. For this exercise, we need two breakout rooms, each equipped with supplies.
From – To	**<u>Reporting Back to the Plenary</u>.** Three Moderators report the results from their Working Groups. A designated assistant records key points on a Flip Chart. Moderators have a chance to ask each other questions. **<u>Group Discussion</u>.** Conducted in a moderated Q & A format. Topical questions include [list of questions]. Questions can be solicited via Taking Notes if required (see Module IX). Results are tabulated and transcribed during the subsequent coffee break, and made available to Participants in electronic format.

It is important to consider linking the process (delivery) as well as the substance of different Learning Outcomes. Variations in methodology maintain interest and enhance the range of possible interactions. For example: each presentation can use a slightly different format from the previous one, or Working Partnerships could replace Working Groups, or an Interview could be used to structure Questions & Answers (see Module IX). These details should be planned in advance and covered in the Lesson Plan.

Well–formulated and comprehensive Lesson Plans in the format of a detailed Internal Agenda serve as a consolidated reference for Trainers covering how to do their work and achieve Learning Outcomes. They complement and expand upon the Seminar Plan, and ensure that Trainers know exactly what to do, when to do it, how to do it, and what materials and resources are required.

<u>F. What are Public Agendas?</u>

<u>Public Agendas (Formal Agendas) are a very basic summary of the Seminar Plan, and serve as a seminar schedule. They are distributed to all interested parties in advance or at the event</u>. The main purpose of Public Agendas is to inform Participants and other parties about what will happen when, so they know *what they will be doing* (generally) and *where they need to be* (exactly). They also help organizers with planning/timing for equipment, refreshments, etc. For this purpose, Public Agendas must be realistic and accurate, so they can be followed.

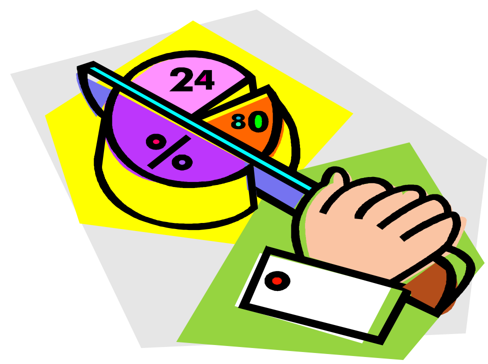
It is advisable not to provide too much substantive information in Public Agendas. A comprehensive description of activities or details concerning their exact duration are unnecessary. Furthermore, excessive details can restrict the Trainer's flexibility, and needlessly distract the Participants.

- Overly detailed scheduling information can create unrealistic expectations about the timing for each subject. Participants may notice or focus on even slight deviations.
- Setting the time requirements for Learning Outcomes is an art as much as a science. Especially for participatory exercises. Trainers should not preclude minor deviations from the schedule to emphasize activities which are successful and shorten those which are not.
- Sometimes it is advantageous to slightly modify the order of subjects. Participants might direct the discussion towards a related subject planned for later. If the Public Agenda is too detailed, it might undermine the natural flow of the work, or cause Participants to comment.

Therefore, Public Agendas should provide the basic information that Participants and organizers require, along with key timelines, while maintaining the required degree of flexibility.

G. <u>How are Public Agendas Prepared and Used</u>?

In order to convert the Seminar Plan into a Public Agenda for distribution, it is necessary to understand the basic principles of time management and utilization at events.



<u>Seminar days should be divided into **four** Working Periods</u>. This is necessitated by the length of a working day, basic human nature, and the way people learn. Participants should not be obliged to work much more than ninety minutes without a break. Therefore, a full–day seminar of seven–eight hours is logically and necessarily divided into four separate Working Periods. Each should last at least sixty minutes, and preferably no more than ninety. The exact timing depends upon the activities as set forth in the Lesson Plan.

<u>It is not necessary to have exact alignment between Learning Outcomes and Working Periods</u>. One Working Period can potentially cover two or even three Learning Outcomes. And one Learning Outcome might require two or even more Working Periods. However, it is important not to disrupt the flow of work. The timing of Working Periods on the Public Agenda may need to be adjusted slightly to make sure that breaks do not disrupt activities.

<u>The four Working Periods during a seminar day should be separated by three breaks</u>:

- <u>One Lunch break</u>. Normally, lunch breaks are forty–five to sixty minutes. Thirty minutes may suffice if the lunch is informal, such as self–service right on the premises, and if Participants agree. One hour is the customary and most appropriate length.
- <u>Two coffee breaks</u>, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Coffee breaks require fifteen to thirty minutes. However, if time is limited, or if an activity must be completed before lunch or the end of the day, it may be acceptable to serve refreshments and snacks at or during the seminar. Refreshments can also be served to Working Groups.

<u>Long Working Periods can include a "mini–break" or "comfort rest" of five to ten minutes</u>. Their timing is discretionary, and up to the Trainer. If there are mini–breaks, Participants need to understand that they are distinct from regular coffee breaks. Mini–breaks are not indicated on the Public Agenda.

It is also considerate to serve basic refreshments during registration or upon arrival. This makes Participants feel welcome and comfortable, and allows them to get acquainted with each other.

Here is a standard Public Agenda for one day of a live and in–person event with four Working Periods:

MODEL ONE DAY PUBLIC AGENDA FOR A <u>LIVE</u> SEMINAR	
09:00 – 09:30	Registration and refreshments [Only on the first day of a multi–day seminar]
09:30 – 09:45	Seminar Opening [first day] or Review and Introduction [subsequent days]
09:45 – 11:00	Description of First Working Period
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 12:30	Description of Second Working Period
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:00	Description of Third Working Period
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee Break
15:30 – 16:30	Description of Fourth Working Period
16:30 – 17:00	Wrap–up or Seminar Closing

The length of Working Periods for live and in–person events can be adjusted slightly to reflect the time required for Learning Outcomes or activities, the most suitable starting and finishing times of the seminar, registration, opening and closing formalities, breaks, and logistical requirements.

On–line training often follows this schedule, but it is different from in–person events. Many of the tools and techniques which make live events more dynamic and interactive are not available or much less practical. This is of particular concern when a Learning Outcome goes beyond information provision, and requires interaction or joint activities. Considering the limited attention span for on–line training via a computer, it may be advisable to approach the timing based upon “academic hours”.

A possible Public Agenda for on–line virtual training could be as follows:

MODEL ONE DAY PUBLIC AGENDA FOR A <u>VIRTUAL</u> SEMINAR	
Working Periods	Breaks
10:00 – 10:45: Description (Opening and Introduction)	10:45 – 11:00
11:00 – 11:45: Description	11:45 – 12:00
12:00 – 13:00: Description	13:00 – 14:00 (Lunch)
14:00 – 14:45: Description	14:45 – 15:00
15:00 – 15:45: Description	15:45 – 16:00
16:00 – 16:45: Description (Closing and Future Planning)	END

This Public Agenda is simple and straightforward. It provides six working periods, instead of the standard four used at in–person events. Accordingly, there are five breaks, instead of three. Working periods are limited to forty–five minutes (with one exception). This respects the more limited attention span associated with computer–based training. And this Public Agenda is easy to accept and keep track of, since it has a repetitive and consistent schedule, with each of the six working periods starting on the hour. A consistent approach promotes compliance. But its rigidity can interfere with the flow.

Remember that the Public Agenda can only be fully finalized after the Seminar Plan or Lesson Plan, which lists the modules or Learning Outcomes, based on Training Needs Assessment.

Therefore, as a final step before dissemination, Trainers can verify the accuracy of their planning by carefully comparing the Seminar Plan or Lesson Plan to the Public Agenda. Successful delivery is much more likely when all aspects and documentation of seminar planning are harmonized.

Since Public Agendas serve as the master schedule for the seminar, they need to be made available *in advance* to organizers and those engaged in delivery or logistics (such as assistants and caterers). Participants can receive it when they arrive on the first day.

Please note that for the remainder of this Manual, the term "agenda" will be used to designate the "Public Agenda", and the term "Lesson Plan" will be used to designate the Internal Agenda.

H. What are Event Descriptions, and How are they Used?

Event Descriptions are concise documents which provide key details about a training seminar. They are extremely useful for informing sponsors, organizers, and potential Participants. They also serve general public relations purposes, and can generate interest in training events. Event Descriptions can be included in promotional brochures, placed on websites, or transmitted directly to potential Participants. They can also be included in the curricula of training institutions, particularly those which serve professionals.

The following format can be used for Event Descriptions:

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
I	Title of Event: [be succinct and descriptive]
II	Content of Event and Identity of Presenters: a) The event covers… [List main subjects, identify select key topics or modules] b) The event is delivered by… [List main presenters, summarize their qualifications]
III	Who should attend and why: a) The event is for… [Describe target audience] b) The Objectives and Learning Outcomes are… c) Participants will benefit by… d) Requirements for participating are… [Identify any pre–requisites for attending]
IV	Logistical Details: a) The event will take place on/from… [Indicate timing and duration of event] b) The event will take place at… [Indicate location of event]
V	Documents for the Event: a) Syllabus: [Describe materials that will be utilized, list select references] b) Materials provided: [Indicate what if any materials will be provided]
VI	Recognition: [Does the event provide any accreditation? Will there be a certificate?]
VII	Conclusion: [The event is important because… Don't miss it because…]

Some themes may not apply. For example, Event Descriptions for training events may not require a syllabus. On the other hand, circumstances can make some themes indispensable. For example, Event Descriptions for mandatory courses must clarify the form of recognition or certification.

<u>Event Descriptions help ensure that a) the right people attend, and b) the wrong people do not attend</u>. Both results are important for promoting the "quality" of the audience, and creating an appropriate Learning Environment for those who are taking the event seriously.

Finally, Trainers can use Event Descriptions to highlight the professional services that they offer, as part of their "portfolio". Good Event Descriptions enhance the prestige and success of Trainers, as well as the quality of their training events.

I. <u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

Seminar Plans are the master document for training seminars. They guide overall organization and delivery. Lesson Plans (detailed Internal Agendas) link Learning Outcomes to what will actually be done at the seminar. They help Trainers plan, arrange, and deliver activities which use optimal methodologies to meet training objectives. In addition to what will be done, they indicate how it will be done, when it will be done, and how long it will take. This makes Lesson Plans into a detailed schedule. Accordingly, they must be carefully formulated and logically formatted.

Public Agendas provide basic information about the seminar, including the modules that will be covered and the timing of breaks. They can also present short biographies of the Trainer(s). Their main purpose is to guide organizers and Participants, so that they know how their seminar day will be spent, and where they need to be at any given time.

Event Descriptions are useful public relations documents that generate publicity, inform the target group, and build interest. They are particularly helpful for a) attracting the right people and encouraging them to attend, and b) discouraging the wrong people from attending. This helps Trainers assemble the most suitable audience, and create an optimal Learning Environment.

Together, these documents organize and structure seminars. They are organizational and content management tools that enable Trainers to do exactly what they set out to do, namely best meet the needs of Participants, and use their limited time most efficiently.

Naturally, Trainers can tailor their approach, design, and use of these tools to their exact needs and the specific circumstances of the training. However, as a general rule, Trainers who prepare and use these tools correctly are much more likely to succeed. Preparation may be time–consuming, and even sometimes tedious. But it is an excellent investment, and almost always pays off with more organized and fruitful events, and better results.

MODULE VII
SEMINAR MATERIALS

Learning Outcome: Trainers can prepare high–quality seminar materials that successfully realize Learning Outcomes, and can use them effectively.

A. Introduction

Seminar Participants expect and are entitled to receive materials covering the subject matter, for their personal and future use. Ideally, seminar materials should be a welcome addition to any library. They should be in an attractive and user–friendly format, and have continuing relevance (so Participants have good reason to use them later, and want to do so).

The optimal content and format of materials depends upon a) the subjects being covered, b) the nature and objectives of the seminar, c) the training methodologies being utilized, d) the background and needs of the Participants, and e) practical (budgetary and logistical) constraints. It is up to Trainers to consider and take account of all of these parameters, and design and prepare the best possible materials.

The most important point to remember is that while materials are the basis for what is done at the seminar, training must go much further. Participants can always read materials on their own, and in a much more comfortable place than the seminar room! Therefore, Trainers must take full advantage of the opportunity for live interpersonal exchanges, and collective growth. Naturally, seminars rely upon background information and utilize materials. But in no event should seminars serve as a setting to cover in person the information or materials which are being provided in hard copy or printed form.

B. What Should Seminar Materials Contain?

Seminar materials should provide Participants with solid information concerning the subject(s) being covered, and be valuable for future reference. Accordingly, they should be as comprehensive and detailed as possible, and appropriate under the circumstances.

- Original materials prepared by Trainers are very desirable for Participants. They may be articles, commentaries, copies of PowerPoint presentations, etc. Participants can be disappointed if they only receive reference materials that they can obtain independently. Moreover, this might raise questions about the qualifications and experience of the Trainer.
- Reference materials (laws, manuals, procedural guidelines, cases, published articles, etc.) should be provided whenever they help Participants understand the subject, or if it is useful to have them consolidated in one place. Reference materials can be organized into appendices (with labels or color codes), or they can be bound separately if too voluminous. Anything required at the seminar needs to be printed and distributed. In addition, Participants always appreciate soft (electronic) copies, which are very convenient for future use, and not costly.
- Case studies, role plays, worksheets, and other kinds of documents used for exercises at the seminar should only be included in the materials if advance access is not counterproductive. This is usually not the case, so the best practice is to hand them out at the appropriate time.
- The agenda can be placed at the front of the materials to make it accessible to Participants.
- If the identity of Participants is certain, and if it is appropriate, a List of Participants can be included. However, a list of invitees, with names of absent people and without later arrivals, is not a good idea. It is both over–inclusive and under–inclusive, and confuses Participants when

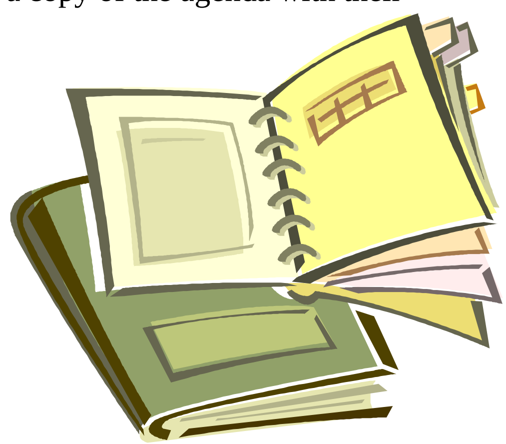
they try to identify colleagues. It is preferable to provide a final and accurate List of Participants, based on registration, during or at the end of the seminar.

- Sometimes it is possible for Trainers to use "<u>off the shelf" materials</u> that are professionally prepared and available for purchase. This is better than "reinventing the wheel". However, it is very important to determine exactly what is being purchased, what limitations are imposed by copyrights, whether there are restrictions on use or re–use, and the kinds of support which will be provided. In addition, "off the shelf" materials should be customized, to the extent possile. Time should be taken to enhance relevance, remove sections that are not applicable, add specific and relevant examples, etc. Handing out someone else's work without taking the time to customize it reduces its usefulness, appears unprofessional, and may raise copyright issues.

C. <u>What is the Best Format for Seminar Materials</u>?

<u>Seminar materials should be very carefully and accurately organized and formatted. Outlining them is essential</u>. This is a time–consuming process, which cannot be left to the last minute.

- Materials should start with a cover page indicating the name of the seminar (subject), Trainer (author), sponsor, date(s), and location.
- The cover page (and other pages, if required) should contain any appropriate logos, headers, footers, acknowledgments, and disclaimers (according to protocol).
- The cover page should be followed by a table of contents with sections and page numbers.
- As mentioned above, it is helpful for Participants to have a copy of the agenda with their materials, either before or after the table of contents.



- Materials should be divided into sections, one for each module or Learning Outcome. Sections can begin with an introduction or description of what is covered, state the Learning Outcome, and end with a conclusion.
- If professional printing is an option, use dividers, tabs on the edges of pages, or color coding to identify and facilitate access to different sections and subjects.
- Reference materials should follow original materials as appendices, or be placed in a separate volume.
- All pages should be numbered. If numbered by section, be sure to indicate the section (A–1, B–1, C–1, etc.).
- Further identifying information can be placed in headers and footers.
- Design and layout should be user–friendly. Ample margins, spaces, page breaks, and line breaks enhance readability. Charts and drawings are always welcome, preferably not split across pages. The liberal use of bullet points and dashes in outline format helps retention. Seminar materials are often page after page of thick text in paragraph form. This is difficult and tiring to read, reduces recall, and makes it harder to locate specific items.
- Lettering should be varied and have visual impact, to facilitate reading and increase retention. **Bold type**, <u>underlining</u>, USING ALL CAPITALS, *italics*, and larger font are ways to generate emphasis and provide structure, and direct readers to priority information.
- If materials are in color, then different color schemes can be used to separate sections, supply emphasis, and enhance visual appeal. Certain color combinations (such as black text with red background) make information stand out. Other combinations (such as yellow text with a blue background) are hard to see.
- Spaces can be left for making notes (particularly for PowerPoint presentations).

Well–formatted materials, following the principles listed above, contribute to the success of the seminar. They are more likely to be useful for the Participants, more likely to be used by the Participants, and more likely to support the learning process.

D. How Long/Voluminous Should Seminar Materials Be?

There are no absolute rules concerning the length of seminar materials. It depends on their nature, intended use, and the requirements of the audience. Some kinds of materials (such as legal texts and analytical works) tend to be long by nature. Sometimes it is possible to keep the materials short, by focusing on case studies and PowerPoint presentations. Generally speaking, materials should be as long as necessary, but no longer, and never "padded" (to impress through their length).

One of the best skills Trainers can master is how to prepare **short original** documents. Participants are more likely to read a short document, and thus more likely to learn from it. *It is better to put ten good points in a two–page document that gets attention and is promptly read by nearly everyone, than to write an excellent and comprehensive ten–page document that impresses people as they put it on a shelf to read "later".* This principle is also applicable to the business world. Never produce a treatise if an executive summary will suffice.

As Truman Capote said: "I believe more in the scissors than I do in the pencil."

As W. Somerset Maugham said: "Stick to the point, and cut whenever you can."

As Beatrix Potter said: "The shorter and the plainer the better."

As Hans Hofmann said: "The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak."

As William Strunk said: "A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, and a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts." Indeed, we could add that a page should have no un–necessary paragraphs, and a document should have no un–necessary sections.

As William Shakespeare said: "Brevity is the soul of wit".

In addition to making materials organized and concise, Trainers should devote significant time and energy to editing**.** If we expect others to read our documents, we should make them as "polished" as possible. This means proof–reading every sentence, preferably multiple times, *making sure that everything is right, and that everything is in the right place*. This is a key indicator of professionalism and courtesy. According to Nathaniel Hawthorne: "Easy reading is damned hard writing."

Mark Twain cogently expressed the significant time and effort required to make documents concise and precise (following the lead of Blaise Pascal). At the end of a long letter, he wrote: "I apologize for such a long letter, but I didn't have time to write a short one."

E. **<u>When Should Seminar Materials be Distributed</u>?**

Seminar materials can be distributed in advance, if this is logistically manageable and appropriate. Advance dissemination shows that the Trainer is prepared and respects the Participants. Background materials are most suitable. However, it may be challenging to identify and reach all of the Participants in advance. Support from the organizers is necessary, and some might still be missed. So, there must be extra copies at the event anyway. Obviously, Participants need advance copies of anything that they are expected to review prior to the event.

As mentioned above, materials that form the basis of activities which will be carried out spontaneously (such as role plays) should not be provided in advance. Homework assignments during the seminar should be shared at the appropriate time. In the final analysis, decisions regarding what to include in the materials and when to distribute them depend on circumstances and planning.

Materials which require translation should be sent to translators well in advance. Leave ample time for proofreading, formatting, and finalization. **<u>The best way to schedule multiple tasks in order to meet a deadline is by working *backwards* from the final result</u>**. To engage in ***<u>reverse planning</u>***, start by listing the final deadline on a calendar. Then note the previous activity and its date, based on the time required, and then the next previous activity with its time requirement, up to the first step. This process establishes exactly *what* must be done and *when* it must be started and completed. If the timeline/list of activities is complete and the required time periods for each action are accurate, then this planning technique is virtually fool–proof.

Even if materials are distributed in advance, be sure to bring extra copies to the seminar. Some Participants may have been left off the distribution list, or they may have registered at the last minute. Sometimes Participants forget their copy, or want extras for themselves or colleagues who could not manage to attend. It is always better to have too many copies than too few.

<u>The general practice is to hand out all or most of the materials at the start of the seminar</u>. If materials are handed out in advance, Trainers are likely to face a situation where some Participants have read them (and know the answers and end up bored at the seminar), while most Participants have not read them (and are embarrassed and annoyed with their better–prepared peers). Furthermore, if Trainers hand out materials at the seminar, some Participants will read instead of paying attention.

Therefore, some Trainers choose to present information for the first time at the seminar, and help Participants think things through, waiting until the end of the event to distribute the materials. This way, materials are used exclusively for later reference, and to solidify learning. The final decision, naturally, is a judgment call for Trainers.

F. **<u>How Should Seminar Materials be Utilized</u>?**

It is very beneficial to use and refer to materials during the seminar. This demonstrates their value, gets Participants familiar with them, and increases the chances that they will be used in the future.

What techniques can Trainers rely upon to make the materials an active part of the seminar?

- Introduce and describe the materials at the seminar opening.
- Show and refer to the materials regularly.
- Get Participants familiar with the materials. When discussing subjects, indicate where they are covered. If Participants do not need to take notes because a point is covered in the materials, tell them so and indicate where.
- Read short passages, quotes, or rules from the materials.
- Get Participants to read or comment on items in the materials.
- Get Participants to take notes in the materials (by leaving blank spaces). This also helps Participants follow presentations.
- Include exercises in the materials, and do them. Individual work followed by group discussions is a great way to use materials.
- Advertise the materials. Explain the advantages of pursuing topics through further study of the materials.

The more Participants use materials and refer to them during the seminar, the more likely they are to become familiar with them, appreciate their value, and put them to further use.

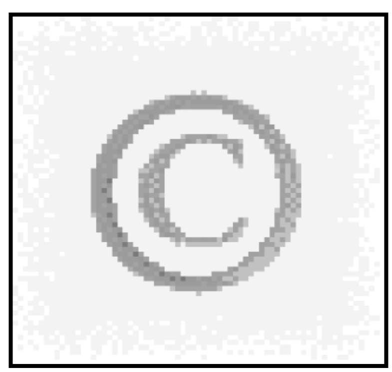
G. <u>Should Seminar Materials be Updated</u>?

Materials should be kept updated, to the maximum extent possible. They should reflect developments in the subject matter, and corrections/suggestions arising from each use. Some Trainers never stop working on their materials, since it is always possible to make them better. In order to ensure proper updating, materials should always be dated, and computer files should have names or dates which reflect modifications. Obviously, it is not possible/practical to update printed materials once they have been distributed. To address this situation, Trainers can place updated versions on a website or other platform, or provide them by email, and advise Participants how to gain access.

H. <u>What About Copyrights and Intellectual Property Rights</u>?

The internet, social media, desktop publishing, the cloud, and widespread use of data transmission and storage devices have dramatically affected copyrights and the use of intellectual property. Meanwhile, copyright laws and the procedures for enforcing them have remained relatively constant.

Therefore:



- Protect original work with copyrights
- Secure an ISBN number whenever possible
- Check whether copyrights belong to institutions which provide funding or remuneration. This is often the case when consultants work on projects financed by third parties.
- Format materials to discourage or complicate improper use
- Place identifying information on each page of materials, in a "header" or "footer". It can include a) the name of the author, b) the name, date, or location of the seminar, and/or c) the name of the sponsors.
- Take steps to protect unauthorized dissemination of materials at seminars and elsewhere

- Be careful about placing materials on websites, and check policies regarding downloads
- Be sure to read contracts and written agreements carefully before signing

When in doubt, consult an expert or lawyer. When it comes to legal matters, an ounce of prevention is always worth a pound of cure.

I. Summary and Conclusion

Seminar Participants expect and are entitled to valuable materials which provide them with the information they need, in a succinct, organized, edited, and user–friendly format. Materials should be designed and organized so that their content is clear and accessible, at the seminar and beyond.

The timing of dissemination must be considered carefully by the Trainer. Whether in advance, at the start of the seminar, or at the end of the seminar, each has advantages and disadvantages. If materials are available at the seminar, they should be put to frequent and constructive use, so Participants get to know them, and understand their practicality.

It is important to remember that the primary advantage of live events is direct communication between Trainers and Participants. Therefore, the materials should always be seen as a launching pad, point of reference, or supplemental tool, which helps the live activities achieve more. Trainers can take advantage of the electronic revolution to manage information dissemination, facilitate use, and keep materials updated. However, they must also consider the challenges that this poses for protecting their work and respecting intellectual property rights.

Above all, sound organization of the content and perfectionism regarding the format should be the rule. These makes seminar materials valuable, practical, well–organized, concise, precise, and user–friendly.

MODULE VIII
THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Learning Outcome: Trainers understand and appreciate the nature and importance of the Learning Environment, and can establish a positive Learning Environment for the Participants at their seminars.

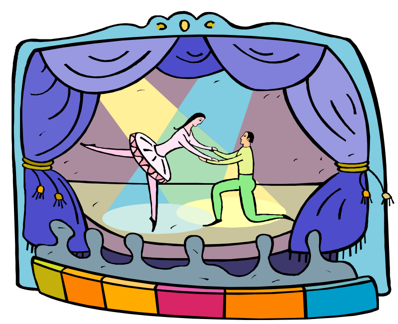
A. Introduction

A positive Learning Environment is a pre–requisite for delivering successful seminars. As pointed out in Module III, adult learning is greatly affected by the conditions and ambience where it takes place. Trainers have primary and ultimate responsibility for creating and shaping the Learning Environment, even though other parties play a major role. This is an area where Trainers must take charge, and do so in a timely fashion.

Two separate aspects of the Learning Environment can be identified. While the traditional focus is on logistical features, many substantive features of Trainer delivery are also a significant factor.

Logistical features include physical factors, such as a) room layout, b) types of tables chairs and their arrangement, c) lighting, temperature, and ventilation, d) sound system, and e) facilities. Other aspects of hospitality, such as meals and refreshments and the timing of breaks, can also be included.






Unfortunately, the Trainer's ability to influence logistical matters is variable, and may be quite limited.

Substantive features relating to delivery include a) organization of the work, b) methodologies and exercises employed, c) level of interactivity, d) quality and use of training materials, e) handling of Questions & Answers, and f) Trainer communication techniques (everything from learning the names of Participants to effective use of Body Language). All of these procedural aspects of the Learning Environment need to be addressed, since any shortcomings are sure to be noticed and felt.

Generally speaking, Trainers are predominantly responsible for these procedural matters, since they are the "front person" for the event (particularly in the eyes of Participants).

B. <u>What are the General Requirements for Creating a Positive Learning Environment</u>?

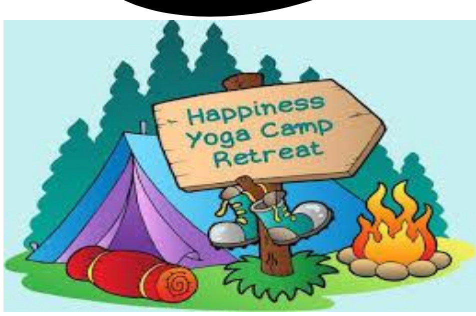
The following general principles are important for creating a positive Learning Environment:

1) Trainers should treat Participants as if they were hosts welcoming guests to their house. Good hosts genuinely care about the comfort and safety of guests, and how they spend their time.
2) Trainers have to take the lead in creating a positive Learning Environment. If anything goes wrong, it is the Trainer up in front of Participants looking bad, no matter who is responsible.
3) Advance planning is crucial. Foresight prevents problems from arising in the first place.
4) Preparations should include regular correspondence with the organizers, advance inspections of training facilities, and early arrival at the seminar. See Module XIII for further details.
5) Trainers have only one chance to make a good first impression. So, it is important to start out right with the Participants, even before the seminar begins. The setting is what they notice and experience first. Initial interactions with the Trainer are also extremely salient.
6) Logistics deserve extra attention. Make sure everything is in working order.
7) The substantive content and delivery of the training, including teaching skills and sound use of methodologies, helps Trainers establish and maintain a positive Learning Environment.
8) <u>The Learning Environment must be safe to be comfortable</u>. Pay strict attention to emergency procedures, the location of exits, and other safety issues (see Module XIII Section "C"). Accidents can and do happen, and the consequences can be extremely severe. <u>Safety first</u>!
9) Consider and attend to every detail. Assuming something is in order is tantamount to inviting an unwelcome surprise at any time.

C. <u>What are the Key LOGISTICAL Features of a Positive Learning Environment</u>?

Trainers need to attend to numerous aspects of the Learning Environment relating to logistics:

1) **<u>Location</u>**. The training location must be convenient and appropriate. The three main possibilities are: the workplace, a specialized institution, or a commercial location (hotel or conference facility).



Work facilities are most convenient, least costly, and save transportation time. And Participants are less likely to cancel attendance completely if a small but important work task surfaces.

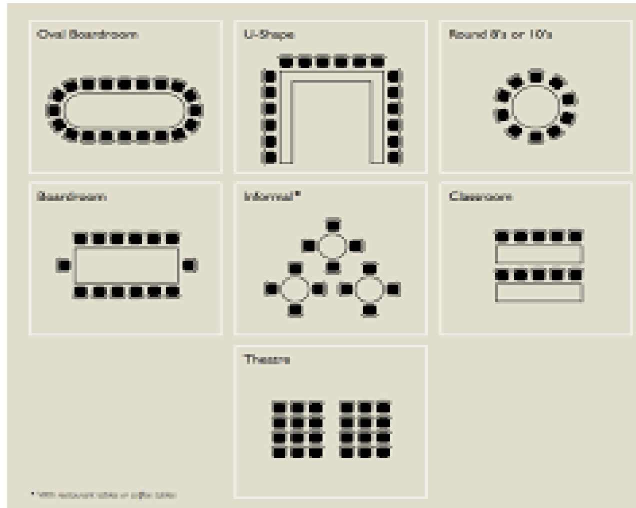
However, it is usually preferable to hold seminars away from the workplace. This enables and requires Participants to focus on the seminar, and reduces the chances they will go in and out or remain at their desk for prolonged periods of time.

Specialized institutions often have good facilities, and can be less expensive than commercial settings.

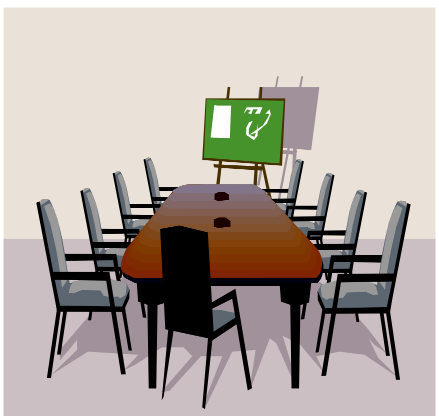
Some types of seminars (such as management training, team building, and personal development) must be held at a retreat, far away from the workplace, in order to be effective. This is because total attention and full participation are requisite.

2) __Facilities and layout__. Physical conditions are very important for success and comfort. The first question concerns the structure and layout of the facilities.

The three main possibilities are: 1) theatre style (in rows), 2) a single table (square, rectangular, round, or U–shaped), and 3) multiple tables. The best choice depends upon the number of Participants, the types of methodologies to be used, and the need for interaction between Participants.



Theatre style is best for presentations to large audiences. But it severely restricts communication between Participants, who often find themselves looking at the backs of heads. So, if the seats are not fixed, remove the bad seats with restricted views and curve the rows of seats as much as possible, to expand the field of vision and facilitate interaction.



In smaller settings and for more intimate events, the main issue is the shape of the table(s) and the setup for the chairs. If a single table is used, what shape is best, and how many chairs will it accommodate? If multiple smaller tables are used, how will they be arranged, and how will the chairs be oriented?

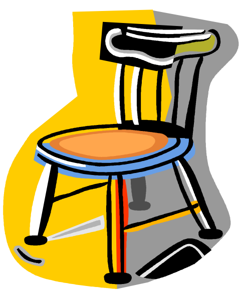
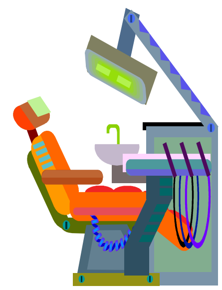
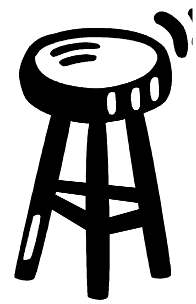
Round or rounded tables are often utilized, because they promote equality and facilitate exchanges between all of the Participants. They conjure up images of King Arthur and his knights. However, completely round tables do not provide the Trainer with a special location or set–up from which to lead, and are thus less convenient for presentations.

The Horseshoe or "U–shape" set up is often superior, especially for small groups of professionals (up to thirty). It focuses attention on Trainers, through a funnel effect. Everyone is able to see and hear everything. It is easy for Participants to communicate directly with each other. There is good space in the middle. This enables Trainers to move around, and manage their proximity to Participants, approaching them when appropriate (for example, to ask or answer questions). Trainers can also set up a head table in front of the "U". Of course, the width and depth of the Horseshoe should be appropriately configured. Note that it is also possible to arrange individual desks in this fashion.

Since set–up greatly affects the Learning Environment, Trainers need to be very attentive to issues relating to configuration, and address them well in advance of the seminar.

Space is a very important issue. It greatly affects comfort and group dynamics. Children may be comfortable in close quarters, but adults generally need room to work and stretch out, particularly when seated for long periods. Body space requirements differ according to cultural and personal traits. The basic rule is that Participants should stay well in each other's social zone, without entering personal space. For further details, see Module XII.

The type of chair is also extremely important. But this issue is often overlooked! Ideally, chairs should be comfortable, swivel, have a back and arm rests, have wheels, be adjustable, and be upholstered in fabric instead of vinyl. In which of the following chairs would you rather spend a long training day?

Several aspects of the "atmosphere" are extremely important for the comfort of Participants and their capacity to fully benefit from the training, and thus should not be overlooked:

a) Temperature. It should preferably be slightly cool. Warmth makes people lethargic and reduces attention span, particularly after lunch, while cooler temperatures focus attention. But studies show that women prefer the temperature to be slightly warmer than men. Keep in mind that the temperature rises slowly but constantly when a group of people share the same room, as a result of their collective body heat. The temperature may be comfortable at the start, but change during the course of the seminar. Therefore, temperature should be regularly monitored.
b) Ventilation and air freshness. Stuffy air and insufficient oxygen reduce efficiency and comfort. Be sure to keep the ventilation on, if possible. Air out the room before the seminar starts, and also during the breaks, if necessary.
c) Lighting. Natural lighting is best, and curtains should be open to prevent claustrophobia. But it should be easy to darken the room when using projection.
d) Sound system. Sound needs to be clear and sufficiently loud. Microphones need to be conveniently placed, with wiring out of the way. It is useful to have at least one portable microphone, in addition to fixed microphones. Trainers should always use a clip–on microphone, so that their hands are free to gesticulate and communicate.

Finally, with regard to layout, there should be suitable places for coffee breaks, snacks, meals, and cigarette smoking (if allowed). If it is possible to arrange limited beverage service inside the seminar room, at the convenience of the Participants, this can be a nice touch. Breakout rooms should be ready, and equipped with flip charts, paper, pens, and supplies. Translation facilities and equipment should be suitably placed. Toilets should be clean, equipped, and unlocked. If necessary, directions or signs should be placed at the entrance to the building and other locations, so Participants can easily find their way around.

3) Preparations. Everything should be ready and in order well *before* Participants arrive. The Learning Environment is compromised, and it is seen as unprofessional, if the organizers are still arranging things (like tables, chairs, and documents) or playing with equipment when Participants arrive. Remember, some Participants arrive early (because they like to, or because their travel was faster than anticipated). The very first Participant to arrive should find the facilities in order and the registration desk manned and ready to distribute materials or supplies.

4) Hospitality. Participants should receive a hospitable welcome upon arrival, and be shown respect from the start. The registration desk should have a welcome package with seminar materials, an agenda, a name badge or table tent, blank paper or a notebook, and something to write with, unless some or all of these items are placed on their desks/seats. Participants should be able to meet and converse with the Trainer before the seminar starts. An accessible Trainer can set the stage for good communication, and start learning about the Participants (name, background, and expectations). As discussed in Module XIII, Trainers harm the Learning Environment if they appear aloof or separate from the Participants before the seminar starts.

One of the best ways to welcome Participants to a positive Learning Environment is with refreshments. A welcome coffee or beverage with light snacks should be available to Participants upon arrival. This makes them feel comfortable, and encourages conversation and networking. In fact, as discussed in Module XII, the smell of coffee and fresh pastries creates an impactful sensory welcome!

5) Seminar Opening. Opening the seminar on time, and in a business–like but relaxed manner, helps establish a positive Learning Environment. It is useful to demonstrate from the start that the agenda will be followed, and that Ground Rules will be respected. When seminar openings are mercifully brief and not consumed with redundant formalities, it also sends a message that content and learning will be prioritized. Indeed, seminar openings can send a powerful message to Participants that their interests are going to be considered paramount. Module XIII discusses this topic in greater detail.

6) Timing. Starting and finishing times should be convenient, so Participants have ample time to travel to and from the event. This includes sufficient time for registration on the first day, and perhaps an early conclusion on the final day (especially if Participants need to travel far). Breaks for refreshments and meals should be properly timed and of sufficient duration to facilitate returning to work.

D. What are the Key SUBSTANTIVE Features of a Positive Learning Environment?

Everything that Trainers do with respect to the content/substance and delivery of training affects the Learning Environment. A positive ambience ensues when efforts to achieve the Learning Outcome are well–organized, the methodologies are sound and correctly applied, the activities are interactive, the training materials are good and useful, there are many good questions and answers, communication is productive, etc. Simple things can make a difference. For example, Trainers who learn the names of Participants add an element of respect and collegiality to the Learning Environment. Trainers who get Participants talking at the first possible chance create a more interactive Learning Environment.

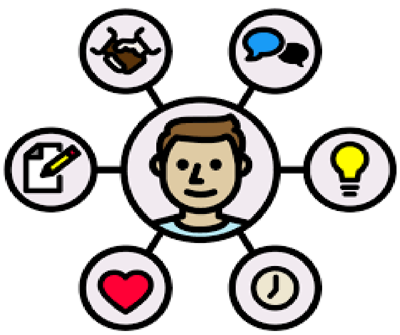
To maintain a positive Learning Environment, keep the length of activities appropriate, use a variety of methodologies, and encourage interactivity. Presentations should never be too long, taking into consideration that the average adult attention span is twenty minutes.

An overloaded agenda is counterproductive. Participants do not necessarily learn more just because more is covered. And they do not learn more when Trainers talk faster. Therefore, never excessively postpone the start of coffee breaks.

Is the coffee ready yet?

Most of these subjects are addressed in detail elsewhere, in the context of best training practices, and need not be repeated here. The point to be made here is that the Learning Environment is not just a question of logistics and physical arrangements. Much depends on how well Trainers do their job.

E. Summary and Conclusion



A constructive and user–friendly Learning Environment is extremely important for professional formation. In fact, it is crucial for delivering Participant–centered training that takes full advantage of team learning. Both as individuals and members of a collective learning exercise, Participants require a positive Learning Environment.

Trainers should treat Participants like guests who are coming to visit, and take all possible measures to ensure that they are comfortable, safe, and have a positive experience. To achieve this, it is necessary to plan in advance, consult with all responsible parties, and be attentive to even the smallest details. From the perspective of the Participants, Trainers are responsible for the conditions at the seminar, and may be expected to answer for what has been done or omitted by others.

Therefore, Trainers must be extremely attentive to how both logistical factors and their own behavior impact the Learning Environment. In addition to physical conditions (location, facilities, layout, hospitality, and timing), they need to be attentive to the repercussions of their delivery (subjects, content, methodologies, and activities). Customarily, consideration of the Learning Environment focuses predominantly if not exclusively on logistical factors. However, it is preferable to adopt a broader perspective. Good Trainers can achieve their objectives despite shortcomings in logistics. Trainers who make Participants uneasy will not benefit much from holding the training in a palace.

Where is the advanced course?

Trainers need to make sure that all conditions at the seminar and everything they do contributes to a positive Learning Environment. This sound like a lot of responsibility. How is it possible to attend to so many *procedural* and *technical* issues, when Trainers are also fully responsible for making the seminar *substantively sound* and *intellectually challenging*? Hopefully, organizers will provide significant support, particularly with facilities, alimentation, and logistics. But Trainers control the agenda and methodology, and work constantly with Participants. So, it is ultimately up to Trainers to ensure that the Learning Environment suits the objectives of the seminar and the needs of the Participants.

MODULE IX
TRAINING METHODOLOGIES

Learning Outcomes:

1) Trainers understand the different kinds of training methodologies, and can identify and utilize the most appropriate ones for their specific Learning Outcomes

2) Trainers can make their methodologies interactive, engaging, and practical for Participants

A. Introduction

Methodology is the way Trainers train. It encompasses pedagogical/andragogical and didactic techniques which achieve Learning Outcomes for the target group, plus the strategies behind these techniques. This module looks at the practices and activities that Trainers can employ, and how they can be best utilized to achieve optimal results.

Good Trainers master a variety of methodologies and select and utilize the most appropriate ones for their Learning Outcome and target group. Clearly, every Trainer has a unique combination of skills and experience, and no Trainer masters every methodology. Furthermore, every training seminar and every audience are different. So, even the best techniques will not work all of the time. Because there is always a chance of sub–optimal results, Trainers need to be flexible and adaptive. Nonetheless, there are many ways to reduce the margin of error, prepare for contingencies, and handle the consequences which can arise from different methodologies. For these purposes, Trainers need to:

- Actively study and become familiar with a wide range of methodologies
- Observe and learn from their colleagues
- Learn which methodologies work best under different conditions
- Be able to select the best methodology for specific Learning Outcomes and target groups
- Develop solid experience utilizing as many different methodologies as possible
- Know which methodologies they are most effective and comfortable with
- Learn how to modify or switch methodology when this proves necessary

Indeed, despite the advantages of a strategic and rigorous approach, improvisation is sometimes indispensable for success at events. This is particularly the case with interactive methodologies.

B. What are the General Principles Governing Training Methodology?

Methodologies are tools and processes for delivering training and achieving objectives. The first rule for using tools is to select the right/best one for the job at hand. For Trainers, this means selecting the right/best methodology for achieving objectives. Accordingly, an effective methodology should be:

- Directly related to the Learning Outcomes. Otherwise, the training will not achieve its goals. For example, if the objective is to develop skills to perform an activity, a demonstration followed by practical exercises is more effective than a lecture. If the objective is to change attitudes or sensitize Participants, a challenging role–play followed by analysis may be best.

- Appropriate for the target group. Otherwise, the training will not be well received, will not help Participants learn, and will not achieve its goals. To determine what is appropriate, there is no substitute for in–depth knowledge of and experience with the target group.

- Adapted to the context. Otherwise, the training will be inappropriate. Training should always be practical, pragmatic, and utilitarian, and take full account of specific conditions.
- Feasible. Otherwise, the training simply will not work. The methodology should always be supported by necessary expertise, time, facilities, technology, financing, logistics, etc.
- Varied. Otherwise, the training is less interesting and Participants will not be fully engaged. Alternating the type, order, style, and pace of methodologies and activities maintains interest and promotes learning.
- Appropriately reliant upon audio–visual aids. Otherwise, audio–visual aids can dominate the activity and even distract Participants. Trainers cannot let technology control or undermine their methodology and the achievement of results.
- Participatory. Otherwise, the training will be less effective, engaging, and educational. Most methodologies are more effective when interactive. Adults and professionals in particular learn more when they are involved. Studies consistently show that disengaged Participants learn less, and retain less of what they learn. Therefore, it is important to enhance the interactivity of all methodologies.

Knowing the target group and circumstances of the training makes all methodologies more effective.

C. How are Training Methodologies Selected?

Each methodology has distinct advantages and disadvantages. In addition, a number of different variables affect how the choice of methodology unfolds during the delivery of training. How can Trainers determine which methodology should be used when and for what purposes?

The following five factors need to be considered when selecting a training methodology:

1) The nature of the Learning Outcome. As mentioned above, different methodologies are most suitable for each category of Learning Outcome. For example, presentations and lectures are well–suited to the transfer of information or knowledge, but are unlikely to change values or attitudes. For this purpose, putting Participants in a role play is likely to be more effective.

- To enhance factual knowledge, it is appropriate to use lectures, presentations, audio–visual aids, diagrams, charts, articles, and documents. Factual learning occurs mainly through visual perception. According to some experts, more than half of factual learning results from seeing, with a much smaller percentage from hearing and doing. This means that information retention is greater if Participants follow visual clues. But retention is best when Participants both see and hear information. This explains the utility of PowerPoint presentations.
- To develop technical skills, it is preferable to use demonstrations, simulations, and participatory exercises that allow Participants to both witness and practice. Skills are developed through action. According to some experts, more than half of skills development occurs through actual performance, with less value from seeing it done, and minimal value from hearing about how it is done. So, to learn to perform an activity or new working practice, Participants must do it.
- To strengthen reasoning skills, it is best to use case studies, analytical exercises, role plays, and simulations that expose Participants to different ideas and allow them to explore strengths and weaknesses. Analytical skills result from targeted thinking. Participants learn to reason when they are exposed to different positions and have to evaluate all sides.

- To change <u>attitudes</u>, it is best to use role plays which place Participants in new positions, interviews, panel discussions (debates), and simulations that highlight different perspectives and encourage empathy. <u>Changes in attitude come from experiencing and feeling</u>. Presentations and information sharing are too abstract and theoretical to change attitudes. Instead, Participants need to put themselves in the place of and identify with others.

The following chart relates methodologies and Learning Outcomes. Naturally, the relationship is not precise, and depends upon several factors. For example, different target groups have different learning patterns. Also, *much depends upon how a methodology is employed*. For example, the development of managerial and teamwork skills depends upon whether Interviews, Teaching Back, and Simulations are organized on an individual or group basis. However, despite the variables, it is useful to categorize methodologies according to their suitability for specific Learning Outcomes.

For the chart, three symbols indicate the value of methodologies for different Learning Outcomes:

+ *Indicates a high level of correlation and usefulness*
✓ *Indicates a basic level of correlation and usefulness*
– *Indicates a low level of correlation and usefulness*

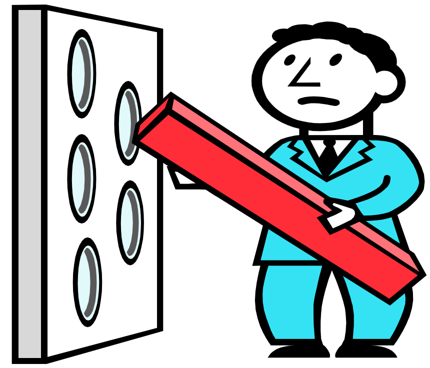
TECHNIQUE	**LEARNING OUTCOME**						
	Active Knowledge	Passive Knowledge	Active Skills	Analytical Skills	Managerial Skills	Teamwork Skills	Values
Lecture/ Presentation	–	+	–	✓	–	–	–
Demonstration	+	✓	+	✓	–	–	–
Panel Discussion	✓	✓	–	+	–	–	✓
Working Group	+	✓	✓	+	+	+	✓
Case Study	+	✓	✓	+	–	✓	✓
Role Play	+	✓	✓	+	✓	+	+
Simulation	+	✓	+	+	+	+	+
Game	+	✓	✓	✓	–	+	–
Group Discussion	✓	✓	–	+	–	✓	✓
Interview	+	✓	✓	+	✓	✓	✓
Teaching Back	+	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	✓

Please review this chart on the basis of <u>technique</u> (*horizontally*) and <u>Learning Outcome</u> (*vertically*).

2) <u>Participants' needs, interests, characteristics, background, and prior experience with training</u>. In other words, what works with the target group. It is very important to know/understand the target group, both in general and at the event, based on sound Training Needs Assessment.

3) <u>The level of interactivity required</u>. The nature of the Learning Outcome and the characteristics of the target group affect the requirement for interactivity and participation. Time management can also be an issue, since interactive methodologies generally take longer.

4) <u>Feasibility, including practical and logistical issues</u>. A methodology which is adapted to the context is practical, pragmatic, and utilitarian. Far too often, methodologies are not suitable, require special conditions that are difficult to meet, or are too complicated. Limiting factors include expertise, time, technology, physical facilities, financial and other kinds of resources, and of course logistics. The best advice is to follow the "<u>KISS Principle": Keep It Straight and Simple</u>. When we increase the number of things that *might* go wrong, we increase the likelihood that something *will* go wrong.



5) <u>Skills of the Trainer</u>. No two Trainers have the same skills or style. Since training skills, style and even personality can impact the results for any given methodology, it follows that Trainers must understand what they do best under different circumstances. It is not a question of being right or wrong, but of being most effective at achieving goals. In this context, Trainers should carefully assess their own skill set, and develop means to improve the skills that they require most.

Proper attention to the choice, sequence, and timing of methodologies based upon the above factors makes seminars more effective and contributes directly to the realization of Learning Outcomes.

The following chart highlights practical requirements affected by the choice of methodology:

POTENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SEMINAR ACTIVITIES			
Human Resources	**Physical Resources**	**Technology**	**Documents**
Trainers	Plenary Room	Computer	Agenda
Experts/Panelists	Breakout Rooms	Projector	Course Materials
Support Staff	Moveable tables/chairs	Sound system	Handouts
Organizers/sponsors	Flip Charts, Blackboards	Microphones	Case Studies
Moderators	Screens	Internet access	Questionnaires
Rapporteurs	Props	Flash drives	Exercise sheets
Caterers	Pens, Markers, Post–Its	Video/recording system	Evaluation forms

The following Checklist can help decide if a particular methodology is appropriate:

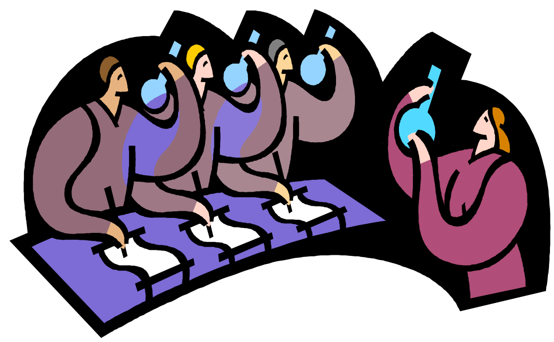
CHECKLIST FOR THE SUITABILITY OF TRAINING METHODOLOGIES		
Methodology	**Criteria**	**Comments**
	Is it optimal for the Learning Outcome?	
	Is it within the capacity of Participants?	
	Will Participants accept it? Will it motivate them?	
	Are there sufficient funds for any expenses?	
	Are there sufficient human resources to carry it out?	
	Are physical facilities and supplies adequate?	
	Is it technically and technologically feasible?	
	Is there sufficient time?	
	Are there any logistical obstacles?	
	Can documentary/reporting requirements be met?	
	How well can assessment or evaluation be carried out?	

D. <u>What are the Principal Training Methodologies</u>?

This section summarizes the principal methodologies which Trainers can utilize.

1) <u>Presentations or Lectures</u>. These are most useful for sharing and transmitting information. Audio–visual aids such as PowerPoint are often used to make them more interesting, impactful, and educational. Presentations and especially Lectures are Trainer–led and topic–centered. They often do not focus on or include Participants. Interactivity is traditionally limited to brief (or extremely brief) Questions & Answers at the end. However, as discussed further below, there are many practical techniques for getting Participants engaged and involved.

2) <u>Demonstrations</u>. Trainers use demonstrations to show Participants how to perform a task or activity. Demonstrations can be extremely impactful, and combine education and entertainment.



Demonstrations are not necessarily interactive, but there are many ways to get Participants involved and give them practice. Some Trainers like to include Participants in the Demonstration itself, if appropriate, and this can work out quite well. Other Trainers prefer to engage Participants in replicating the Demonstration and learning for themselves. Giving Participants a chance to practice what they have seen promotes learning and development, and allows for positive interactions.

To effectively train or teach Participants how to perform tasks or activities using a participatory Demonstration, follow these six steps:

1) <u>Introduce the exercise</u>. Explain the objectives and set the stage for the work. Find out what Participants already know, and make sure they know what is required before proceeding. Also, put Participants at ease.

2) <u>Demonstrate the exercise</u>. Show how it is done. Go through all of the required stages, whether it is a task, skill, or activity. It may be best to limit explanations during the exercise, to let Participants witness and experience it with minimal interruption.

3) <u>Discuss the exercise</u>. After the Demonstration, discuss/explain the methodology, actions, techniques, requirements, and results. Analyze and critique the exercise, consider what worked and what didn't, and discuss how to best handle problems. Do this with questions to and comments from Participants, to the maximum extent possible, to build their understanding.

4) <u>Have Participants prepare the exercise</u>. This can be done individually or in groups. Preparation obliges Participants to figure out and plan each stage in the process, and decide how to replicate what works. This generates insight.

5) <u>Let Participants do the exercise</u>. Performing the exercise for colleagues gives Participants valuable hands–on experience. It develops their sense of what works best and what should be avoided (so they can make future improvements), and it builds confidence.

6) Openly discuss and evaluate how the Participants performed. Encourage Participants to frankly and politely comment on each other's work. Trainers can probe the level of understanding with challenging questions, such as "why did you decide to do it that way?" or "what would you have done if…"? Be sure to praise accomplishments (noting the difficult circumstances) and make feedback polite. Focus discussions on how to improve, and avoid assigning blame for mistakes. Treat mistakes as a chance to learn, and promote self–learning by Participants. This approach empowers Participants to repeat the task, and inspires them to do better.

Careful use of this methodology makes demonstrations practical, interactive, and more didactic.

3) Panel Discussions. Panel Discussions are a dynamic and intellectually challenging format that can stimulate and engage Participants. They usually involve additional Trainers or subject matter experts seated together on the podium. Unfortunately, this methodology is not used as frequently as it should be, and it is rarely performed correctly. The main obstacle is that *many Trainers and presenters do not understand how to effectively moderate a Panel Discussion*. The customary/traditional approach is to "give respected experts their say", in turn, while the Moderator makes introductions and takes a passive approach. We have all seen assembled experts taking turns making statements, raising all of the points they can within (or beyond) their allotted time. To be accurate, this is not a Panel Discussion, but rather a sequence of short presentations by people gathered together in a group.

The problem is that Participants want exposure to *different perspectives on a single topic of interest*, but they cannot appreciate or fully absorb *sequential collections of perspectives on a wide variety of topics*. In other words, the traditional approach falls short for the simple reason that it aggregates too many topics into an unwieldy format.

The way to make panel discussions into effective interactive dialogues is to compare and contrast information on the basis of issue, rather than presenter. Therefore, the job of the Moderator is to ensure that issues are addressed one at a time. Accordingly, the Moderator starts by introducing the first issue. Each expert makes a short statement, limited to this specific issue. The Moderator then poses questions to the experts, comparing and contrasting their answers. Members of the audience can ask focused questions to any panelist. Once an issue is adequately addressed, it is time to move on to the next issue.

To illustrate the problem, and demonstrate how to overcome it, let's take a concrete example, with two possible methodologies. Our event is a conference considering how to improve the judiciary by training new judges (before they assume official duties). In many countries, judicial training institutions provide up to three years of classroom and practical experience to lawyers who have recently graduated from a law faculty and want to be judges. Our conference is looking at how these judicial training institutions operate. Key issues include the managerial structure, governing bodies, admissions policies and procedures, retaining instructors and ensuring the quality of their work, arranging practical internships, evaluating the performance of these future judges, and placing them in courts when they graduate. Participants in the conference include experts from many countries.

The traditional format for such events is sequential interventions. Each expert has a set amount of time to speak about many points concerning his or her country. Here is the format in chart form:

SEMINAR AGENDA AND METHODOLOGY FOR PANEL DISCUSSIONS – MODEL "A"		
ORDER	SPEAKER	SUBJECTS
1	Expert from Country "A"	How country "A" handles all of the main issues being considered, not following any specific order, plus comments
2	Expert from Country "B"	How country "B" handles all of the main issues being considered, not following any specific order, plus comments
3	Expert from Country "C"	How country "C" handles all of the main issues being considered, not following any specific order, plus comments

Hopefully, the order of interventions (set in the agenda) will respect protocol. Hopefully, each expert will focus on the topic. Hopefully, each expert will stick to the allotted time. Hopefully, the Participants will retain information about what is done in each country. However, note that information is presented on a *country–by–country basis*. Reliance upon this variable makes direct comparison of issues very difficult. Especially when an entire day goes by in this format.

Now, let's look at an alternative. The conference uses <u>Panel Discussions with Moderated Debate</u>. Key issues are the determinative variable. In other words, *we present comparative information on an issue–by–issue basis, not a country–by–country basis*. The Moderator starts by introducing the issue. Each expert makes a short statement, limited to the handling of this one issue in his or her country. The Moderator then poses questions to the experts, comparing and contrasting their answers. Members of the audience ask focused questions to any panelist. The Moderator asks follow–up questions, controls who speaks, keeps the conversation moving, cuts off extended or irrelevant comments, and ensures that time limits are respected. Here is the format in chart form:

SEMINAR AGENDA AND METHODOLOGY FOR PANEL DISCUSSIONS – MODEL "B"		
ORDER	SUBJECT	PROCEDURE
1	Issue 1	The Moderator briefly introduces Issue 1. Experts comment briefly on the handling of this one issue in their country. The Moderator compares and contrasts answers. The Moderator asks panelists focused follow–up questions, and then involves the audience in the discussion. The Moderator summarizes the information and draws conclusions about this issue.
2	Issue 2	The Moderator briefly introduces Issue 2. Experts comment briefly on the handling of this one issue in their country. The Moderator compares and contrasts answers. The Moderator asks panelists focused follow–up questions, and then involves the audience in the discussion. The Moderator summarizes the information and draws conclusions about this issue.

Participants are far more likely to be engaged by this discussion of issues, which are relevant and identifiable. For each issue they will hear different approaches, practically in the form of a debate. As a result, Participants will be forced to think and analyze what is best and why. They will have a chance to ask probing and focused questions. Introducing, addressing, and reaching conclusions about issues can lead to greater learning, via focus and reinforcement.

Of course, moderated discussions place a great deal of responsibility on the shoulders of the Moderator. It is easier to let the experts express themselves in turn. And it is safer to adhere to protocol, and just let the experts say what they wish to say. But a series of presentations wastes the valuable potential offered by a true moderated panel discussion. And it undermines the fundamental nature of a panel by elevating form (seating arrangement) over content.

An effective Moderator probes the issues and actively controls the discussion. This is done by selecting the key issues and placing them in the correct order, determining who speaks and for how long, asking probing follow–up questions, relating different answers to each other, engaging the audience at opportune moments, keeping the conversation moving, cutting off extended or irrelevant comments, and ensuring respect for time limits. The challenges are obvious. The discussion is only as good as the Moderator. And moderation becomes more difficult as more parties get involved.

4) <u>Working Groups</u>. Working Groups allow Participants to address issues in a collective fashion, and benefit from each other's expertise. The customary procedure is to divide Participants into small groups and give them an assignment, to be carried out in a separate location. Normally, each group has a Moderator (leader) and a Rapporteur (scribe, responsible for taking notes and documenting conclusions). The task can be identical for each group, different but complementary, or completely different. After a fixed period of time for discussion, each group reports back to the plenary session in turn. Discussions can take place after each group reports (advisable), or at the end of the process. If time runs short, or if presentations become repetitive, reports can be limited to new or additional points. To be fair to Participants and Working Groups, the order for reporting can be varied.

Working Groups are one of the most commonly used and effective interactive methodologies. They allow Participants to exercise considerable control, and can be productive and engaging. Working Groups are very effective for Learning Outcomes which involve finding solutions to shared problems, developing positions, enhancing understanding, building consensus, or changing perspectives. In addition, they can yield continuing and lasting benefits, if results are utilized effectively. For these reasons, many Trainers rely on Working Groups whenever they are useful, appropriate, and feasible.

Working Groups can be adapted to many functions. They can be used to consider case studies, to engage in Role Plays, to set the stage for Teaching Back, or to prepare Interviews. But to be effective, particularly in combination with other methodologies, Working Groups must be carefully planned/ designed and well managed. Preparation and supervision are extremely important, since Working Groups require a significant investment in seminar time and Participant energy.

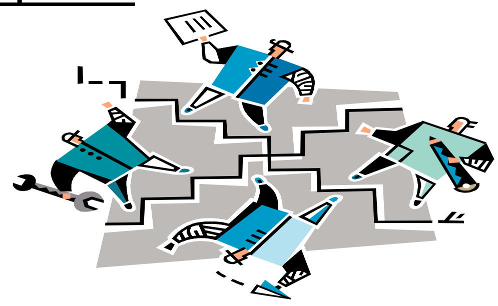
<u>There are three different ways to structure Working Group assignments</u>:

- <u>Single Topics</u>. This is when all Working Groups share a common task. It is best when only one subject is being covered, and different perspectives are sought. Participants can compare and contrast their answers to those of others. This develops understanding, and sometimes consensus. Multiple discussions of one topic are also useful for drafting guidelines or protocols with universal application to future conduct.

- <u>Complementary Topics</u>. This is when each Working Group handles a distinct but related task. It is the best approach for covering different aspects of a single issue or situation, and giving Participants a chance to assess one of them in depth as a prelude to understanding the others. For example, after watching a Role Play or listening to a case study concerning a legal dispute, different Working Groups could analyze the positions/interests of the plaintiff's attorney, the defendant's attorney, and the judge in a civil case, or the prosecution and defense in a penal case. Understanding is increased and attitudes are challenged through complementary analysis, and learning to see issues from different sides.

- Multiple Topics. This is when Working Groups have separate tasks, which are not directly inter–related. This approach is best for covering a large number of subjects, particularly when there isn't enough time for each Participant to address every topic in a Working Group. Instead, Participants address one topic in depth in their own Working Group, and then listen and respond to presentations on the other topics at the plenary session. With multiple topics, learning tends to be cumulative.

There are three different ways Working Groups can answer questions:



1) Directed Group. This is when there is one correct answer, and the objective is for each Working Group to find it. Trainers must be careful not to anticipate or provide the answer. Further, Trainers must provide standard/common working conditions. If working conditions differ, or if one Working Group has an advantage, the results will not be fully comparable.

2) Semi–Directed Group. This is when there is no absolutely correct answer, but the objective is to move in a constructive fashion towards viable conclusions, which set the stage for follow–up. Trainers serve mostly as Facilitators, a) making sure that Participants understand what is expected from them, b) establishing balance between the process and the result, c) helping to summarize and integrate results, d) helping reach useful and valid conclusions, and e) providing advice concerning how to make the best use of results.

3) Non–Directed Group. This is when there is no correct answer or resolution, and Working Groups are expected to develop understanding and analytical skills via mutual interaction. Trainers must structure the deliberative process carefully, make sure that Moderators in each Working Group know their role, and be ready to serve as Facilitator. This is because the way the issue or work is handled is as important as reaching a specific conclusion.

How Can Trainers Make Working Groups more successful, and ameliorate difficulties?

1) Trainers should take the following steps ***before the seminar***:

- Make sure that Working Group activities directly support Learning Outcomes. Carefully assess their correlation and integrate the activity into the Lesson Plan.
- Plan Working Group activities carefully. Set precise objectives, select tasks that best achieve these objectives, anticipate possible results, and identify obstacles that might arise.
- Consider your audience. Decide which tasks are most effective and appropriate for the target group. Be attentive to background or personality issues that can affect results.
- Identify ways to cover more ground. Instead of having Working Groups mirror each other, consider the possibility of assigning them complementary or different tasks, to get more done.
- Carefully structure Working Groups. Determine the optimal number of groups and members of each group, based on the assignment. If tasks are identical, group size can vary. Having more groups with fewer members facilitates decision–making and expedites work, but lengthens reporting at the plenary session. Smaller groups are usually more dynamic, and better for interaction and learning. If tasks differ, there should be one similar size group for each task.
- Determine the best way to form the Working Groups. They can be set up in advance or at the seminar. If at the seminar, you can let Participants decide, go by seat location, or use a random

factor (last digit of phone number, color of car, etc.). Each group should be representative (a cross–section of Participants), unless tasks are specialized/targeted. If there are several exercises, Participants usually prefer to stay in the same group, and this avoids confusion. On the other hand, changes can be made if this is necessary, or to enhance variety.

- Make advance arrangements. Secure suitable facilities with breakout rooms, procure needed supplies, prepare materials and handouts, and create a favorable Learning Environment.
- Schedule Working Groups strategically. Alternating between presentations and group activities that complement each other (varying methodology) enhances impact. Placing Working Groups before a coffee or lunch break reduces problems if they finish at different times. It gives extra time to those who need it, and rewards those who finish promptly.

2) Trainers should take the following steps ***at the seminar***:

- State the objectives and give clear instructions. Make sure Participants know what to do, what procedures to follow, what results to achieve, and how results will be used. However, keep instructions and guidance brief and to the point. Consider providing an instruction sheet or checklist to guide the work. Announce time limits, promise to enforce them, and then do so.
- Make sure Moderators and Rapporteurs know their jobs. Moderators should lead and facilitate. Rapporteurs should be attentive and faithful scribes. If the Working Groups select them, Trainers should suggest criteria (seniority or rotation). A short briefing for Moderators is helpful, but this is not feasible when they are chosen by the Working Groups. For this reason, some Trainers prefer to choose and prepare Moderators in advance. At larger conferences with formal Working Groups, Moderators are carefully selected and briefed in advance.

- Visit each Working Group. To demonstrate interest and learn about Participants, Trainers should spend time at each Working Group. Observe and listen, without writing anything down. Employ neutral Body Language while observing. Move on to the next group without comment. If necessary, calmly state that you are only observing, not participating. Translators should whisper in the Trainer's ear, to avoid disturbing the work. Even without a translator, Trainers can observe and learn from group dynamics and Body Language. Remember, Trainers send a very negative message by not visiting Working Groups, or by sitting on the sidelines chatting with an assistant or sitting at their computer while Participants work.
- Don't interfere with Working Groups unless absolutely necessary. Trust Working Groups to perform their tasks, and avoid intervening. Clarify procedural/technical issues, if asked, but avoid involvement in substantive discussions. Only intervene or provide guidance if discussions are off–track, or if tasks are not being properly performed. If a Participant is disruptive, take a polite stance in the interest of the group. If it is necessary to provide feedback or instructions to a Moderator, do so away from the group, not in front of others.
- Keep track of time. Monitor time and enforce time limits. Announce when time is starting to run out. If Working Groups have multiple tasks, tell them when a certain percentage of time has elapsed, and indicate if they should move on. If one Working Group finishes early, give it a supplemental task, or allow it to take a break. If all Working Groups require more time, extend the deadline. But if only one Working Group lags behind, try to move it along. Rewarding it

with extra time when other Working Groups have finished sends a negative signal concerning time management, and can be seen as unfair. Remember, *once Trainers fail to adhere to a single time limit, Participants are less inclined to honor subsequent time limits*.

- Give Working Groups an equal chance to report. At the plenary session, allow Moderators and Rapporteurs to do their jobs. If there isn't enough time for each Working Group to report fully, or if things get repetitive, limit further reports to new/supplemental points. Then, modify the order of presentations next time, so each Working Group has a chance to go early. Another possibility, if time is short, is to limit each Working Group to key findings, or a maximum of three points. This reduces the overall time used, distributes time more equally, and gives each Working Group a chance to present its most important points.

- Respect the results. Participant work product must be highly valued, even if it does not coincide with Trainer expectations or planning. Corrections should only be made if there is a material error, and then as politely as possible, offering praise and downplaying deficiencies. Trainers should never preach or proselytize preferred results. If there is disagreement amongst Participants, the Trainer can facilitate. Clarify things and talk them through, to reach understanding and narrow differences. This can be done as part of the debriefing.

- Conduct a full debriefing. Professionals benefit greatly from a debriefing concerning what has been done, achieved, and learned. And, they want the implications of their work to be appreciated. There are several ways to do this. Key observations or points can be discussed in a larger context. Practical applications can be identified. The activity can be related to previous and future Learning Outcomes. Comments and conclusions can be recorded on a flipchart. Representatives from Working Groups can help facilitate the debriefing.

3) Trainers should take the following steps to make the results sustainable ***after the seminar***:

- Make the work useful. Working Groups can achieve long–term results. Lasting value is obtained when work is relevant (linked to actual situations and issues) and oriented towards future practice. In fact, Working Group activities combined with plenary discussions lend themselves to the formulation of Action Plans, Resolutions, and Guidelines that codify consensus based upon collective wisdom. To reach this outcome, design results into the methodology, carefully structure and guide the collective processes, and diligently transcribe results (with flipcharts and computers).

- Give Participants something important to take home. **The optimal practice is to prepare and distribute an Action Plan, Resolution, or Guidelines.** It is very impressive if Participants leave a seminar with the results of their work in hand, memorialized and ready for future use. To do this, a) prepare a draft document in advance, and b) finalize it during a lunch or coffee break, according to actual results from the plenary discussions. But be sure to do this correctly! It is dishonest, manipulative, and certain to undermine the entire process if Trainers give Participants a previously prepared document or something which does not fully reflect their work. It would be better to leave the actual results collecting dust on flipcharts (as so often happens). It is also possible to give Participants a CD–ROM or USB Flash Drive with seminar materials, substantive information, results from Working Groups, and photographs from the seminar. This can be done at the closing ceremony.

- Follow–up. Use email addresses from the sign–in sheet to send Participants extra materials in electronic format, or to pursue further initiatives, when this is feasible and appropriate.

Finally, honestly evaluate the results. Were the objectives of the Working Groups achieved? Was the methodology appropriate? Was there a good Learning Environment? How can this activity be improved for next time? Answering these questions (alone or with trusted assistance) helps Trainers improve future performance. Trainers who make optimal use of Working Groups can provide an extremely positive learning experience for Participants, and achieve significant and lasting results.

What are the key potential benefits of Working Groups?

BENEFITS OF WORKING GROUPS	
1	They give Participants significant responsibility and influence over the seminar
2	They facilitate informal sharing of information, ideas, and opinions between Participants
3	They can develop and modify positions, and possibly even attitudes and values
4	They create a supportive and interactive Learning Environment and social ambience
5	They can make seminars rewarding, stimulating, and engaging for Participants
6	They promote professional collegiality, and deepen professional and interpersonal ties
7	They can generate consensus/guidance on how to handle or resolve real problems and situations

What are the key potential disadvantages of Working Groups?

DISADVANTAGES OF WORKING GROUPS	
1	They require suitable facilities. This means either a large plenary hall with moveable tables and chairs that can be divided into separate areas, or break–out rooms for each Working Group. The second variant is usually superior, since re–arranging the plenary hall (even during coffee breaks) can be a logistical challenge, and disruptive.
2	They require sufficient supplies. This includes flip charts, magic markers, paper and pens, etc. It is also beneficial to provide and replenish light refreshments in each breakout room.
3	They can be difficult to set up. It is necessary to establish clear and fair criteria for membership, to prevent friends or colleagues from getting together and to prevent imbalances. Moderators and Rapporteurs must be selected. Procedures must be clarified.
4	They do not always stay on track. Participants may diverge from assigned tasks, miss key points, or focus excessively on details. Suitable guidance (and perhaps oversight) is necessary.
5	They take up a considerable amount of time, and time might not be used efficiently. Some Working Groups may finish early or run late. Therefore, good time management is required.
6	They depend upon good moderation. Moderators and Rapporteurs must understand their roles and be able to fulfil them in order for Working Groups to be successful.
7	They depend upon the target group. Certain professions and target groups have less experience working together, and are less inclined towards collective activities and compromise.
8	They may depend upon personalities. Discussions can become personality–centered rather than task–oriented. Some people may dominate the work, exclude others, and distort the results. This is more likely to be problematic if certain Participants have and choose to exercise higher rank or status.
9	They may not reach consensus. Differences of opinion may arise, and disputes can come into the open. This can be productive, if well–managed, but it can also impede and limits results.

5) __Working Partnerships (Working Duets or Buzz Groups).__ Practically speaking, this is a mini–Working Group with two members. Participants engage on a topic with one other person, seated beside them. Logistics are simple, since Working Partnerships are formed immediately, and there is no need to relocate. Nonetheless, all the benefits of discussion and reaching and documenting joint conclusions remain. After a few minutes at most, a spokesperson for each Working Partnership presents the results, going around the room. Each spokesperson can be limited to one point, or latter speakers can be limited to raising new points. To promote fairness, speaking order can be modified each time. For variety, Participants can take turns serving as spokesperson, and team up with different neighbors. If necessary, some groups can have three members. As with Taking Notes (see below), written answers can be redistributed for others to read.

A related and highly engaging technique is called __Snowballing__ or __Pyramiding__. When the Working Partnerships are finished, each joins up with another, and the four Participants hold joint discussions before reporting back to the plenary. This can be intriguing for Participants, since it is quite different from simply forming a Working Group of four people right from the start.

Working Partnerships can successfully integrate mini–consultations into plenary sessions. They are logistically easy, time–efficient, and a great way to get Participants thinking and talking. Finally, Working Partnerships give Trainers a chance to listen to Participants conversing, or handle another task (prepare for the next subject, or verify whether coffee is ready). However, Working Partnerships should have a limited mandate and a short duration, so they effectively complement plenary activities.

6) __Case Studies__. Trainers create a scenario or supply information about a situation, and Participants analyze it, make decisions, or solve problems. While Trainers take the lead, interactivity between Participants can be built into the Case Study methodology, by establishing different positions or interests, and facilitating cross–communication. It is also possible to move Participants beyond the particular details of the Case Study, to compare and contrast other similar situations.

Participants can review a Case Study individually, in Working Partnerships, or in Working Groups. This is customarily followed by a plenary discussion involving all of the Participants. Notes can be taken, and results can be transcribed and disseminated. If the Case Study is based on a real situation or actual problem, the Participants are more likely to become engaged, have ideas they wish to express, and listen to suggestions from their colleagues.

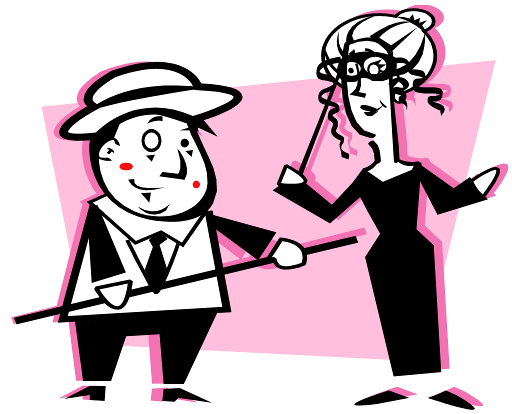
Case Studies are excellent for getting Participants to:

- Engage in creative analysis, address issues, and solve problems
- Share ideas, reactions, and related experiences
- Learn about themselves, and how they can most effectively meet future challenges, and
- Determine how to implement new approaches and institute changes

Case Studies are particularly useful for professionals who face difficult scenarios at work, such as ethical dilemmas. For such situations, the experiences and ideas of colleagues are highly valued.

7) Role Plays. Participants watch or act out roles in a carefully designed practical situation or vignette, and then engage in analysis and discussion.

Role Plays are one of the best ways to frame important subjects and issues in a thought–provoking context, thereby generating constructive interactions and promoting positive learning and understanding. Role Plays create opportunities to analyze, exchange ideas, and practice skills. They are versatile, and easily integrated into other methodologies, such as plenary activities, Working Groups (for discussion), Panel Discussions, etc. Indeed, Role Plays are an excellent way to bring a Case Study to life, by making it visual and participatory. Correctly used, Role Plays can be stimulating and perhaps even enjoyable.



Role Plays are almost always prepared by the Trainer in advance. But it is also possible (although time–consuming) to have the Participants design and deliver Role Plays using a Working Group format. Role plays can also be presented in videos, as a prelude to group discussion. However, it is usually more impactful if they are presented live, with Participants acting them out.

In any event, Role Plays need to be carefully crafted and utilized in order to achieve optimal results.

The preparation of Role Plays is a five–step process:

1. Define the objectives to achieve and issues to explore. Training Needs Assessment provides initial guidance for identifying issues and content. **But real–life situations and genuine experiences are the best source for Role Play scenarios.** The trick is to find a dilemma or contradiction, such as a difference of opinion or practice concerning how a matter should be handled. This could be a business dispute that cost money, a legal dispute that led to contradictory opinions from different courts, a labor dispute that resulted in industrial action, an ethical dispute that led to professional discipline, etc. Be sure to prioritize issues, and limit their number in line with time constraints.

2. Create the structure for the Role Play. It should effectively highlight and explore the selected issues, without making them too obvious. Scenarios usually have multiple actors (for example judge and assistant, prosecutor and defense counsel, lawyer and client/defendant, or three of these parties). There can be two distinct sides to an issue (for example a business owner and a union leader). The key is to adapt the scenario to the issues, and make it both familiar and intriguing for Participants. Role Plays should not seem artificial or contrived.

3. Set up the Role Play. What format will have the most impact and be technically feasible? For example, role plays can be filmed, or written down for selected Participants to read. How will the Participants access the content (required information)? How can Participants be steered away from speculation, by making the facts clear and complete? No two target groups will have the same approach to understanding and analyzing what takes place in a Role Play.

4. Prepare for analysis. There are many different techniques for carrying out the analysis and generating/documenting positions to share and review. The choice depends upon the nature of the issues, the characteristics of the audience, and the time and facilities available. Analysis can take place in plenary discussions moderated by the Trainer. Working Groups or Working Partnerships can be used to generate positions for comparative review. As always, it is a sign of success when Participants direct respectful and substantive comments regarding the Role Play to each other.

5. Plan the debriefing. Closure for Role Plays requires some form of conclusion or debriefing. It is at this time that Trainers can present their own approaches or positions. At the very least, it is necessary to summarize results, evaluate the exercise, and/or engage in future planning.

When used for the first time, it is difficult to determine in advance how well a Role Play will actually work. Rehearsal is not possible, and much depends upon how the Participants react. Perhaps the best approach is to solicit feedback from a knowledgeable expert or trusted member of the target group.

Role Plays with analysis have the following *advantages*:

ADVANTAGES OF ROLE PLAYS WITH ANALYSIS	
1	Focus attention on important and actual issues that are highly relevant to Participants
2	Bring theoretical concepts, issues, and problems to life, through practical application
3	Get Participants to educate each other, in a practical and professional context
4	Develop analytical skills, approaches, and understanding that Participants can apply
5	Can change values, particularly if Participants take a position that is not customary (business owners acting as union leaders, prosecutors acting as defense counsel, etc.)
6	Can be interesting, dynamic, engaging, encouraging, inspiring, and perhaps enjoyable
7	Provide a nice break from presentations and lectures

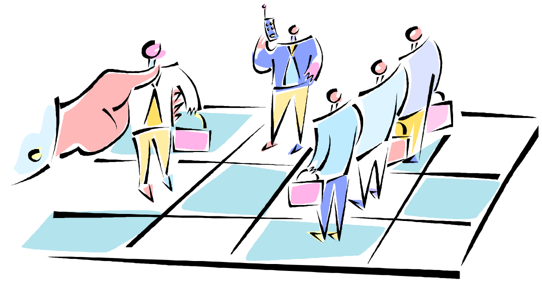
Role Plays with Analysis have the following *disadvantages*:

DISADVANTAGES OF ROLE PLAYS WITH ANALYSIS	
1	Issues must strike a chord with Participants, or the Role Play will be uninteresting or tedious
2	Issues must be carefully developed, or the Role Play will be artificial and not engaging
3	The Role Play must be carefully designed and presented, and all required information must be provided in a user–friendly fashion, or the analysis will not be fruitful
4	Participants may require guidance and instructions concerning what they are doing and why
5	There may be resistance to the assignment or performance of roles
6	If there is a competitive element or lead role, some Participants may try to dominate others
7	Time management is difficult – the exact duration cannot be precisely predicted
8	Features of the associated methodology (such as a Working Group) can complicate the analysis
9	A debriefing must be carefully carried out to fulfil the objectives of the Role Play
10	Participants may be dissatisfied if there is no definitive or correct answer, and the objective is simply to develop analytical skills or explore issues

If a moderated plenary discussion is used to analyze the Role Play, Trainers should act as Facilitators. This means posing poignant questions, in a logical sequence, and getting the Participants to answer them and talk to each other. Indeed, some Trainers rely very heavily on questions during the analysis. Useful techniques for managing questions are discussed in Module XI Section "D". During facilitation, Trainers should be careful not to take positions, and if pressed should promise their thoughts or answers afterwards. As mentioned above, input or guidance from Trainers should only be provided during the de–briefing, *after* the Participants have had a full opportunity to speak.

In spite of the challenges, Role Plays can usually be successfully managed through sound preparation and attention to detail. This makes them an extremely important and valuable part of every Trainer's repertoire of interactive methodologies.

8) Simulations. Simulations are in many ways the zenith of interactive methodologies. They can inspire and motivate Participants, deepen learning, and change values in ways that other methodologies cannot. This makes Simulations very appropriate for professionals. In addition, simulations offer an excellent contrast to more traditional activities.



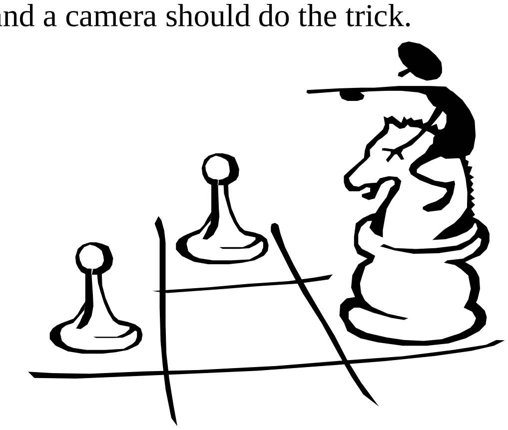
Simulations are usually used to place Participants in a structured setting that resembles a challenging aspect of their employment or personal life. The goal is to get them to perform a task or respond to this situation in the security of the seminar setting, where learning can take place and experience can be gained without the stress and negative repercussions of failure inherent to the real world.

Simulations are like a role play where Trainers create a format for innovative Participant action and interaction. The advantage of Simulations is that they put Participants in charge of the work, and enable them to learn by doing and responding. In other words, Simulations are distinguished by their open–ended nature, which allows Participants to direct the results. Naturally, as with Role Plays, facilitation/moderation is required, and there should be analysis, conclusions, or a de–briefing afterwards.

Moot Court Competitions are the classic example of a Simulation. Legal professionals form teams and take opposite sides in a lawsuit with a detailed factual scenario and contentious legal issues. The teams present their case before a judge or panel of judges, in a setting resembling a courtroom. Other possible scenarios include negotiating sessions, sales or marketing opportunities, television broadcasts, problem solving exercises, etc. Interviews can be considered a non–competitive Simulation. In fact, any of these formats will work as long as Participants face poignant realistic issues or problems that they truly want or need to solve.

Simulations are much more successful when they take place in a semi–realistic format and setting, with suitable props. This helps participants to feel their roles. For example, Moot Court Competitions are more authentic when they take place in a room that resembles a court, with judges seated on an elevated platform that makes them imposing. In such a setting, Participants will feel and act as if it were actual litigation. Legal professionals would not engage if they presented cases from small desks in a regular classroom. For an Interview, lamps and a camera should do the trick.

9) Games. Games introduce an element of friendly competition into seminars, and can be energizing and amusing. Participants compete with each other in a structured exercise with a competitive format. This is usually done in a limited number of teams, which collectively perform tasks or answer questions to obtain points or move along a path. Teams require ample opportunity to consult and collaborate, but with strictly enforced overall time limits. Trainers usually keep the score, and make it clear and visible. Games resemble Simulations in many respects, but they are more structured, with rules and scoring.

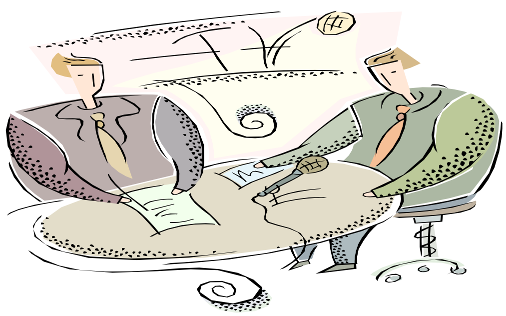


There are many ways to present questions to Participants in a Game. They can be written on flash cards divided into categories, listed on flipcharts and uncovered one at a time, or shown on a board or computer screen. One of the most dynamic ways to present questions is via a crossword puzzle. Two teams take turns presenting a collective answer to one blank of their choice on a crossword puzzle, printed out for them and also projected on a screen. Each correct answer moves the team forward one place on a scoreboard. Wrong answers result in the loss of the turn. It takes considerable time and effort to create a crossword puzzle on a specific subject. But such Games are a) very educational for Participants, who learn all the answers, b) enjoyable, and c) not strenuous for the Trainer to lead.

When designing Games, Trainers should identify and replicate formats that work. Samples can be found on the internet. Popular game shows on television and board games available in stores can also serve as models and sources of inspiration.

At the conclusion of the Game, the victors deserve to be recognized with a small prize. Make it symbolic, not expensive or fancy. Chocolates or small souvenirs are very acceptable. Then, conduct a short de–briefing. Finally, give each Participant a printout of the answers or the final result.

10) Interviews. Interviews are a seldom–used but dynamic and pragmatic technique for creating dialogue and focusing on important issues. There are many different formats and techniques for preparing and presenting questions. For example, Participants can prepare and conduct an interview of the Trainer, individually or in groups. Or a subject matter expert can be interviewed after making a presentation. It is also possible to have Participants interview each other.

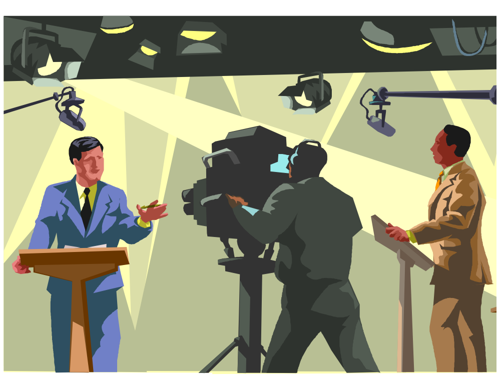


Interviews can be extremely practical and time–efficient. They can get Participants actively involved, make them think, and allow them to direct work towards their own priority topics and issues.

There are multiple possibilities for integrating Interviews into individual and group work. Indeed, the interview process can be used with most other methodologies, to increase interactivity and engagement.

Different formats for Interviews include:

- Individual Questions for Trainers. The simplest method is to have each Participant write down a question for the Trainer. Participants can be called on to pose their question, or questions can be collected and redistributed so that Participants ask someone else's question. This practical technique helps ensure the success of Question & Answer sessions.



- Group Questions for Trainers. Participants form Working Partnerships with a neighbor, and jointly write down their preferred question(s) for the Trainer. This makes question preparation interactive and engaging. Each Working Partnership can be limited to one question and a follow–up, or they can be given more latitude to conduct an actual or longer interview. To enhance authenticity, the room can be set up to look like a press conference, with a camera and lamps for props, and the Participants can act and be treated like journalists.

- Inter–Group Questions. If the above techniques work well, and the subject matter lends itself to input from Participants, it may be worthwhile getting Working Partnerships or small Working Groups to answer each other's questions directly, with moderation by the Trainer. This can generate extremely dynamic exchanges. It can also be done as a Game. Participants are divided into two or more groups, which take turns asking each other a question. Teams are given a chance to deliberate, before presenting a collective answer. To reduce pressure and prevent competition, this can be done without any formal scoring.
- Questions for Participants from other Participants. It is also possible to have an individual Participant answer questions from others. If necessary/appropriate, the Participant can be given a chance to consult with the Trainer before answering. This technique is quite appropriate after a Participant performs Teaching Back (see below). Naturally, this can only be done with volunteers. It is inappropriate to put Participants on the spot in front of others without consent.

It is clear from the above that there are many innovative ways to combine Interviews with other methodologies such as Taking Notes, Working Partnerships, Working Groups, Simulations, and Games. Once Trainers have experience with the basic techniques and a good sense of what works best with different target groups and subjects, it is possible to be extremely creative.

11) Teaching Back. This methodology gives Participants a direct role in the training. It can be a very powerful way to engage Participants and enable them to build and share their knowledge and experience. The usual process is for the Trainer to give one or more Participants information or a research assignment, and then invite them to teach the group. This can be done individually, in pairs, or in groups. Teaching Back can be based on case studies, articles, or sections of the training materials.

Teaching Back is probably the most effective technique for getting Participants involved in the teaching and learning process. One of the best ways to learn a subject is a) prepare to teach it, b) actually teach it, and c) respond to questions and feedback. This is also excellent experience.

Teaching Back gives Participants a stake in the training process, by learning more about a subject and then teaching it to others. It inspires Participants to learn and learn from each other. It adds variety to seminars and generates interest.

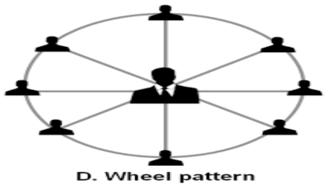
The role of the Trainer is to organize and oversee the process, and make Participants comfortable with an expanded role. Time management is important. Teaching Back should be of limited duration, so Participants do not feel that they are being deprived of the Trainer's expertise.

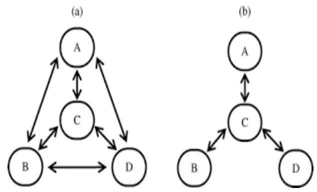
Teaching Back works best in multiple–day seminars. Participants can be asked to do homework, and deliver a brief presentation the following day. This avoids the use of seminar time for preparation, which is not practical. If a Participant already knows a subject and volunteers to Teach Back with minimal extra preparation, for example after lunch, that can work well. Finally, Teaching Back offers Trainers an additional practical benefit, by allowing them to turn the floor over to someone else.

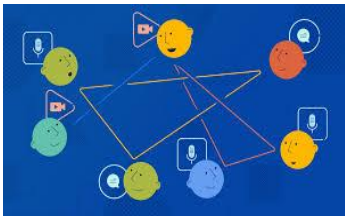
E. How Can Trainers make Methodologies More Interactive?

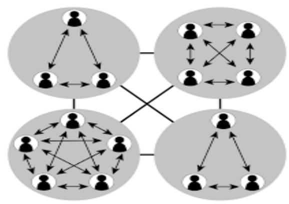
As can be seen from the above, and as discussed more fully below, interactivity is one of the keys to successful utilization of any methodology. The following six techniques can be combined with other methodologies, or used on their own, in order to get Participants actively involved.

1) __Facilitated Group Discussion__. This is probably the primary interactive technique employed by Trainers during plenary sessions where all Participants act collectively. It often follows or is incorporated into presentations, and generally relies upon a Question & Answer format.









__Picture the structure of interactions__. Interactions can take place exclusively between the Trainer and individual Participants, in the form of a wheel with spokes. Or the Trainer can generate diverse interactions between Participants, by serving as a Facilitator.

As a general rule, Facilitated Group Discussions are more interesting when there are multiple lines of communication, and when Trainers know how to enable audience interaction.

The quality of Facilitated Group Discussions depends on input from Participants. The methodologies and techniques listed below can generate good input and questions, even from reluctant audiences.

2) __Brainstorming__. Participants respond to a question or problem by calling out a rapid series of ideas or suggestions. All points are immediately written on a flipchart by the Trainer or preferably an assistant, without discussion or comment of any kind. When the list is complete (no more ideas are forthcoming), the Trainer leads an open discussion of every idea/suggestion, in order. This includes analysis, categorization, and review.

Brainstorming is an effective problem–solving technique, because it takes advantage of the subconscious mind to develop a free–flowing chain of thoughts and ideas. It yields results because sometimes our best thoughts come from inspiration rather than reason. Brainstorming is often considered an individual activity, using problem solving skills. But under the right circumstances, it can work well in groups.

3) __Taking Notes__. Purely verbal interactions between Trainers and Participants face two serious obstacles. First, Participants may be shy. Second, Participants may draw a blank when they lack time to think about a question or answer, or must do so in their head, without paper and pen. Trainers can become discouraged by silent Participants avoiding eye contact, feel reluctant to risk interactivity, and end up seeking the relative "security" of one–way presentations. Meanwhile, Participants learn that negative reinforcement "trains the Trainer" to leave them alone. Thereafter they can relax, without further challenges. From a behavioralist perspective, it is easy to see how reliance upon verbal interaction leads Trainers and Participants to maneuver each other away from interaction.

This vicious cycle can be resolved by making it easy for Participants to prepare a response, and by eliminating any excuses for not having one. __This is done by allowing a short period of time for Participants to think of and write down an answer or comment__. Paper and pen are the solution.

__Notes are the great equalizer__! Every professional should be able to come up with an answer or comment if given a moment to think and write. And shyness is unlikely to stand in the way of reading or relaying the result. Therefore, Trainers should allow Participants to engage in an "internal dialogue" before they dialogue with others. After giving the Participants time to jot down an answer or comment, Trainers can confidently ask for volunteers, select someone (without really putting them on the spot), or go around the room.

Taking Notes can be used for a myriad of purposes. Participants can be asked to a) answer a question, b) come up with a question of their own, c) identify a problem which they actually face, d) vote on an issue, or e) record their opinion. To make the process livelier, or to ensure anonymity (thereby encouraging Participants to express their true opinion or vote honestly), Trainers can collect, randomize, and redistribute the answers, to be read by someone else. Participants who are hesitant to express an opinion verbally may be much more comfortable writing it out and having it read anonymously by someone else, as part of a stack of index cards or "Post–Its". In addition, Participants are challenged to think in different ways when presenting someone else's question or point of view.

Taking Notes can be used creatively to overcome many obstacles to audience participation. This technique consistently facilitates verbal interaction and input. It also gives Trainers more control and flexibility over who gets called on, making it possible to a) bypass Participants who talk too much, and b) involve Participants who are passive but who may have a lot to contribute.

4) Questionnaires. Participants are asked to write down their responses to a set of questions concerning a sophisticated topic. Questions can be open ended or multiple choice. The answers can be collected, or retained by the Participants, or both (using two sets of answers). If the answers are collected, they should be anonymous. The Trainer then leads a discussion concerning the answers, making a special effort to get Participants to explain their answers, and consider any differences that arise. This can engage the Participants in interesting debates, with the Trainer serving as a Moderator or Facilitator. Questionnaires can be particularly useful for Learning Outcomes related to values and attitudes, for example ethical requirements or techniques for addressing problematic situations.

5) Collective Consultation. Participants appreciate a chance to vote or indicate preferences regarding an issue, and compare themselves to the collective. The most common voting technique is a show of hands. Unfortunately, this is probably the least effective. Some people do not vote. Some people hold up one finger and lower it quickly. Some people vote twice. Counting is difficult, and after two rounds of hand raising nobody remembers how anybody voted. This impedes follow–up discussion.

It is more effective to have Participants indicate their position by using a piece of paper with an arrow, umbrella, or other unidirectional symbol. In response to questions, all Participants hold up their paper at the same time, and keep it visible. Up indicates "yes", down indicates "no", and sideways indicates "maybe" or "I don't know". This technique creates an all–inclusive simultaneous vote that reveals where everyone stands. It is easy to compare and contrast positions. Dialogue and interesting conversations between Participants ensue. And this technique works with any size audience. Indeed, it may be the only way to perform Collective Consultation with a large audience. Note that on–line meeting platforms such as "Zoom" include a comparable "non–verbal feedback" function.

6) Voting with Stickers. This is an effective variation of Collective Consultation, which can be used to canvass Participants on complex issues (as well as simple yes–no questions). Participants are asked to place small stickers (or "Post–Its") on flipcharts, to prioritize or assess issues, or indicate preferences. Participants can write numbers on the stickers, to indicate priorities or percentages. For example, Participants can indicate what percentage of a problem results from different causes by placing a sticker with a number next to a list. Different color stickers can be used to divide the Participants into specific groups, and thereby analyze the results according to designated parameters.

Results from this exercise are transparent and immediately visible. They can be quickly collated (perhaps during a coffee break), announced, and distributed to Participants. An additional advantage of Voting with Stickers is that it gets Participants up and out of their seats, and is an effective energizer. When Participants spend too much time seated, gravity takes its toll on blood circulation. Getting Participants up and voting counteracts bloated feet and tired heads, and renews interest.

Using these six interactive techniques makes Group Discussions and plenary sessions more interactive, participatory, interesting, and effective. They also give Participants a stake in the event, and an interest in its development. They are great additions to any repertoire of methodologies.

F. What are the General Principles for Interactive and Participatory Methodologies?

Audience participation generates interest, maintains attention, and promotes learning. It makes learning practical, and keeps it oriented towards shared ideas and experiences. Perhaps most importantly, it enables Participants to play an active role in their own professional development.

In addition to making seminars more valuable and engaging, participation is the best way to get Participants to work. Unless the Learning Outcome can be achieved exclusively through information transmission, Participants should facilitate mutual learning. Active learning is always more effective than passive learning. And it is more enjoyable as well.

Seminars can be considered interactive when:

- Trainers and Participants engage in discussions and dialogue via different methodologies
- Trainers ask Participants questions and get answers from them
- Participants ask Trainers questions and get answers from them
- Participants engage in discussions and dialogue with each other
- Participants ask each other questions and answer each other
- Participants share personal opinions, experiences, and other forms of input

The following checklist presents some key questions which Trainers should ask when they evaluate their use of the interactive methodologies and techniques outlined above:

CHECKLIST FOR INTERACTIVE METHODOLOGIES AND ACTIVITIES		
	Question	**Answer and Comments**
1	Did the interactive activity help achieve the Learning Outcome?	
2	Did Participants have the required skills, interest, and temperament?	
3	Was the activity stimulating and interesting? Did Participants relate to it?	
4	Was the activity appropriate for the group composition and size?	
5	Were there any cultural or linguistic impediments?	
6	Were the introduction and de–briefing handled well? Given enough time?	
7	Was the investment of time worthwhile/warranted, or were there more efficient ways to meet the objectives?	
8	Did the activity fit smoothly into the Seminar Plan and Lesson Plan? Were there problems with sequencing (combining it with other work)?	
9	Were there problems with scheduling, or placing the activity at the appropriate time of day?	
10	Was the activity varied enough, did it contrast/complement other work?	
11	Were there logistical obstacles regarding facilities, equipment, or props?	
12	How was the activity received by and evaluated by the Participants?	
13	What will the long–term results be? Are they sustainable?	

Considering these issues helps improve subsequent performance. Of course, these questions can and perhaps should also be asked in advance, when preparing an interactive activity.

G. What are the Disadvantages of Interactive Methodologies?

Despite their many advantages, interactive methodologies are not a panacea. They are not appropriate for all target groups or under all circumstances. Sometimes they distract from the work, complicate the seminar, or take too much time. They may even backfire, and prove counterproductive. This is because audience participation introduces a variable that is beyond the control of the Trainer. It is impossible to know in advance how an audience (or each member of it) will behave. And a single Participant can alter the flow of the work and change the ambience completely. A presentation can be rehearsed until it is "ready for prime time", but *every interactive exercise is unique*.

For this reason, Trainers are advised to start with a pilot exercise that is straightforward and short. See if this works before making an irrevocable commitment to more extensive exercises. In other words, *avoid testing the depth of the water with both feet*. This is not always possible when a detailed Lesson Plan must be prepared in advance, and interactive activities have to be scheduled. In such cases, be certain to set the stage for interactive work carefully, make sure that the Participants are ready, and start with simple exercises before progressing to more elaborate ones.

What happens if Trainers do not carefully manage and control participation?

- Some Participants may speak too much and dominate, while others remain silent
- Some Participants may digress from the topics at hand, and pursue their own interests and personal agendas, thereby reducing the relevance of the activity for others
- The work can become excessively subjective, that is to say overly focused on opinions and perceptions at the expense of facts and results
- Disputes can arise, particularly if Participants have strong views and lack traditions of conciliation in group settings
- Timing and the use of time can become complicated, and work can fall behind schedule
- The Trainer's authority can be undermined

Preventing these problems requires extra preparation and ability to act and react on the spot. View interactive exercises as theatre, with a live audience taking part in the plot and dialogue. Not like a movie, which is filmed in private, making it possible to re–shoot any scene as often as required.

H. How Should Training Methodologies be Used?

What is the optimal methodology for applying methodologies? How should Trainers approach and utilize methodologies? This sounds complicated, and even paradoxical. However, it is relatively straightforward in practice. There are several standard steps that Trainers can take to make all of their methodologies more effective in practice:

1) Inform Participants about the Learning Outcome(s). When Participants know and understand the Learning Outcome, they are more likely to appreciate and accept a well–selected methodology. This principle applies to the entire seminar and to each activity.
2) Motivate and reach out to Participants. It may be helpful to briefly explain a methodology, and clarify why and how it will be used. Indeed, this can help Participants accept and approve of the methodology. It also helps them answer the question at the back of their minds, namely "What's in this seminar for me?" or "How does this activity advance my interests?"
3) Actively guide the transfer of knowledge and skills. This is achieved by serving as a Facilitator for the selected methodology. Managing interactivity helps Participants to educate themselves

and each other, building on their existing expertise and experience. Facilitation is important because in a certain sense much learning is actually self–learning.

4) Maintain interest. Keep methodologies dynamic. Use interactive techniques, questions, audio–visual aids, and Body Language to keep the Participants engaged. Vary techniques, so that Participants do not get accustomed to patterns. Don't hesitate to use an assortment of methodologies and change track when things are not progressing satisfactorily.
5) Stimulate memory and recall. Use learning techniques such as practice, repetition, review, association, imagery, and mnemonic memory tools to educate more effectively. For example, acronyms are a good way to remember a series of points. Imagery is one of the most effective ways to facilitate recall. Body Language, especially gestures, can enhance impact and promote retention. Humor (amusing commentary, not funny jokes) can also be useful.
6) Carefully time and sequence methodologies. The optimal timing and sequencing of methodologies enhances their effectiveness. Variety and complementarity are key.
7) Combine training modalities. Use visual and auditory methodologies together. Do not rely excessively on words:

"What I hear – I forget, what I see – I remember, what I do – I learn"

8) Master key techniques that bolster the effectiveness of any methodology. For example:

- "Ice breakers" are great at the start of seminars and activities, to get the ball rolling
- "Energizers" get or keep Participants motivated in the middle of an activity
- "Closers" summarize and finalize seminars or activities. They can be used to review and emphasize key points, make conclusions, engage in future planning, or celebrate success.

9) Seek evaluation and elicit feedback. Use feedback and commentary from Participants to focus efforts on what really works. Be attentive to Participants, and watch for clues (especially from their Body Language) concerning what is working best. Feedback is crucial for improving Trainer performance, and identifying/making any warranted adjustments.

By following these steps, Trainers can make *any* methodology more effective.

I. What is the Relationship between Methodology and Trainer Personality?

No two Trainers have the same skills or style. Since training skills and style impact results from any given methodology, it follows that each Trainer must understand what he or she does best under different circumstances. Self–knowledge and self–awareness are crucial. Trainers should know what their skills and preferences are, and what they do best. There is no objectively right or wrong training style. The key issue is whether training is effective. Thus, when teaching the same subject to the same target group, one Trainer might be able to do an effective presentation, while another Trainer might obtain great results from an Interview. The choice depends on individual factors, and ability to best use personal strengths. There are many skills that Trainers can learn, and some skills that Trainers must have. And some Trainers are better than others at doing certain things. But anyone can become a better Trainer, by developing skills and learning to apply training style to different methodologies.

For self–improvement, Trainers should accentuate their strengths, instead of trying to master too many methodologies, technologies, and styles. Paradoxically, the only way to develop self–awareness (and thereby self–confidence) is through practice. As stated in Module I, life is a cruel teacher. Unlike school, life often presents the test first, and the lesson can only be studied and learned afterwards.

There are several useful paradigms for categorizing skills and preferences, so that Trainers can choose the most appropriate methodologies. Sample criteria include:

- Do you focus on content or process? Content refers to substance. This kind of focus creates desire to cover everything important or possible in the most accurate fashion. Process refers to the way that the seminar is conducted. Focus on process results in great attention to methodology, and making the seminar experience meaningful and rewarding for Participants. Clearly, the best approach is to deliver valuable content via effective processes. Still, Trainers should be attentive to how well they balance these somewhat different approaches/tasks.
- Do you focus on goals or individuals? Trainers who focus on achieving goals like to stick to the tasks at hand and stay on track/schedule. Trainers who focus on individuals are more willing to be flexible, personable, and go with the flow, as guided by Participants. Clearly, the best approach is to perform required tasks while still respecting individuality. Still, Trainers should be attentive to their preference/emphasis between these sometimes–competing requirements.
- Are you attentive to experiential learning? Some Trainers emphasize the personal nature of learning, by asking Participants to explain their reactions, identify what they have learned, and explain how they will apply it. Other Trainers take a more objective approach, and prefer to let Participants work out these issues for themselves. The best practice is to apply experiential learning when it really makes a difference. For this purpose, Trainers need to know how useful experiential learning is for their Learning Outcomes and target groups.

To comprehend strengths and weaknesses, Trainers must obtain and process accurate feedback. Training style is improved by frank assessment of actual performance. Many Trainers are attentive to audience reaction and sensitive enough to develop a good idea of what they achieve and what/how they need to improve. Nonetheless, it is helpful to get verification from supplemental sources. Questionnaires are a good place to start. However, as pointed out in Module XV, Participants may be excessively polite about what they put in writing, and avoid critiques of training style. Colleagues may also be too polite to really help. Perhaps the best way to see ourselves as others see us is with a video.

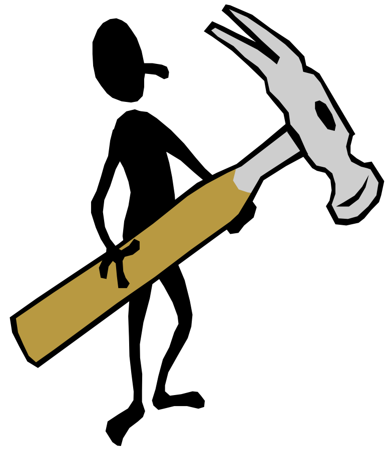
J. How Can Methodologies Promote Sustainability?

Methodologies should be selected and applied to promote the long–term objective of training, which is to make learning/development practical, applicable, useful, and thus **sustainable**. Naturally, Trainers want to make the seminar an agreeable learning experience for Participants. But the big payoff comes from how their work and life are changed and improved *afterwards*. The following best practices help make training sustainable:

- Build results and sustainability into the choice, design, and use of methodologies and activities. Means to promote sustainability should be incorporated into the work of Trainers from the very start. This is the only way to make sure that it receives sufficient emphasis. The idea is to plan and implement with an eye to the future, considering the results which will be achieved and their durability and duration. Good Trainers focus on the destination before the journey starts.

- Make training applicable to the real world of the Participants. Use real–life examples, particularly for Case Studies and Role Plays. Allow Participants to practice new skills and get feedback in the relative safety of the seminar setting. Make full use of debriefings after exercises. Use flip charts to list solutions to problems, type up the results during a coffee break, and give each Participant a copy. Send the Participants home with write–ups of their conclusions and decisions. Remember, *if it is their work, it will mean more to them*.

- If implementation is the goal, plan for it. Activities can end with planning for implementation and preparations for the future. Useful techniques include: drafting workplans with deadlines and measurable results, preparing protocols for implementation, reaching agreement on a model "contract", establishing future benchmarks, drafting a post–dated memorandum that will be opened at a set future date, using reminder systems to bring specific subjects to the attention of Participants at future intervals, and scheduling regular future meetings. When instituting a regular future activity, make the timing easy to remember, like "First Friday" or "Second Saturday" of each month, "Last Working Day of the Month Wrap–Up", etc.



- Help Participants fully address obstacles to implementation. There is a big difference between knowing and doing. Far too often, Participants do not use new knowledge, and do not modify their behavior after seminars. Their institution may be dominated by inertia, their supervisors may resist change, and they might not have any positive role models. Faced with the same reward and punishment parameters, Participants often resume and continue old habits. These obstacles may be quite difficult to overcome. But the first and most indispensable step is to identify them and deal with them at the seminar (if possible).

Trainers can also take steps to promote sustainability outside the seminar. A particularly useful tactic is to canvass and involve the sponsors, managers of Participants, and/or others who can make change happen. When these parties help design the seminar and incorporate their objectives, they become interested in implementation and results. Specifically, they can a) help define the knowledge and skills that Participants should develop, b) identify ways to put new knowledge and skills to good use, and c) determine how to track and measure results.

In order to motivate sponsors and managers, Trainers can a) frankly point out how difficult it is to change behavior through a single seminar without dedicated follow–up, and b) emphasize the connection between sustainable results and the post–seminar environment. To be sure that these contacts yield results, Trainers can arrange a post–seminar meeting/debriefing. It should cover the results achieved, concerns which have arisen, potential modifications of working conditions and reward/penalty systems, and practical future steps. It may not always be possible, but training is more sustainable if Trainers can work with key parties such as sponsors and managers of Participants to go beyond a one–shot deal, and create a longer–term consultative process.

Finally, as a general proposition, training is most sustainable when it is interactive, participatory, engaging, visually impactful, multi–faceted, and utilizes a maximum range of sensory inputs.

K. <u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

Trainers must know how to strategically choose and use the most appropriate methodologies. Just as tradespeople master a wide variety of tools and select the right one for the job at hand, or chess players choose which piece to move when. Key methodologies for Trainers include Presentations/Lectures, Demonstrations, Panel Discussions, Working Groups, Working Partnerships, Case Studies, Role Plays, Simulations, Games, Interviews, and Teaching Back. Trainers should also master supplemental techniques (listed below) that can be combined with these methodologies to promote interactivity and participation, and thereby results and sustainability.

However, the choice for Trainers is not always clear cut. Working with people presents numerous variables. Much depends upon the Learning Outcome, the target group, the nature of what is being done, the context, the logistics, and the personality and skills of the Trainer. Furthermore, each Trainer is unique, and no two training seminars are the same. However, Trainers can employ many techniques to become aware of what they do best, and learn how to combine different methodologies with their own training style. And there are many best practices for utilizing different methodologies. To put everything together, Trainers should focus on results and the sustainability of their work.

Finally, and perhaps in some ways most importantly, Trainers need to fully appreciate the personal ramifications of their choice of methodology:

"<u>People may forget much of what you say, but they remember how you made them feel</u>"

In other words, <u>methodology also promotes learning through a direct effect on how Participants feel</u>. And what Participants feel strongly influences what they take away from the seminar. For this reason, <u>when Trainers use methodology well, Participants remember well, and remember the Trainers well</u>.

In combination with the methodologies available to Trainers, interactive techniques offer the greatest payoff for professional formation, and have the greatest impact on how Participants feel. Given the variety of options, their clear educational and motivational value, and the chance to make seminar work enjoyable and sustainable, interactive techniques should come in first place. Amongst the best are Moderated Group Discussions, Brainstorming, Taking Notes, Questionnaires, Collective Consultation, and Voting with Stickers

Why then does the Presentation/Lecture format (perhaps with questions at the end) predominate?

- Presentations/Lectures are easier to prepare and deliver, and facilitate time management
- Presentations/Lectures are relatively safe, and unlikely to lead to anything worse than boredom
- Some Trainers prefer to stay in control and stay in the spotlight
- Some Trainers do not trust Participants to play a role in their own professional formation
- Inertia favors traditional practice

It is clear that interactive methodologies and are more challenging to implement, more unpredictable, more time–consuming, and never totally manageable. And they require additional preparation, and special interpersonal skills on the part of Trainers. However, their numerous advantages make them highly recommended under the right circumstances. Indeed, the best Trainers usually achieve that status by being able to effectively use interactive methodologies and techniques.

MODULE X
PRESENTATIONS

Learning Outcome: Trainers have the knowledge and skills required for making effective presentations that engage and involve the audience.

A. Introduction

Presentations are an important component of every seminar, and an excellent way to communicate and convey information (when delivered well). Therefore, Trainers must know how to make great presentations. This requires mastering some special techniques, being able to take advantage of natural skills, and understanding what Participants want to see and hear (and will tolerate). Please note that the term "lecture" will not be used, since it has the connotation of being extremely one–sided.

Generally speaking, presentations are most effective when a) powerfully delivered, b) suitably timed (brief), and c) interspersed with other activities. Indeed, once Participants know that presentations are being given and utilized in this manner, they will be more attentive and receptive.

There is a common misperception that presentations are "speeches delivered formally to a large audience". Actually, we are constantly giving presentations, every day of our lives! They occur whenever we interact and communicate with others. This includes meetings, interviews, marketing activities, social events, meals, even when we educate children and train pets.

Thus, the concept of presentation should be expanded to include any situation where we speak to others with the objective of conveying information or a message. For example:

- A two–minute description of recent progress given by an employee to the boss in the hallway
- A customer's request to a store manager to replace a recently purchased defective product
- A manager explaining to an employee how to perform a work–related task
- A story or experience relayed to a group of friends gathered in a restaurant or bar

Objectives may vary, audiences may be small, settings may be informal, but the fact of the matter remains that *any time we are communicating a point to others we are making a presentation*.

These examples show that there are many excellent reasons to develop presentation skills, in addition to being able to successfully deliver training. Indeed, good presenters who can work with an audience are more successful at almost everything they do.

B. What are the Basic Principles for Making Effective Presentations?

The following principles are important for training, but also apply to presentations in many contexts:

- Presentations are primarily used to convey information. But they can also be used to convince or entertain. *Inform + Convince + Entertain = ICE.* (Acronyms are a great memory tool).
- Presentations are more effective when there is interplay and exchange. So, keep Participants as actively involved as possible.

- Special skills and techniques are required to persuade and convince. According to Cicero, it is necessary to engage the mind, move the heart, and make people care. This means generating the will and then showing the way.
- Personality is important. Trainers should be authoritative, confident, authentic, enthusiastic, credible, dynamic, honest, congenial, agreeable, and passionate (without excessive emotion).
- Trainers need to establish a physical presence. This can be done through style, appearance, Body Language (stance, eye contact, voice/intonation), clothing/uniform, props, etc.
- It is more effective to show than to tell. Professionals prefer to make up their own minds on the basis of what they perceive, not follow instructions concerning what to think.
- It is crucial to make presentations well–structured, concise, and to the point. Organization is the key to effectiveness. When any time is wasted, everyone's time is wasted.
- Pauses are very important. They focus attention, generate interest, give Participants time to think, demarcate a new subject, or hide the fact that the Trainer has lost his/her place.
- Presentations should go beyond the materials. Good Trainers take advantage of any chance to speak directly to Participants. They do not read to people who know how to read.
- There is no excuse for inadequate preparation of a presentation. The admonition that "failing to prepare is preparing to fail" is especially true for presentations.

C. What are the Three Parts of a Presentation?

Presentations (like written materials) have three crucial parts:

1) **Opening**
2) **Body**
3) **Conclusion**

Each of these three parts must be prepared and finalized in its own right. Then they must be thoughtfully interlinked and harmonized like the parts of a puzzle.

1) Part One: Opening

This is the place to get the attention of Participants, and tell them what they are going to learn, be told, or do. The opening should introduce the topic, explain why it is important, and summarize anticipated results. Trainers should focus attention, create anticipation, establish rapport, display their style, and make Participants feel comfortable. Suggestions for making the opening captivating are presented in Section "D" below.

2) Part Two: Body

This is the content of the presentation, where Participants learn what they need to learn. It should be well organized, and divided into sections. If the objective is to convince or set the stage for concrete action, the body can be divided into three parts, according to the "**POP System**". Present:

a) The *Position* (nature of the situation or problem)
b) The *Options* (what can be done to address or resolve the situation or problem), and
c) The *Proposal* (optimal or preferred solution).

Be sure to provide bridges/transitions between sections or points, so Participants follow where the presentation is and where it is going. Time management is important, so make every word count.

3) <u>Part Three: Conclusion</u>

This is the place to summarize and reiterate what Participants have learned or done. The key concepts, points, and results should be succinctly highlighted. Use reinforcement to solidify learning. Then, consider what comes next and define or plan further steps, or get participants to do so. Build on what has been accomplished by inspiring future use and progress. Unfortunately, far too many presentations skip these last crucial steps, and end somewhat abruptly with a premature "time's up, so thank you".

<u>Sometimes Trainers start with what could best be described as an Introduction, essentially creating a fourth part of their presentation prior to the opening</u>. However, introductions do not captivate, and may even undermine the opening. As discussed in Section "D" below, it is better for Trainers to start with a challenging statement or intriguing question rather than pleasantries or a summary of their background and qualifications. If an introduction of the Trainer and/or subject is really necessary, it should be given by an organizer, and kept brief. Otherwise, Trainers should incorporate background information into subsequent statements, and weave the introduction into the presentation: "Indeed, I have often witnessed the importance of this measure over the past twenty years of my work with…"

"<u>REPITION IS THE MOTHER OF LEARNING</u>"

This key principle deserves to be applied to coordination of the three sections of each presentation:

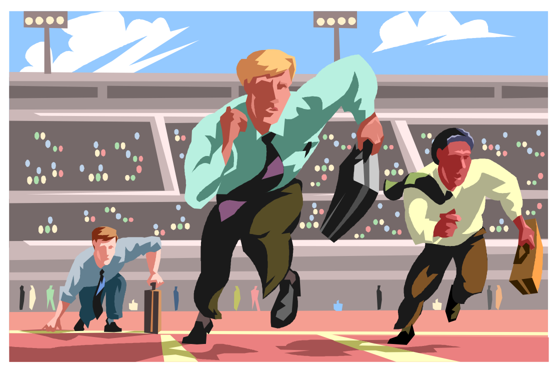
1) **<u>Open by telling Participants what you are *going to* tell them</u>** (and why it is important)

2) **<u>Then use the body to tell Participants what you *want to* tell them</u>**

3) **<u>Then close by telling Participants what you *already* told them</u>** (and how to use it in the future)

This technique is preferred by all communications professionals. News programs, for example, begin with headlines or a summary of what is to come (with something of interest for everyone, to keep people tuned in), and they end with another summary. Breaks are preceded by a preview of what follows, to make sure people stay on board or come back. Trainers should use the same practices.

D. <u>What is the Best Way to Start a Presentation</u>?



The first words from Trainers generate the greatest impact, and are what Participants remember most. Therefore, <u>the best way to open a presentation is with a provocative/challenging statement, a promise based on the Learning Outcome, or a poignant question</u>. State an intriguing fact, describe an interesting situation, ask a probing question, or make a startling promise about what is to come. Think of a racer leaving the starting block!

Consider the following opening lines:

- "**Fifty percent** of new businesses fail during their **first** year! And the **main** reason for this failure rate is … [dramatic pause] inadequate market analysis". Today, we are going to discuss how to prevent this from happening to **you**.
- "Judges who do not attend continuing education courses every year are **two times** [hold up two fingers] more likely to have their decisions over–ruled on appeal".
- "Why is it that annual salaries for managers have increased by **twenty percent** since commissions were introduced?" How can a commission plan help increase **your** sales?

- "Last month, just as the captain of the **largest** boat in our fleet was entering international waters with a cargo of electronic supplies…"
- "By the end of this seminar, **everyone** in the room will be able to deliver more effective presentations to a group of **any** size" (statement of the Learning Outcome).
- "Everybody in this room **already knows** how to make a sale. What we are going to do today is help you to close deals **faster**, by reading the Body Language signals every client sends".

The delivery of the opening statement is crucial. The tone of voice and pitch should be dynamic. It is important to emphasize key words, and use hand gestures. More powerful results are achieved by combining words and gestures. It can be effective to pause before starting, to build anticipation and excitement. Pauses can also be useful after the opening sentence. Training style should focus attention and make Participants take notice. Trainers should think of great orators starting a major speech! "Friends, Romans, and countrymen, lend me your ears…"

Here are some *ineffective* ways to begin a presentation:

- Long pleasantries concerning how nice it is to be at the seminar, meet old colleagues, be back in town, etc. Why not weave pleasantries into an informative and attention–grabbing opening?
- Background or logistical information. Why clog up the opening with off–point matters that can best be handled later, at a more appropriate time?
- Rambling comments. Why not get attention with a focused and concise approach?
- Contrived or artificial questions. Why not get Participants to concentrate on a key issue?
- Jokes. A well–told short story that is interesting and relevant can be riveting, and can include surprises or humor. But jokes designed to generate laughter are usually a bad idea, and can potentially be dangerous. Why risk the silence that follows a bad or poorly delivered joke?

E. What are the Ten Key Requirements for Effective Presentations?

Here are ten key issues and practices that Trainers must deal with to make effective presentations:

1) PREPARATION

As a general rule, more preparation is better. While it is possible to over–prepare a presentation, and make it seem rehearsed or "canned" rather than genuine, this is unlikely. If there is any doubt about the presentation, a little extra preparation is most likely to be helpful. The following principles apply:

- Start preparing presentations early, or well in advance.
- Prepare notes (or an outline) to structure the presentation and guide you through it. Make them concise, easily visible, and user–friendly. Get comfortable with the notes by using them. Feel free to make annotations on the notes.
- Practice your delivery several times, including the day before the seminar. Be sure to do the entire presentation at least once. This is the best way to prepare for delivery.
- Know the opening lines of the presentation by heart.
- Get the timing right. Know how much time you have. Time the practice delivery, until you have a good feeling for how fast you need to go and how much you can actually cover.
- Indicate the length of sections in the margins of notes, if this helps with time management.

- Improve delivery and Body Language by considering how others see you. Make and watch a video of your presentation, or practice in front of a full–length mirror.
- Improve voice control and tone by finding out how others hear you. Make and listen to a recording of your presentation, or at the very least practice listening to yourself.
- Obtain feedback regarding content and delivery by practicing in front of a trusted person.
- Carefully plan and organize any use of materials, equipment, or props.
- Make a list of questions that are most likely to be asked, and prepare tentative answers.
- Make a list of questions to ask, in case this proves opportune.
- Review your notes one final time on the day of delivery, if possible.
- Keep everything required for the presentation with you and under your control. Never trust crucial items to someone else, or put them in a place where they might get "diverted" or not arrive on–time (such as checked luggage).

As stated previously, **failing to prepare is preparing to fail**.

2) CONFIDENCE

It is important for Trainers to communicate confidence. Participants want to see Trainers in control, poised, comfortable, and calmly self–assured. After all, *looking* and *acting* like an expert is part of *being* an expert. Trainers who don't seem to know what they are doing lose respect from the Participants, and compromise their message. *Confidence is demonstrated by controlling position, posture, movement, Body Language, eye contact, tone of voice, and delivery style*, as well as showing knowledge of the subject. In order to appear confident, Trainers must also overcome nervousness.

People show nervousness in their own individual ways. The most typical manifestations are shifting position, fidgeting, clasping or wringing the hands, gripping or playing with something (such as a pen), holding an item up or close to the chest, tapping, finger movements, rapid eye movements, avoiding eye contact, stuttering, and speaking in an uneven voice. Some people stand behind a barrier (podium or desk) for protection, become stiff, or put their hands in their pockets. Through experience, Trainers get to know their habits and tendencies, and what to avoid doing. They can also identify practices which help them under different circumstances.

There are three categories of techniques to build confidence and minimize nervousness:

1) **Preparation**. Confidence and comfort are enhanced by knowing the subject, being familiar with the target group, practicing the presentation, memorizing the opening lines, being adept with equipment and audio–visual aids, having good notes conveniently placed, having a glass of water handy, and feeling good about (getting to know) the location and logistics.

2) **Positive mental attitude**. Helpful mental techniques include thinking confidently, using positive imagery, accepting that a little nervousness is natural (not getting nervous about being nervous), seeing the presentation as a friendly conversation, and remembering that training can and should be fun (or at least enjoyable). It is also useful to think positively about the Participants. After all, they usually want Trainers to succeed, since this is to their benefit. And they are likely to overlook small matters when they appreciate the big picture.

3) **<u>Physical relaxation exercises</u>**. Useful techniques include deep breathing exercises (up to three breaths using the diaphragm, to decrease heart rate and increase oxygen flow to the brain), meditating, humming a nice song, sitting down for a minute, and taking a small slow walk. It is also helpful to use confident Body Language (like pushing the shoulders back and putting both hands behind the back), since feelings are affected by posture. Some Trainers stand near a table and gently put their hand against it for support. To be relaxed, avoid stimulant beverages.

<u>The best approach is to try different techniques from each category, and see which (or which combination) is most effective</u>. Everyone is different, so what helps one person may not be very beneficial for others. For example, some people like to walk around, while others prefer to sit. But above all, remember:

- Even successful speakers, actors, musicians, and athletes *sometimes* get "stage fright"
- To a certain degree, a little nervousness and extra adrenalin is actually a positive thing
- Nervousness dissipates and confidence builds once the presentation gets under way

So, prepare yourself, memorize the opening lines, employ relaxation techniques, accept being a little nervous, and start with a good rhythm. Then, be confident about letting the rest take care of itself.

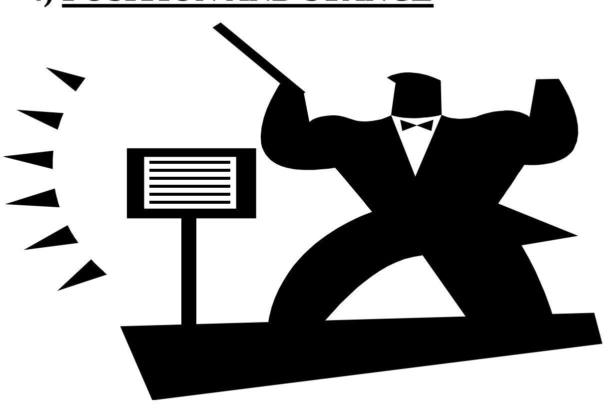
3) <u>ORIENTATION</u>

<u>Orientation refers to a Trainer's relationship with the environment</u>. The following principles apply:

- Arrive early to inspect the facilities, get familiar with them, learn where things are, and make final preparations.
- Make sure that the layout, tables, chairs, equipment, lighting, sound system, and ventilation are to your satisfaction.
- Organize everything you need, such as your computer, note table, and papers, and make sure you have drinking water.
- Stand in the exact location you will use when speaking. Get comfortable with this position. Change anything you don't like. Practice your opening lines (out loud if you are alone).

When Trainers are oriented and comfortable with their surroundings, it shows.

4) <u>POSITION AND STANCE</u>



Trainers need to strictly control their position (location) and stance at all times. Position and stance directly affect authority and presence, and help put Trainers in charge. They show how Trainers view their role, and approach their relationship to the Participants. In addition, position and stance have a profound impact on the nature of communication, the feelings that are generated, and the Trainer's ability to "reach out" to Participants. Always be aware of where you place yourself with respect to others. Make motion deliberate, by considering and being aware of how, when, and why you move about.

First and foremost, choose a central position, which is dominant and puts you in charge. You should be able to funnel attention upon yourself, and see all of the Participants. Trainers are the center of attention when their outstretched arms create a horseshoe effect that includes all the Participants. Look at the attorney (or expert) to the right. He is facing the jury squarely, and holding his arms open to create an inclusive funnel. It is almost as though he were hugging them from a distance. Notice how this captures everyone's attention, and focuses it exactly where he wants it, on him and his chart.

Change distance to modify interactions and the level of intimacy. Approaching Participants or a single Participant increases intensity/focus, and strengthens communication. Use this technique to draw attention to a point, or to focus on or motivate a Participant who deserves special attention, or who is not paying enough attention. Notice how the attorney (or expert) to the left approaches the jury and reaches out with his arm/hand. But be sure to stay in the social zone, without entering personal space. Also, never turn your back on Participants. Face them even when retreating away from them towards a central position.

Avoid going beyond an imaginary line connecting the closest Participants on your right and left. This excludes them, and can appear inconsiderate. If you accidentally cross this line, move backwards slowly without turning around, and glance at the Participants on each side to acknowledge them (and offer an unspoken apology). Continue talking while back–pedaling. Do this deliberately yet gracefully.

Choose the right elevation. In small seminars, stay at the same level as Participants, and stand in order to see and be seen by everyone. In larger rooms with theatre style seating, it is advantageous to be slightly elevated. Otherwise, Participants in the back may not be able to see you, over the heads of people in front of them. In a large hall where the first rows are below the podium and the rows ascend (like an amphitheater), it is best to stand on the floor and look up at everyone. Otherwise, you look down at the front rows. The worst practice is to sit behind a desk or stand behind a podium above a large audience. This makes Trainers look like a head perched on a desk or podium.

With a level playing field, Participants see the Trainer well

With an elevated stage, Participants only see a talking head

Speaking up to everyone, the center of the floor is the center of attention

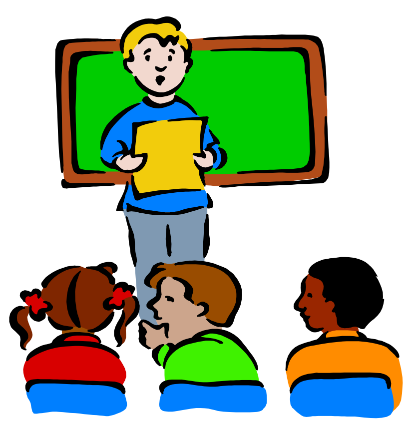
Always stand when making a presentation. It is difficult to have a solid presence when seated. Standing makes Trainers more visible, and enhances eye contact. It frees the arms and hands to make gestures. It enables Trainers to move about, modify distances (approach Participants), and change orientation (face a Participant squarely). It expands the chest and lungs, allowing for better voice projection. It permits Trainers to orient their feet in particular/selected directions, to provide emphasis. Simply stated, Trainers who stand communicate better.

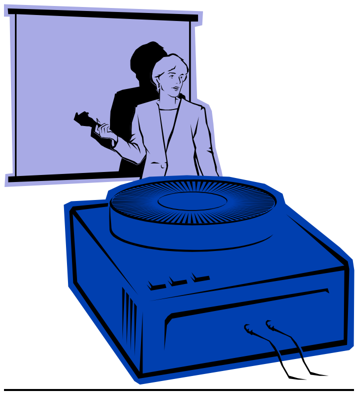
Only sit down for special reasons and for short periods. Sitting in a chair right in front of the audience (without a table or other barrier) is a nice way to communicate directly and informally. Some Trainers do this to change the rhythm of the seminar, and shift from a presentation to a more relaxed dialogue. Sitting behind a table is not recommended. Participants will not be able to see you well, your ability to use Body Language will be limited, and the projection of your voice will be reduced. Good Trainers alternate between standing and sitting, for strategic and practical reasons.

Maintain a solid stance that shows control. Stand up straight, with legs firmly planted and weight on the balls of the feet. Do not rock, sway, lean, move from side to side, or engage in any repetitive motion. Control foot alignment. To focus attention, point both feet in a single direction or towards a Participant. To be more inclusive, point feet and toes outward to expand the area of communication.

Avoid Barriers. To communicate directly with Participants, do not stand (or hide) behind a lectern, table, or other item of furniture. This creates physical separation and an impression of aloofness. Standing directly in front of a group, without barriers or props, is the ultimate expression of confidence. It also brings Trainers closer to Participants. Of course, it is acceptable to have a lectern or table just to the side, for occasional use and to place notes. But only stand behind a lectern if you need to rely heavily on notes, or want to appear important, authoritative, or imposing.

Avoid turning props into barriers. Trainers sometimes hold notes, documents, clipboards, or other items up in front of them. This is a protective and blocking gesture, which creates distance between Trainers and Participants. It also reveals nervousness. When people exert energy to maintain a body position (such as holding up their hands, a notebook, or a glass), it signifies tension. The higher the position, the greater the tension. When people are relaxed, gravity moves everything downward. Try to place notes and documents on a nearby table, where you can comfortably glance at them, and only pick them up when you really need to, such as to read a brief passage. Use one hand (unlike the person at right), and hold things to your side in between uses and whenever possible.





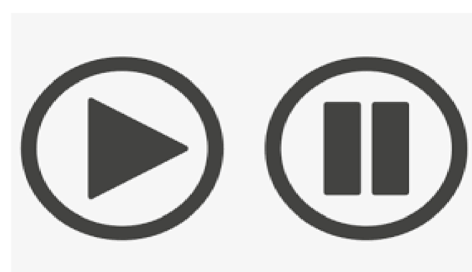
Never get in the way of the show. Don't block the view of Participants by standing in front of screens, flipcharts, or other audio–visual aids like the person on the left. Do not turn your back on the audience when using audio–visual aids, like the person on the right. Avoid standing in front of a strong source of light. Light behind a person reduces visibility and creates a shadow effect.

5) DELIVERY

The way a presentation is delivered attracts as much (and sometimes more) attention than the substance of what is covered. Great delivery can add a lot to limited substance. Poor delivery can detract significantly from great substance. Great delivery and great substance make a winning combination. Open on a powerful note, and then keep up the momentum.

For successful delivery, follow these suggestions (discussed in greater detail in Module XII):

- Attention. Focus attention on yourself, and on what you want Participants to notice. Make your delivery powerful and convincing to maintain attention.
- Diction. Use short sentences and plain language. Do not use long and complicated sentences that are difficult to understand. Choose words carefully. Use action verbs in the present tense to enhance the impact of events or stories. Avoid utterances (ah, um), intensifiers (utterly, absolutely, surely), hedgers (sort of, a little, kind of), and useless words (you know, I mean).
- Pace. Keep a good pace. Talk fast enough to maintain interest, but slow enough for the Participants to follow. Try to match the normal talking speed of the Participants.
- Pauses. Know how to pause, and have the courage to pause. Trainers who can control pauses and use them comfortably establish control and show confidence. Use pauses to make points, separate subjects, and give Participants time to answer a question. Pausing at the end of sentences and mid–sentence where there would be a written comma creates an agreeable pace and actually increases Participant understanding. As the saying goes, "Pause for Poise"!



Control your play and pause buttons

- Eye Contact. Look around the room, focusing on Participants one at a time, noticing each person periodically. Making eye contact at random appears natural, whereas moving methodically from one side of the room to the other appears artificial. Do not neglect Participants closest to the front or on your dominant side (a common mistake). If you are nervous about making eye contact with large groups, look at foreheads. Be sure not to overdo eye contact by staring.
- Voice. Enunciate words clearly, and separate them, so Participants can hear each one. Vary pitch (tone) to provide emphasis and maintain interest. Clearly emphasize important words and phrases. Control volume and project your voice evenly, to make sure that everyone can hear, even in the back.

- Expressions. Control facial expressions. Keep them positive and relaxed. Avoid displaying negative emotions and reactions.
- Gestures. Every gesture communicates! Pay attention to your gestures. Control them, and use them to shape your message.
- Hands. Use your hands to communicate. Keep them out of your pockets, so Participants can see them. Know what different hand signals mean, and how and when to use them. Try to master the basic elements of sign language.

Finally, control your movements. All movements should be deliberate, and as graceful as possible. Know where you are and where you want to go (orientation and direction). Further, time your movements carefully. For example, move forward or towards a Participant when asking or receiving a question. Move backwards to answer a question to the entire audience, or after finishing a point.

6) NOTES

It is impressive to deliver a presentation without notes. But this is not necessary, nor advisable. Participants understand that notes are useful and sometimes indispensable. They do not think less of Trainers who use notes properly (within limits). On the contrary, when Trainers do not use notes, Participants may wonder if the presentation is “canned”, extemporaneous, or haphazard (missing key points, since nobody can remember everything). The bottom line is that Participants want to learn and want a good presentation, so Trainers should do what is necessary to meet their standards.

The first rule is to make notes in outline format, and use them to structure presentations. Outlines are summaries which help Trainers stay on track. They cover the major topics and points to cover, and also keep everything in the correct order. When properly summarized and formatted, notes are easy to use, and never interfere with the presentation. In addition, notes help keep Trainers confident and comfortable with their tasks.

Follow these additional principles:

- To create an outline format and strict structure, use Roman numerals for major subjects, then capital letters for sub–topics, and then regular numbers for points to cover. To make notes user–friendly, follow the principles mentioned for materials in Module VII Section “C”. Employ bold text, underlining, bullet points, colored backgrounds, different size text and font, highlighting, symbols (such as question marks, exclamation points, and stars), etc.

- Keep notes short. Use key words and mini phrases, not full sentences. Remember, notes are designed to trigger memory, not provide information. If you know the presentation well, an outline in skeleton format is sufficient.
- If you have multiple pages, number and staple them together.
- Never use a copy of the presentation as notes. It will probably do more harm than good.
- Refer to your notes. The goal is to give a good presentation, not prove memorization skills.
- Never read your notes. Don’t read anything more than a few sentences or a short quotation.

- Make sure the text is large enough to be seen comfortably from a distance.
- Don't let notes use you, like the man on the right. Use them comfortably, like the lady on the left. But only hold them for limited periods of time, as necessary, and preferably in only one hand. Notes are not props.
- The best way to manage notes is to place them on a small table nearby. This way you can look over towards them for reference, as needed.

- Use notes to help with time management. As suggested above, place notations in the margins concerning how much time each section should take. This helps keep things on schedule, and determine if it is necessary to speed up or slow down.
- Always bring your notes with you and keep them under your control, even if you have excellent audio–visual tools. There is always a chance of encountering "technical difficulties".
- Remember that familiarity with notes, through practice, makes them better friends for delivery.

Following these practices makes notes into an optimal tool for delivering excellent presentations, and turns them into a source of confidence for the Trainer.

7) TIMING

Judicious use of time is the hallmark of good presentations. Good Trainers make every minute count.

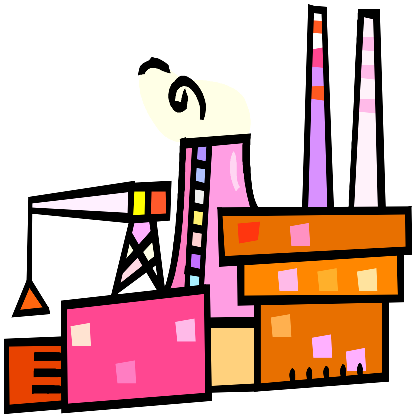
- The normal/average adult attention span is about twenty minutes. After that, a rapidly growing percentage of Participants start to "turn off", and retain less. Indeed, after only seven minutes, minds start to wander. Even dynamic speakers confront diminishing returns very quickly.
- Presentations that are participatory and engage the audience can be productive for longer. But the maximum amount of time should never exceed forty–fifty minutes (an "academic hour").
- Retention is always limited. The average Participant learns five to ten new points in a presentation. If a Participant misses a point, it is simply because it was not in this limited number. Talking longer or faster is unlikely to significantly increase the amount of learning taking place.
- To monitor time, use an easily visible large watch or small clock on a side table. Never look at a wristwatch. This draws attention to the time, and distracts Participants with thoughts about scheduling.
- Through practice, know how much detail to provide in presentations.
- If time becomes a problem, pick up the pace. But don't skip subjects. Make some brief points on each subject, and state the need to move on.

- Try to control the timing of interactive exercises, despite the challenges.
- Stay within your allotted time. Do not keep Participants late, eat into the coffee break, or take time from other Trainers. This shows lack of organization and generates resentment, which far outweigh the benefits of any incremental learning.
- Remember, time is our friend, because it keeps us honest. We are lucky to have other people's time. The object of a presentation is not to cover everything possible, or to use as much time as possible. *Great Trainers provide as much value as is reasonably possible in the available time*.

Additional principles regarding time management are discussed in Module XIV.

8) DISTRACTIONS

To stay focused and keep Participants focused, take prudent steps to prevent distractions. And if they arise, be ready to deal with them or in the alternative ignore them.



- Eliminate or block sources of noise, in advance if possible. If there is street noise or a factory nearby, close the windows. If there is noise in the building, speak to the organizers.
- Put away audio–visual aids after use. Turn off screens, turn over used sheets on flip charts, and cover props. Remove objects that distract or create barriers.
- After using a marker, replace the cap and put it down. If the cap is off, Participants might think about it drying out. If you put it on your ear, Participants will wonder when it will fall off.
- Do not focus on Participants who are causing small distractions. Unless action is warranted, avoid eye contact and pretend that they are not there.

If there is a distraction beyond your control, subtle humor may be the best (and only) bet.

9) HONESTY

Trainers should be as honest and straightforward with Participants as possible. However, many organizational, logistical, and personal details are not for public consumption. Honesty should be distinguished from credibility. Trainers should always be credible, in the professional sense. Honesty should serve credibility. And credibility does not always mandate complete disclosure.

- Be honest with Participants about organizational or logistical issues that can be characterized as *force majeure*. For example, inform Participants if a power cut will prevent the use of audio–visual aids, or if the late arrival of a co–Trainer due to travel problems requires a last–minute re–distribution of work. There is no reason to keep this kind of information secret.
- However, if an organizer or colleague is responsible for a logistical problem, either characterize it as *force majeure* or say nothing. Never single out another party for blame.
- Never tell Participants that you are nervous, unprepared, disorganized, have lost your place, or are doing something for the first time. They may suspect this, but don't confirm it.
- If you are unable to resolve a problem but believe that a Participant might have the know–how, make a light–hearted comment about your limitations, and accept assistance graciously.
- Be willing to admit that you do not know something if you are pressed to provide an answer and this is indeed the case. But be quick to indicate where the answer can be found, and/or promise to find it within a set time period. Then fulfil your promise.

- Never betray a confidence. Information provided on a confidential basis (for example during Training Needs Assessment) should never be disclosed. However, limited disclosure may be warranted if there is a compelling reason and anonymity of the source can be fully respected.

Finally, encourage Participants to be honest, and also forthcoming. For example, invite them to speak up if they need a mini–break, or wish to cover a particular subject in greater detail. Let Participants know that this kind of information is welcome. Show respect for such input, and be sure to act on it (to the extent possible).

10) <u>HUMOR</u>

Humor can be an excellent tool in the Trainer's repertoire or a dangerous risk. Often it is a double–edged sword, that is to say a bit of both.

- People who are not naturally funny should not try to be funny.
- Trainers should not use jokes unless they know what they are doing. The silence following something only the Trainer thought was funny can seem to last for an eternity.
- Distinguish jokes and humor. It is possible to be humorous and witty (to elicit smiles) without recourse to jokes.
- Humor has to be related to the training subject and what Participants know. An amusing anecdote that the Participants identify with can score points.
- Humor should never be directed against anyone. Making fun of a Participant is taboo.
- Trainers can usually get away with self–criticism or light–hearted humor at their own expense.
- Subtle humor that is graciously served can help Participants have a good time, thereby promoting creativity, learning, and retention. Studies show that humor supports memory!
- Humor can help change attitudes. Indeed, sometimes humor works in instances where logic and argument do not. However, this use of humor is a special skill. It depends on the audience, and it can backfire.
- Icebreakers are a good place to inject a slight note of levity. This can reduce tension and promote congeniality moving forward.
- Use humor incrementally. Start small, test the waters, and be ready to back off.

Although it may be dangerous to tell jokes, this does not mean that seminars have to be somber and rigid. It is possible and usually advantageous for Trainers to employ subtle humor to create a friendly and comfortable Learning Environment. <u>There is a major difference between humor which encourages smiles and jokes which seek laughter</u>. Perhaps the best approach is to forget about laughter, and consider how to elicit and share smiles.

F. <u>What are the Best Ways to Use Audio–Visual Aids</u>?

One picture is worth a thousand words. This makes audio–visual aids one of the best means for improving presentations and enhancing learning. Particularly when they combine pictures or video and sound, or reinforce/embellish spoken words.

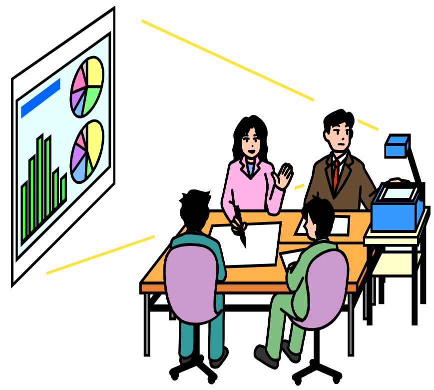
<u>Audio–visual aids for presentations include</u>: projectors, players, blackboards, whiteboards, flipcharts, objects (props), anything used for demonstration purposes, and even some kinds of handouts.

<u>Audio–visual aids are extremely important because</u>:

- Most learning is visual (according to some estimates up to 75%).
- What we see we learn faster, understand better, and remember longer.
- Learning is most effective when visual and auditory inputs complement each other.
- Audio–visual aids structure presentations, and help Trainers stay focused and on track.
- Audio–visual aids make presentations more interesting, add variety, increase attention, enhance focus, and generate emphasis.
- Audio–visual aids demonstrate relationships through diagrams, charts, graphs, etc.
- Audio–visual aids can add humor, through cartoons and pictures.

- Audio–visual aids help standardize presentations for multiple occasions or locations.
- Audio–visual aids can make a favorable impression. They show that Trainers have spent time preparing, and are not just talking extemporaneously or off the top of their heads.
- Video recordings are particularly useful for demonstrating a skill or practice.
- If suitable for printed handouts or placement on a data storage device (DVD or USB), audio–visual information can serve as a permanent and continuing resource for Participants.

Best practices for using audio–visual aids include:



- Preparation. Put all materials together well in advance of use.
- Appropriateness. Make sure audio–visual aids are appropriate to the subject matter and presentation, and relevant to the audience (customized).
- Integration. Integrate audio–visual aids into the presentation, and time them well, so that they are complementary.
- Practice. Do "dress rehearsals" of your presentation using the audio–visual aids, until you are comfortable with them.
- Functionality. Make sure audio–visual aids work. Before the presentation, check the power source, connections, compatibility of computer programs, functioning of USB devices, lighting, visibility, and sound system.
- Placement. Make sure that screens and flipcharts are appropriately placed and situated, so that they are visible to all Participants.
- Use. Keep audio–visual aids ready for use, but on standby. If possible, don't turn them fully on or take them out until they are needed. Also, turn them off or put them away immediately after use. Avoid distractions. But don't start disassembling things until after the seminar.
- Setting the stage. Introduce your audio–visual aids before using them. Start by telling Participants what they are looking at, and why.
- Props. Props can be considered audio–visual aids. Showing them can be useful, particularly if they have symbolic value. They can also help demonstrate correct processes and procedures.

- Timing. Use audio–visual aids at the right speed. Give Participants adequate time to see/read and listen. If you are providing information in a block (for example showing a video role play for subsequent group discussion), it is useful to be able to freeze the picture while you talk, or rewind and fast forward.
- Eye Contact. Maintain eye contact as much as possible. Don't read from a screen. Face forward and face the audience.
- Position. Stand to the side, to the extent possible, so Participants have an unobstructed view of everything they need to see.
- Pointers. Use the right kind of pointer or pointing device.

Even when everything mentioned above is done right, the format of audio–visual aids can detract from results. PowerPoint presentations, in particular, are far too often not user friendly! Therefore:

- Make the formatting of slides as user–friendly and as simple as possible. This includes headings, layout, contrast, font size, background, clip–art, and transitions.
- Ensure that text on slides is large enough to be seen by all Participants, including those in the back. There is no point showing text that is too small to read.
- Never put more than seven lines on one slide, or more than seven words on one line.

- Never present long or excessive text on slides. Participants are likely to be unwilling or unable to read it. Put it in the materials or a handout instead.
- Use numbers for related or sequential lists, bullet points for non–prioritized lists, and boxes for separate topics.
- Use charts and graphs freely.
- Number slides (preferably at the bottom) for reference purposes.

<u>Colors send powerful visual messages, and can be used to enhance any presentation</u>.

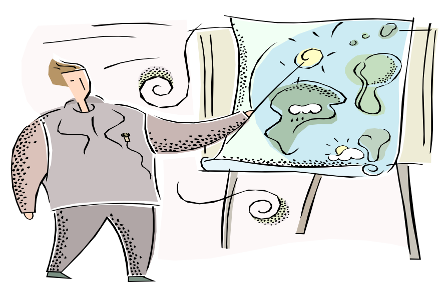
- Red attracts attention, increases intensity, highlights problems, or signifies the need to stop.
- Green signifies nature, health, progress, growth, agreement, and forward progress.
- Yellow generates warmth and optimism, and can stimulate thinking. It represents the sun and sunshine. Yellow can also be used to signal caution.
- Black is serious and good for emphasis, but can be somber or indicate finality. In many contexts, such as financial, black is very positive, signifying solvency or surplus.
- White signifies purity, cleanliness, and good. It can also be used to establish order.
- Blue is associated with trust, authority, and masculinity, and evokes images of the sky.
- Orange is a positive color. It can be used to stimulate energy or for highlighting.
- Gold and silver are associated with wealth, success, prosperity, good results, and prizes.

Use different colors with audio–visual aids, PowerPoint presentations, flipcharts, etc. But remember that colors are culture–specific. For example, brides in China wear read, since white signifies death.

<u>Flipcharts are perhaps the most commonly used audio–visual aid, and certainly the most reliable</u>. They are readily available, easily moved and stored, long–lasting, and inexpensive. Flipcharts always work, since they are not dependent on technology or electricity. They can be prepared in advance, with outlining and tracings of drawings, or small notes in pencil along the margins. Flipcharts can be used to document ideas, track plans, record input, make a presentation more impactful, share the results from Working Groups, or vote/prioritize by attaching stickers or "Post Its" to specific lines or places. In spite of the information revolution, Trainers should know how to use this simple and versatile tool.

- Make sure the flipchart is correctly assembled and stable
- Place it properly, for use while facing the audience. Most Trainers approach flipcharts from their dominant side. Some prefer to use their non–dominant side for writing, and their dominant side for pointing.
- Make it accessible to Participants if they will be using it
- Have adequate supplies of paper and markers
- Do not put too much material on one page
- Write in block print, and make the letters large enough for all to see, including Participants in the back

- Use different colors for variety and classification
- Replace the cap and put markers down when not in use
- Have a pointer if you plan to do a lot of pointing
- Turn pages out of sight when they are no longer necessary
- Talk to the Participants, never talk to a flipchart
- Don't turn your back on Participants when using a flipchart



Despite their numerous advantages, audio–visual aids are not a panacea. They should not be over–used, since Participants do not want to be overloaded with visual information or stimuli. They should not be overelaborate, since this distracts and detracts from the Trainer's work. They should only be used at the right times. It is counterproductive to show slides in a warm darkened room right after a big lunch. The time they take should be carefully considered, since their use may not be worthwhile. And audio–visual aids are not cure–all gimmicks, so they do not rectify deficiencies in a presentation.

Finally, when using audio–visual aids **always** have a "Plan B" available! No technology is infallible, and everything that depends on electricity can fail to work at one time or another. So, always have paper copies of important documents (such as presentation notes and PowerPoint files). Perhaps the best practice is to make sure a flipchart is available, even if you do not plan to use it.

G. What are the Main Problems with Presentations?

It is important to understand the limitations of presentations or lectures:

- Presentations that are non–participatory or one–way oblige Participants to be passive. This ignores their experience and potential to contribute, and can make seminars boring.
- As stated above, the normal/average human attention span is twenty minutes. After as little as seven minutes, attention starts to drift. After forty–five minutes, most Participants are somewhere else. This is the rationale behind the "academic hour". Presentations must be dynamic, interactive, and interspersed with activities in order to maintain attention.
- Presentations don't account for individual learning styles. Participants can't control their receipt of information (re–read items of interest, skim something already clear, pause to reflect, refer to other materials, or take breaks as needed). Therefore, some people prefer to learn information from a document, perhaps in an easy chair in the comfort of their home, instead of getting background information through a presentation.
- Reading renders presentations ineffective. Participants can read for themselves. Trainers must take full advantage of the priceless opportunity to speak to them directly and in–person.

Working at Home

- Some Trainers rely too heavily on notes during presentations. Notes should be outlines, which are short and sweet, so that Trainers focus on communication and delivery.
- Information retention from presentations is greatly affected by the Trainer's delivery skills.
- Time limits for presentations can be strict. This makes organization and efficiency crucial.
- Presentations and lectures need to be carefully outlined and prepared, so that they introduce, inform, highlight, reinforce, and conclude in due course.
- If too carefully prepared, presentations and lectures can seem artificial or canned.
- Presentations that rely exclusively on words, without visual clues, disregard the principle that much learning takes place through the eyes, and sometimes more than through the ears.
- The absence of feedback makes it difficult for Trainers to gauge the results of presentations and lectures. Body Language may be the only source of clues. As a result, Participants may leave with misperceptions and doubts.

However, it is possible to overcome many of these difficulties and limitations.

H. How can Trainers Make Presentations More Interesting?

Presentations and lectures are important. And they must be included in training seminars. But their effectiveness depends upon how well Trainers overcome their difficulties and limitations.

There are many useful practices and techniques for making presentations more effective:

1) Keep presentations short
2) Use dynamic delivery techniques and Body Language
3) Use audio–visual aids
4) Make presentations participatory
5) Alternate between presentations and quick participatory exercises

This section discusses techniques to make presentations more dynamic and participatory. The following chart highlights key differences between participatory and didactic training/presentation styles. It shows how participatory styles can make presentations more effective.

THE INTERACTIVITY OF PRESENTATIONS	
Participatory	**Directed or Didactic**
Participants can influence presentation	Trainer controls all aspects of presentation
Delivery has built–in options for participation	Delivery follows an unalterable set plan
Participants are considered to be a resource	Trainer is the main resource
Knowledge/experience of Participants assumed	Participants not assumed to be knowledgeable
Training can build skills and understanding	Training focuses on transmitting information
Trainer asks questions and follows them up	Trainer focuses on making statements
Trainer elicits examples from the Participants	Trainer provides examples
Trainer interacts, solicits input and feedback, is receptive to exchanges with Participants	Trainer prefers passivity and is not receptive to engagement with the audience
Participants exchange with each other	Participants address all comments to Trainer

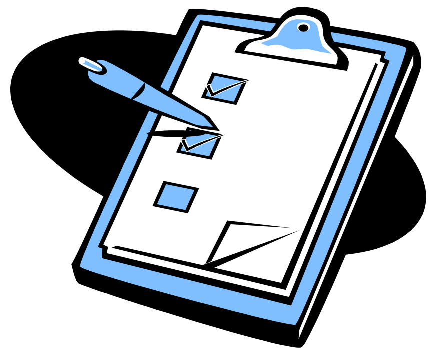
<u>To make presentations more interactive and interesting, Trainers can</u>:

- <u>Ask closed–ended questions that require a "yes–no" answer, pause, and then consider following up</u>. For example, "Did the manager of the department respond quickly enough?" or "Was the company prepared for this development?
- <u>Ask open–ended questions that elicit suggestions or feedback</u>. For example, challenge Participants to discuss a relevant example from their real–life experience: "Has anyone encountered this kind of situation before?" Or ask a general question such as: "Under these circumstances, what do you think is the best course of action?"
- <u>Get Participants involved</u>. Use an anecdote, case study, or interesting example. For example: "What do you think happened next?" Remember, a good story should have a hero, a cause, a conflict, a crisis, and finally a resolution.
- <u>Instead of making a statement, pose an intriguing rhetorical question</u>. Instead of: "The Judge ruled for the plaintiff because she was able to demonstrate due diligence", try: "Now **WHY** would the Judge rule for the plaintiff in this case?" Then pause while Participants reflect. Then continue: "Well, unlike the opposing side, *she* was able to demonstrate due diligence."
- <u>Develop an outline with space for notations, or a note–taking page</u>. This enables Participants to follow the presentation carefully and note additional information they find important.
- <u>Pause occasionally</u>. Make eye contact while pausing. Then sincerely ask the Participants if they are following. Assess Body Language to identify Participants who might contribute.
- <u>Use reinforcement techniques</u>. Rephrase or paraphrase answers to questions. This shows that the Trainer is paying attention. Or compare and contrast different comments/perspectives.

- Use Taking Notes and Working Partnerships. Instead of presenting a list or announcing the answer, give Participants two minutes to write down their ideas, working alone or with a neighbor. Then let them present the results, or add to what others have said.
- Use "Collective Consultation". Give each Participant a piece of paper with an arrow on it, and call for answers to questions by holding the arrow up for yes or down for no. See Module IX Section "E" for a full description of this technique.

Some of these techniques are more straightforward with smaller groups, but most can be used even in an auditorium. In any event, Trainers should approach presentations from the paradigm of "active learning", and find ways to engage Participants in the learning process. For further information about working with audiences, see Module XI and Module XII.

I. A Checklist for Evaluating Presentations



Trainers can and must exercise significant control over their presentations. This depends upon their skills and their ability to determine what works with their target groups, and under which circumstances. Trainers can also constantly take steps to improve the results from their presentations and lectures, by practicing, developing experience, and carefully assessing their results. For this latter purpose, Trainers need to ask and honestly answer questions regarding their presentations, and how to improve them.

The following checklist for Trainers is illustrative:

TRAINER CHECKLIST FOR PRESENTATIONS		
	Question	**Answer/Comments**
1	How well did the presentation meet the needs of the Participants?	
2	Did the presentation effectively inform, educate, motivate, etc.?	
3	Was the presentation well organized, structured, and focused?	
4	Was the Trainer prepared, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic?	
5	Did the Trainer introduce at the start and summarize at the end?	
6	Was the level of difficulty correct for the audience?	
7	Did the presentation respect time limits? Was the pace appropriate?	
8	Was presentation time used efficiently and effectively?	
9	Was the Trainer seen, heard, and understood by all Participants?	
10	Did the Trainer communicate well, and establish rapport?	
11	Was non–verbal communication effectively managed? How about eye contact, facial expressions, tone of voice, stance, etc.?	
12	Was there sufficient interaction with the audience?	
13	Were practical examples used? Were they apt and interesting?	
14	Were there enough opportunities to ask questions and follow up?	
15	Were Participants engaged, interested, and receptive?	
16	Were quality materials/handouts provided? For reference or for use?	
17	Were audio–visual aids used appropriately and effectively?	
18	Were the setup and Learning Environment conducive and effective?	
19	Did the presentation conclude with form of some future planning?	

J. <u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

<u>Trainers must be able to make effective presentations</u>. They are perhaps the most important and most commonly used methodology for training purposes. While the specific context is relevant, the basic rules and best practices for making effective presentations are fairly constant and consistent, even in different settings and with diverse target groups.

Trainers need to develop a number of techniques and characteristics in order to "perform presentations" before an audience. For example, it is necessary to be well prepared, totally oriented, confident, masterly in delivery, judicious in the use of notes and audio–visual aids, and in charge of timing. Generally speaking, the best ways to develop presentation skills are:

1) Practice, combined with thoughtful consideration of the results, and
2) Careful observation of the work of others, to determine what to do and what not to do

In spite of their value and prevalence, Trainers should not rely excessively on presentations. Attention spans are limited, particularly in the information and entertainment age. Information dissemination is not enough to make a seminar successful. And Participants are too often left out, which can have an extremely deleterious effect on the achievement of Learning Outcomes.

Therefore, it is extremely advantageous to make presentations as interactive as possible. This can be accomplished with techniques such as interspersing brief exercises (like Taking Notes and Working Partnerships), optimally posing and using questions (see Module XI Section "D"), and effectively employing Body Language (see Module XII). This approach prevents presentations from becoming overly directed or didactic, and allows Participants to become engaged and act as a valuable resource.

Clearly, <u>it is not sufficient to simply provide an opportunity to ask questions at the end of a presentation</u>. In point of fact, forcing Participants to save their questions until the end can be seen or interpreted by them as an effort to stifle their involvement.

Trainers who master the art of making effective presentations and learn to overcome their shortcomings can achieve the best of both worlds, by combining teaching and facilitated learning.

MODULE XI
WORKING WITH LIVE AUDIENCES

Learning Outcome: Trainers understand audience dynamics and how to most effectively interact with Participants, to make live training more effective and generate a positive learning experience.

A. What are the General Principles for Working with Audiences?

The general principles for working with audiences apply to all formats, whether the primary objective is to inform, convince, motivate, or entertain. Therefore, it is valuable for Trainers to have experience achieving different objectives with different kinds of audiences in diverse settings. Indeed, effective training usually involves a combination of informing, convincing, motivating, and entertaining.

In order to succeed in front of any group, it is necessary to:

- Be prepared
- Know the audience, including what they want and how they think/work/operate
- Know which interactive methodologies are most appropriate, and how to use them
- Understand group dynamics and how to work with people in groups (the focus of this module)

Techniques for working with audiences can be studied, and observing others (from Trainers to entertainers) is useful. However, skills for interacting with Participants and managing audience participation are predominantly developed through practice. While some people have a natural talent for this, most Trainers have to go through a learning curve. Things get better and easier as Trainers gain experience dealing with different audiences, methodologies, and subjects, and become more comfortable with their work. Nonetheless, there are always variables, and every seminar is unique.

This module covers six key subjects: 1) the nature of group dynamics, 2) techniques for working with audiences, 3) best practices for asking and answering questions (the principal form of interaction between Trainers and Participants), 4) energizers, 5) how to deal with difficult Participants (one of the greatest challenges Trainers face), and 6) Emotional Intelligence. This module is just an introduction. Much has been written about these subjects. Supplemental sources of information should be consulted.

B. What is Group Dynamics and Why is it Important?

Working with an audience is all about managing group dynamics and understanding group psychology. Individuals often behave differently when part of a group. Why do people behave the way they do in front of others? Why do some people want to show off, while others become shy? Why do some people behave disruptively in order to avoid being put on the spot? Why are some people assertive in private but withdrawn in groups? Why do groups do things that individuals would not? Psychologists and sociologists have been trying to answer these questions for decades, if not centuries.

1) What are the main factors affecting group dynamics? By way of introduction, it is useful to note that many factors which affect the Learning Environment (discussed in Module VIII) are relevant here.

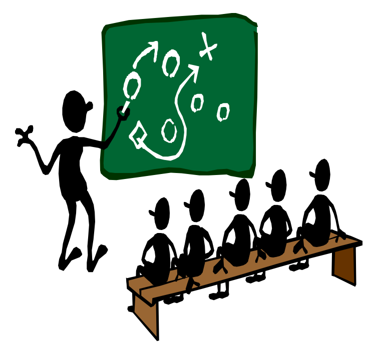
a) Group Size. The number of people in a group significantly affects behavior. As the number increases, most people become more passive, yet some become more assertive. As a result of mutual reinforcement, larger groups are sometimes more easily swayed (so called "mob mentality"). Some activities become impractical beyond a certain number. Most Trainers prefer to have no more than twenty to thirty Participants in a seminar, to keep the interactions more personal and manageable. If a Working Group has more than seven to ten members, it is harder to manage and contributions become more unequal. Decision–making is almost always more focused and rapid in smaller groups. This is one of the reasons why Working Partnerships operate so efficaciously and promptly.

b) <u>Group Composition</u>. This refers to the identity of members. Groups can be *homogenous* (for example police inspectors or sales representatives from one company) or *heterogeneous* (for example different professionals from the same vicinity who share a common interest in the subject matter). Even if a group is homogenous, there can still be differences in status or level of experience (for example senior and junior managers). Dealing with a mixed group is almost always more complicated. Although their needs, interests, learning styles, and level of experience may diverge, they have to be addressed simultaneously.

Group composition affects how Participants feel about each other and collaborate. Relations between members of homogenous groups are more likely to be colored by inter–personal histories (positive or negative), which may be unknown to the Trainer. Members of heterogeneous groups may well be strangers, and are less likely to share a common approach. Finally, group composition influences the formation of sub–groups and cliques, which affects interactions and alters the Learning Environment. For this reason, Trainers are advised to take note of who sits together, who talks to whom during coffee breaks, who is more alone, and other indicia of relationships between the Participants.

Visibility and equality make roundtables perfect for multilateral interactions.

c) <u>Set–up</u>. Group dynamics depend on the physical layout and spatial arrangements, and how and where people are placed. Participants seated theatre style in rows of fixed chairs, looking at the back of the head of the person in front of them, are less likely to interact. The absence of eye contact impedes communication. Set–up also affects the position and movement of Trainers, which can significantly alter group dynamics.

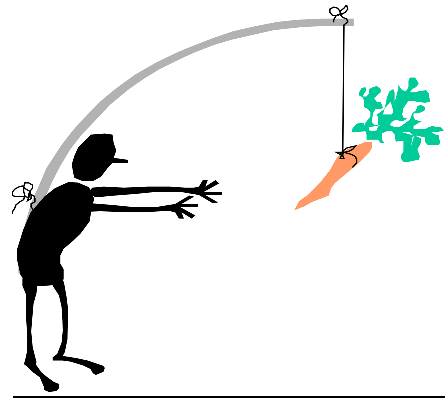


Facing the group or in front of a row, Trainers are the focus of attention.

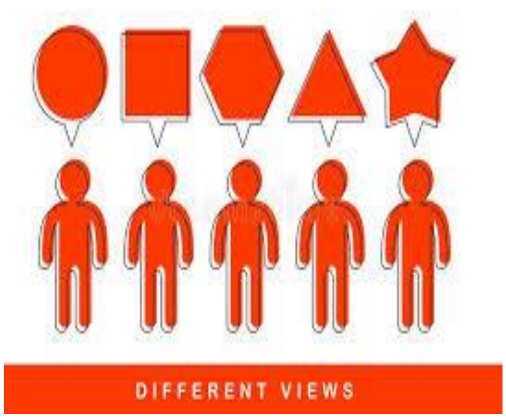
d) <u>Space</u>. As mentioned in Module VIII, Participants should have enough space to feel comfortable. Intrusions into personal body space cause anxiety, and sometimes even aggression. Participants who feel cramped are less likely to interact positively, and less likely to learn. Note that body space preferences and requirements vary amongst cultures and professions. In addition, residents of urban areas are usually used to having less space around them.

e) <u>Ambience</u>. Group dynamics depend on how people feel. A positive Learning Environment sets the stage for good feelings and constructive interactions. If the setting is comfortable and the atmosphere is pleasant, the group is much more likely to work effectively. If the furniture is uncomfortable and poorly placed, or the room is too hot or cold, or the coffee and food are bad, or there is background noise, Trainers have a harder time working with Participants.

f) Motivation and Interest. Group dynamics is greatly affected by the reason Participants are there. Is training mandatory or voluntary? Does it take place during or outside working hours? Is there any recognition (certification or professional advancement)? If Participants share objectives and concerns, the direction of training is more uniform. On the other hand, Participants in mixed groups have diverse motivations. All of these factors affect whether Participants cooperate or compete, share information or hide it, respect or denigrate. Sometimes Trainers have to motivate in order to build consensus. Otherwise, they may find themselves managing divergent interests or balancing hidden agendas.

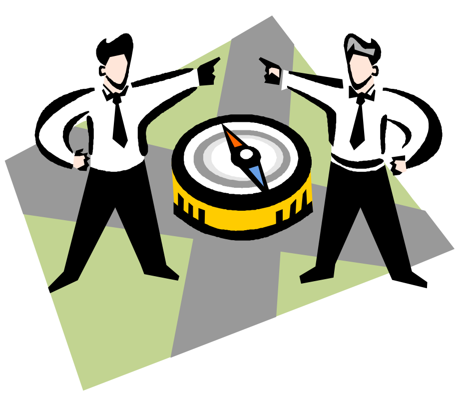


g) Behavior Patterns. Interpersonal dynamics depend upon the predominant behavior patterns of the target group, and the personalities and characteristics of leading Participants. Trainers encounter many different behavior patterns. It is beyond the current purview to survey them in detail, but for illustrative purposes three examples will be presented. They are "Role–Based Behavior", "Power–Based Behavior", and "Decision–Making Behavior".



Role–Based Behavior. People approach problems and tasks in different ways, based on their nature, experience, and predisposition. For example, when groups face a joint task, people may prefer to start by: a) discussing procedures and decision–making (ground rules), b) debating and setting objectives (goal orientation), c) defining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT Analysis), d) calculating resources and figuring out how to best use them (accounting), or e) identifying obstacles and determining how to overcome them (problem–based approach). This diversity is often manifested at the start of Working Group activities.

Power–Based Behavior. Interactions between group members often reflect a search for power, prestige, image, influence, or success. Power relationships may already exist in a group, particularly if they work together, or share a profession valuing seniority and status. Power relationships can create rivalry, jealousy, and other emotions that color seminars. They can oblige Trainers to exercise greater control. But Trainers must address power–based behavior carefully, to avoid offending important people, especially if they do not know the history and motivation.



Decision–Making Behavior. Behavior patterns become most salient when it is time to take a decision. Ideally, decisions are based on *substance* (how to handle/resolve problems, say in a case study). But they can be impeded by disagreement over *procedure* (how/when they are taken). Trainers must manage and respect any decision–making in interactive exercises. This requires facilitation and conciliation skills. Much depends on the specific nature of the target group. Some professions attract people who are competitive by nature, while others attract conciliators. This affects decision–making at seminars.

2) <u>What measures can Trainers take to manage group dynamics</u>?

a) <u>Enforce protocol and rules of engagement</u>. Trainers have primary responsibility for setting, sharing, and enforcing protocol and the seminar rules of engagement. Organizers also have authority, but Trainers are on the front line, and should not delegate their duties unless absolutely necessary. Compliance with sound rules is crucial for structuring group dynamics. The entire group suffers if any Participants chronically arrive late, take long breaks, skip sessions, use mobile phones impolitely, hold private conversations when others speak, interrupt, ignore protocol, or behave disputatiously.

Many basic principles of good conduct are logical and well–known. But this doesn't mean that they are always followed. Remember, "<u>What we tolerate we validate</u>". Therefore, good Trainers address any issues that arise in a prompt, pro–active, and consistent fashion, in the name of the collective.

b) <u>Practice facilitation and conciliation</u>. Trainers set the tone and pace for group dynamics through their own style, interpersonal relations, and communication techniques. When Trainers encourage contributions, listen to Participants, answer questions fully and politely, and demonstrate respect and interest, this sets the stage for positive group behavior. On the other hand, when Trainers don't fulfil their duties as Facilitators and Conciliators, tolerate inconsiderate conduct, or fail to address disruptive or negative behavior, this affects all subsequent interactions.

c) <u>Set the appropriate level of formality/informality</u>. Group dynamics are best when the most suitable level of formality/ informality is established and maintained. Trainers need to reconcile competing approaches, by demonstrating a) *enough formality* to comply with the rules and practice mutual respect, and b) *enough informality* to establish a collegial and harmonious ambience. For example, it is possible to be courteous and informal at the same time. Effective use of Body Language can be very helpful in this regard. It is not always easy to find the right balance, but doing so is important and always yields good results.

d) <u>Miscellaneous techniques</u>. In addition to the above, Trainers can use the following techniques to manage group dynamics:

- Anticipate problems that might arise and take proactive steps to mitigate them
- Identify leaders or allies amongst the Participants who can play a positive role in group activities and managing group dynamics
- Attentively determine what is working at the seminar, and build upon it
- Adjust methodologies and formulate activities to create positive group dynamics and avoid potential difficulties
- On substantive matters, politely reach agreement to disagree if compromise is not possible
- On procedural matters, politely take decisions and implement them, since this is the prerogative of the Trainer

With this basic understanding of how to manage group dynamics, we can now look at the best practices for constructive interaction with Participants.

C. What are the Best Techniques for Working Effectively with Audiences?

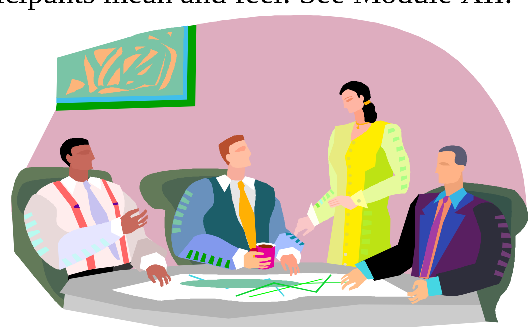
Working with audiences and managing interactive methodologies are in many respects two sides of the same coin. Therefore, Trainers should combine methodological skills and interactive skills to achieve diverse goals of their participatory activities. The following practices are important:

1) General principles for effective communication at seminars

The following are best communication practices for Trainers in seminar settings:

- Speak clearly and concisely. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Make points cogently. Keep sentences short and grammatically correct. Give clear directions, and carefully explain what is being done.
- Speak at an appropriate pace for the audience. Communication is less effective when the Trainer speaks either too quickly or too slowly. Use correctly timed pauses to adjust overall speed. If there is interpretation, the pace should not exceed the capacity of the interpreter.

- Be a good and active listener. Understand the Participants' points and positions, and show that you respect them. Focus on their content and intention, and remember what has been said. Paraphrase to show interest and increase understanding. Ask follow–up questions and request clarifications whenever appropriate. Remember, referring to someone's comments at a later point is the surest way to show respect, and prove that you were listening carefully, especially when there is attribution by name. For further information on listening skills, see Appendix 3.
- Do not interrupt Participants unless it is absolutely necessary. If comments run too long, take a moment to establish/reinforce a Ground Rule that everyone should speak succinctly and respect time limits, to be fair and maximize the overall number of opportunities to speak.
- Avoid using negative Body Language, even when a Participant is off track. Be attentive to what you do! People are often quite unaware of the small negative signals that they send. Especially their micro–expressions, which last a fraction of a second (always less than one–half second).
- Pay attention to the Body Language of Participants, and try to interpret it correctly. Body Language provides useful clues concerning what Participants mean and feel. See Module XII.
- Demonstrate interest in the audience. Show that you care. *Professionals want to know that you care before they will care about what you know*.
- Provide feedback. Participants want and deserve feedback. It is not possible to develop skills without polite input and guidance. But it is important to keep feedback positive and supportive, never threatening. The benefits of getting to the correct answer are significantly diminished if the path is unpleasant.



- Show positive personality traits. These include respect, acceptance of others, dynamism, confidence, enthusiasm, dedication, self–discipline, openness about yourself, sincerity, honesty, impartiality, people–orientation, patience, organization, diligence, focus on results, and a polite but calm sense of humor.

2) <u>Encouraging and facilitating audience participation</u>

To encourage and facilitate contributions from Participants, the following techniques are useful:

- Use methodologies which directly enable Participants to get involved, such as Taking Notes, Working Partnerships, and Interviews
- Open the door to participation by making Participants feel comfortable about it

- Use positive Body Language to encourage Participants, such as open hands, smiles, good eye contact, slow head nodding, and moving closer (enhancing proximity)
- Use voice control to offer encouragement, for example by speaking more softly when interacting
- Always find something positive in every intervention, no matter how small it might be, and try to recognize it, so that the Participant feels acknowledged and encouraged
- Learn the names of the Participants, and use them regularly. This is very important for generating respect and getting people to open up. Use first names if possible. In some cultures, it is acceptable to use first names if they are preceded by a title. For many people, the most beautiful sound in the world is their name.
- Provide opportunities for Participants to share real life examples and experiences. Set a precedent by sharing an interesting experience or something personal about yourself, if appropriate. This opens the door for the Participants to reciprocate.
- Give everyone a chance to provide input. Keep things open as well as on–track. Make the seminar room an inclusive and respectful place.
- Facilitate conversations *between* Participants. Get them talking to each other and asking each other questions. Ask them what they think about previous comments, using names whenever possible, and then compare and contrast the responses. Give Participants an opening and a welcoming gesture when it comes to establishing multilateral lines of communication.
- Create opportunities for Participants to evaluate themselves and their own learning. Ask them what lessons they see in a case study, or how they would like to modify things in the future.

Remember, <u>the best time to set a precedent for audience participation is at the start of the event</u>! When Participants have an early green light to interact, and see interactivity being managed in a proper and constructive manner, they are likely to become enthusiastic and continue to engage. If the group is a manageable size, this can be accomplished during the introductions. Different techniques in this regard are discussed in detail in Module XIII, Section "E". Otherwise, be sure to use an interactive methodology as soon as practicable, preferably during the first working period.

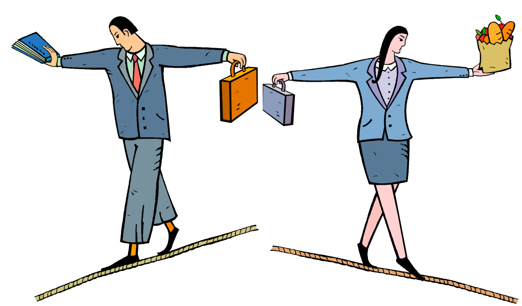
3) <u>Responding to the audience</u>

Working with an audience requires skill and practice a) handling certain types of situations that recur frequently, and b) responding to certain kinds of things that Participants frequently do.

- *<u>What if a Participant gets something right</u>?* Provide praise. But make sure that it is genuine, polite, and low–key, never patronizing. Follow–up or refer to the answer later, if possible.

- *What if a Participant makes a mistake*? As mentioned above, maintain neutral Body Language. Avoid negative facial expressions (frowns, down–turned eyebrows, rolling eyes). Say something positive if at all possible, by following up on an aspect or nuance of what was said. Then either a) move on, if the best course of action is to ignore the mistake, or b) engage in a "polite clarification". An excellent technique for doing this is described below.
- *What if no Participant volunteers to answer a question*? Wait as long as possible. Do not be afraid of a pause. After pausing, employ a technique like Taking Notes. Choose a Participant if necessary or appropriate, using the "Pose, Pause, and Pounce" technique described below. Or simply pretend that it was a rhetorical question, answer it yourself, and move on.
- *What if a Participant is consistently silent*? Look for an opening, like solid eye contact, and offer an easy question. Try asking for a personal opinion or idea about something, in which case there is no wrong answer. Show genuine interest.
- *What if a Participant has not done an assignment or preparatory work*? Point out how the seminar will be more beneficial for everyone if each Participant comes prepared. Express a sincere desire to go as far as possible beyond the basics. Offer to get into the real "tricks of the trade" if the basics can be covered quickly. Provide a positive incentive for being prepared. But be sure to do this in a constructive manner, and direct your comments to the collective, in the form of a general principle. Do not single anyone out, and avoid offending.
- *What if there are large discrepancies in the knowledge/skills of the Participants*? Try to mix both elementary and advanced points, so that everyone gets something at their level. It may be useful to divide the Participants into Working Groups on the basis of their experience, and give them different assignments which are in line with their capacity.
- *What if the Trainer does not know the answer to a question*? Try to provide the best possible estimation, if you can. Admit it, if necessary, but then be quick to point out where/how the answer can be found. Or, offer to research the point, and provide results by a certain time.
- *What if two Participants are having a private conversation*? Ignore it as long as you can, but take action when you must. Suggested techniques are discussed in the context of dealing with difficult Participants below.

The above should be considered general guidelines, not perfect answers. It is always necessary to adapt them to specific target groups and circumstances. In some situations, a direct comment with a light–hearted smile works wonders, while in others the utmost regard for formality, protocol, and nuance is needed. The trick is to determine what works best in each situation. Indeed, it is like walking a *tightrope*, but that is the nature of working with live audiences!



D. How Should Trainers Manage Questions?

Questions are one of the most important tools that Trainers can use to involve and inform Participants, and make seminars productive and interesting. Unfortunately, they are rarely used as well as they should/could be. There are four inter–related skills:

1. Trainers must know how to ask questions. By asking questions properly, Trainers can stimulate thinking and learning, and elicit important information from the Participants.
2. Trainers must know how to get Participants to answer their questions. By getting Participants to answer questions, Trainers help them develop critical thinking skills and active knowledge, which will serve them well in future work, and enable them to share with their colleagues.

3. Trainers must know how to get Participants to ask questions. By getting Participants to ask meaningful questions, Trainers can make their seminars more interactive and interesting, better identify Participants' interests and needs, and more effectively meet those needs.
4. Trainers must know how to answer questions from Participants. By answering questions well, Trainers can inform, educate, and motivate Participants, encourage further questions, and move seminars in fruitful directions.

If Trainers can't ask/answer questions well, or get Participants to ask/answer questions well, seminars are less interactive, informative, interesting, engaging, motivational, comfortable, and valuable.

Therefore, while each of these four skills is somewhat separate and requires special attention, they are also collective, integrated by nature, and to a certain degree depend upon each other. For example:

- The way Trainers ask questions significantly affects how/whether Participants answer them
- The way Trainers answer questions significantly impacts how/whether Participants ask them

So, mastering questions and answers is an important skill for Trainers, and worth looking at in detail.

1) How Should Trainers Ask Questions?

By asking the right questions correctly, Trainers set the stage for good Question–and–Answer practice in general, and also increase the chances for getting good answers. Here are some best practices:

- Prepare some questions in advance. Contemplate and draft quality questions that are likely to generate participation and interest, and lead the seminar along constructive pathways. Make Question & Answer part of the seminar planning process.
- Ask questions early and often at the seminar. When questions are asked right from the start of a seminar and regularly thereafter, it sets an interactive and exploratory tone for the entire event.
- Know the rationale for your questions. To ask the right questions, know whether they are designed to test knowledge, generate interest, elicit opinions, create debate, or simply encourage participation.
- Introduce your questions. While good Trainers do not waste words, it can be very useful to introduce/signal a question, thereby preparing Participants to listen. Try phrases such as "This leads us to a very interesting question" or "To proceed further, we need to first answer an important question". This ensures that Participants catch the question from the very beginning.
- Address questions to Participants by name, when appropriate. Try to use names when posing questions. When questions refer to a previous comment, indicate the source by name. As mentioned above, people like hearing their name, and appreciate positive attention and recognition. This is a key aspect of "tailored training".

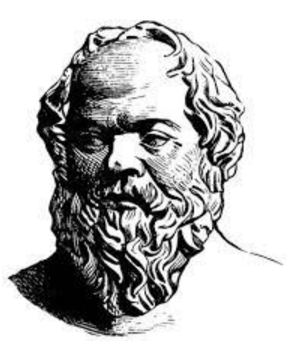
- Use the "Pose, Pause, and Pounce" technique. First, pose the question to everyone. Do not designate a target in advance (unless there is a special reason, like following up on a previous question, or breaking up a private conversation). This would put the target Participant under pressure, and make concentration more difficult. It also lets other Participants off the hook. Second, pause and be patient. This gives everyone time to think, and forces them to search for an answer, in case they are called on. Third, after sufficient thinking time has passed, select one Participant to call on, preferably someone who is making eye contact and appears receptive.

- Avoid surprises. Don't call on a specific Participant suddenly, particularly after a comment that was not clearly a question from the start. This is intimidating and causes discomfort.
- Make questions appropriate. This means relevant to the subjects and issues being covered, based upon what the Participants can be expected to know, and suitable for the cultural milieu. Appropriate questions are more likely to lead to poignant or logical answers.
- Keep questions articulate and focused. This means clear, concise, and precise. And carefully limited to a single issue. In other words, *ask questions one at a time*. Avoid compound, multiple, or run–on questions, which can confuse and intimidate Participants, and rarely lead to a clear answer. The likelihood of eliciting a coherent response is greatly enhanced when a single question in a single grammatically correct sentence is preceded by concise background information and properly introduced.

- Distinguish between open and closed questions. Use the right category to get the best response.

Open questions are more thought provoking. They are best for initiating discussion: "What do you think about…?" or "How can we manage…?" Open questions are also good for spreading discussion: "Do others agree?" or "Good point! Does anyone else wish to comment?" Closed questions, which can be answered with one word, either "yes" or "no", are useful for getting affirmation and moving on. They can also serve as an easy challenge for a hesitant Participant, or as a segue to the next topic.

- Use follow–up questions. Ask follow–up questions from time to time. Also, return to Participants who have already given a relevant answer. This prevents Participants from becoming complacent, and thinking that they won't get called on again. Follow–up questions are a great way to refer to previous answers, and demonstrate listening skills and respect.
- Build questions upon each other. Use follow–up questions strategically. A series of questions and answers can be an extremely fruitful way to move a discussion forward, and thereby reach valuable conclusions. The usual process is to start with general or basic questions, and then move on to specific or advanced questions. Best results are achieved by taking a strategic approach. The requires linking the questions together, and building the questions upon the responses. For this purpose, it is very useful for Trainers to master the "***Socratic Method***".



Starting with a proposition, idea, or definition, the Socratic Method uses a series of logically sequenced questions to develop a thesis. This is done by inspiring critical thinking, reasoning, and logic. Questions can cover exceptions (to probe assumptions), reasons/justifications, implications, or even the questions themselves. The ultimate objective is to get Participants to educate themselves and each other, and learn about themselves and each other in the process.

The key to the Socratic Method is building the questions on the answers, while still following a strategic path towards achieving the Learning Outcome. If this is done correctly, it is possible to develop analytical skills while educating. Much depends upon the ambience that the Trainer establishes. In some contexts, most notoriously for law students, an element of pressure is applied. This is to develop skills for "thinking on one's feet". However, this kind of approach is not appropriate when working with professionals in a seminar setting.

Finally, as mentioned above, be sure to have the courage to pause after asking a question. In other words, do not answer your own question simply because nobody responds right away, creating a moment of silence. This rewards Participants (lets them off the hook) when they are silent, and thereby encourages future silence.

2) <u>How Should Trainers Get Participants to Answer Their Questions</u>?

The best way to get Participants to answer questions is by:

1) Posing good questions correctly
2) Setting the stage for good answers
3) Providing positive feedback in response to answers, thereby encouraging responsiveness

The first step is choosing the right kinds of questions and posing them in the most suitable manner, as described in Point 1 above. A good question is the starting point for a good answer.

Then be sure to properly set the stage for answers. Provide participants with any background information that might be required, introduce the question appropriately (as described above), and create the right circumstances for the question to be answered. Always give Participants a chance to prepare and present their answer. Techniques such as Taking Notes and Working Partnerships can be extremely useful (or even necessary) in this regard.

The best approach is to consistently provide valuable and courteous responses to answers, in a respectful manner, using appropriate Body Language. Useful feedback and meaningful follow–up questions also set the stage for fruitful dialogue.

It is important to remember that during this process, other Participants are likely to be observing attentively, keeping in mind that next time it could be them.

When Trainers establish positive conditions for answering their questions and react appropriately, Participants will continue to interact readily and willingly throughout the seminar.

In other words, the Trainer's response to Participant's answers sets the stage for their future answers.

Interactive exchanges are amplified greatly if the Trainer can get other Participants to pose follow up questions or make comments in response to what their colleagues say. This kind of interaction between Participants can be particularly informative and engaging. Naturally, whether or not this is appropriate and useful depends upon the audience, subject matter, and ambience. In any event, Trainers require facilitation and moderation skills in order to manage this process, and prevent it from becoming adversarial or counterproductive. If this occurs, the Trainer needs to quickly step forward and establish/ reinforce a Ground Rule. But if well carried out, multi–lateral exchanges and dialogue between Participants can be extremely positive.

Perhaps the most important rule for responding to answers (and for that matter all comments) is that the Trainer should never criticize or demonstrate open disapproval of what a Participant says.

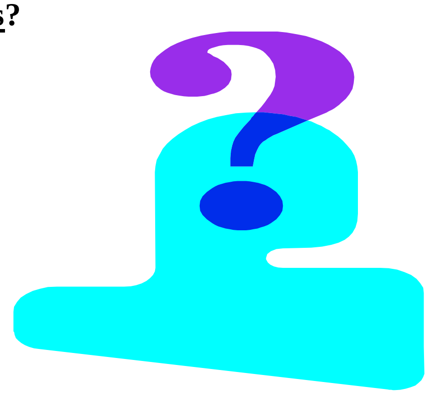
In order to maintain constructive dialogue and an appropriate Learning Environment, the Trainer should never make a Participant feel wrong or embarrassed. Strong negative words such as "no" or "wrong" cannot be used. This intimidates, makes the Participant feel bad, and discourages everyone else from answering subsequent questions. It also generates resentment against the Trainer, particularly from professionals. And as if all this weren't enough, criticism stifles and discourages further questions *to* the Trainer, since Participants will prefer to keep quiet, or be apprehensive about the prospect that posing a question might lead to them receiving a question.

So how should a Trainer respond to a poor answer or a mistake? As mentioned above, the Trainer should start by maintaining neutral Body Language, and searching for something/anything positive in the answer that can be acknowledged. Moving on may be necessary, for reasons of protocol or due to time constraints, but this could leave an important matter unsettled. If circumstance permit, the best approach is to engage in a "**polite clarification**".

How is this done? First of all, instead of "grading" the answer, take a step back and consider how to gently lead the Participant to better understanding. It is useful to start with a completely neutral statement, along the lines of "Well, let's take a closer look at this". Then pose a basic question, perhaps an easy closed question, that the Participant should be well able to answer. This gets the ball rolling and inspires confidence. Then lead the Participant through a series of progressive questions that build upon each other, using the "Socratic" method as described above, to finally arrive back at the initial question. If this process is carried out correctly and kindly, the Participant will realize and voluntarily revise the initial answer, without any opprobrium or embarrassment. This result can be acknowledged by the Trainer in a very low–key manner, perhaps with an affirmative head nod. Note that polite clarifications promote analytical skills on the part of the Participant answering questions and for the entire audience, and demonstrates constructive interest and sincere respect on the part of the Trainer.

3) How Should Trainers Encourage Participants to Ask Questions?

Why do Participants ask questions? Under the best–case scenario, questions arise from a genuine desire to learn. However, sometimes questions are posed to impress others, or so Participants can hear themselves speak, or even to show–up the Trainer. Assuming that the questioning will be in good faith, the objective of the Trainer is to encourage Participants to ask relevant and valuable questions, thereby promoting Learning Outcomes and making the Learning Environment more constructive and interactive.



In order to encourage questions from Participants:

- Set a Ground Rule that courteous, timely, and precise questions are always welcome.
- Demonstrate that questions are acceptable and natural. Solicit them sincerely. Sometimes the choice of words greatly affects the result. For example, instead of asking *if* there are questions, ask "What questions do you have?" Or give a hint: "You must have questions about that last point, which suggests a completely new tactic for addressing this problem".

- Praise questions, if appropriate. Try "Thanks for raising this excellent point" or "This is exactly the challenge that the critics raise". But be cautious. Too much praise can appear insincere, be construed as patronizing, or even cause Participants to speculate when no praise is forthcoming.
- Pause for questions at natural transition points in presentations.
- Encourage Participants to pose questions during breaks, if they are shy or hesitant to take up seminar time. If it is worthwhile, repeat the question and answer it for everyone when the seminar resumes. But do so without indicating the source, unless you have prior permission.
- Regularly use Taking Notes, Working Partnerships, and Interview techniques.
- Never be condescending. If a Participant has doubts or concerns, they should be considered legitimate and worthy of a response.

<u>The quality of questions from Participants is important</u>. There is no point encouraging questions if they are not good. So, guide Participants towards the kinds of questions you can and want to answer!

- <u>Request straightforward questions</u>. If you find multiple questions confusing, ask Participants to pose questions one at a time, and promise to permit follow–up. It is better to correctly answer one question at a time than get confused by multiple questions. Humor (admitting limitations when it comes to tracking multiple questions) can also prove handy.
- <u>Request short questions</u>. Ask Participants to a) keep their questions concise and precise, and b) keep their introductions short. Questions need not begin with mini–presentations or elaborate statements. Explain that it is hard to answer long questions, and they take too much time.

Finally, <u>it is an extremely valuable skill to be able to discern when a Participant has a question but is hesitant to speak up</u>.

Sometimes this is revealed through Body Language. As discussed in Module XII, one of the most common signals is stroking the chin. While this is perhaps more predominantly a male gesture, in effect touching a real or imaginary beard, some women also display it. This gesture might be accompanied by an index finger pointing up the cheek, demonstrating critical assessment. Head scratching, raised eyebrows, extended arms with open hands, and most especially a finger over the mouth may also be extremely relevant.

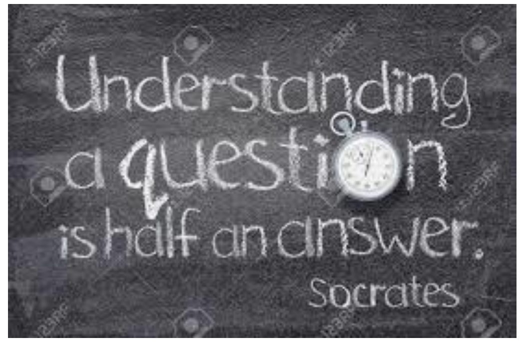
In addition to encouraging questions, sometimes Trainers need to discourage questions or follow–up questions. For example, time may be limited, or one Participant may be speaking too much. In this case, avoid direct eye contact while answering, and move back to a more neutral position. If necessary, don't hesitate to briefly mention the need to move on.

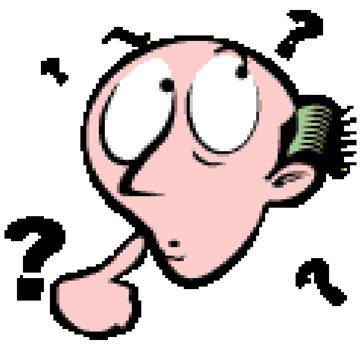
Applying these techniques will help Trainers increase both the quantity and the quality of questions that they receive from Participants, and better structure interactivity.

4) <u>How Should Trainers Answer Questions</u>?

Answering questions involves much more than providing requested information. In fact, the way questions are answered affects how Participants learn and feel, and influences whether or not they will ask more questions. If questions are sincerely welcome, respected, and cogently answered, and Participants feel rewarded for speaking out, there will be more questions. If questions elicit irritation, condescension, negative Body Language, or a frustrated tone of voice, they will soon dry up. Best practices include:

- Be prepared. Anticipate questions, and think about or practice the answers. If a question is raised often, consider answering it in a presentation. However, if all points are fully covered in presentations, there won't be any follow–up.
- Understand the Question. Listen carefully, using the positive listening skills mentioned above. Focus on the question while it is being asked, and try to determine what the Participant is really looking for. Is it information, guidance, or re–assurance? What is the content of the question, what is the context, and what is the meaning behind it? Be attentive to Body Language, and particularly any incongruence between what is said and how it is said.





- Paraphrase. Sometimes it is useful to paraphrase questions before answering. This shows that the Trainer is listening, verifies the Trainer's interpretation of the question, and helps other Participants understand the question. Paraphrasing is especially useful when the question is complicated. It can also secure additional time to come up with a good response. But paraphrasing must be done respectfully, without appearing to put words into the Participant's mouth. Participants object when Trainers answer the question they want to be asked, rather than the question actually being asked.
- Provide reasonably short answers. Be concise and precise. Make answers accurate and to the point. Don't take more time or use more words than necessary.
- Answer everyone. Direct answers to both the Participant who posed the question and the entire audience. Start out and end up looking at the Participant, but in between try to expand eye contact and point your feet outwards. This approach turns answering questions into a discussion for everyone, instead of a separate conversation with one person.
- Refer to the Participants. As with asking questions, answers can also refer back to previous questions or answers, to show respect and attentiveness, and make Participants feel valued.
- Seek satisfaction. If there is any doubt as to whether the question has been answered, it is perfectly acceptable to ask: "Does that answer your question?" or "Would you like further details?" Participants respect Trainers who take a genuine interest in meeting their needs. Trainers who give half an answer and quickly move on lose respect.
- Admit limitations. Do not hide the fact that you don't know an answer, as long as it happens infrequently. Consider offering an "estimate". Then, open the floor to Participants. If nobody can answer, propose a plan to find and share one.

- Collect and Save Questions. Answer questions collected through Taking Notes in batches, a few at a time, as needed, or to add variety to a presentation. If a question refers to a subject that will be covered later, explain this save it. Some Trainers allot a special place (like a flip chart) to collect questions that are being saved, and thereby ensure that they receive attention. This shows that questions are important and deserve attention, no matter when they are asked. In any event, keep the lists accurate and be sure to answer all saved questions.

- Don't answer off topic. If a question is beyond the scope of the discussion, or not of general interest, politely explain this, and offer to answer it privately, perhaps during the next coffee break or after the seminar (and then be sure to do so).
- Explain how instead of why. If Trainers are challenged as to *why* something is true, and put on the defensive, they can defuse the situation by focusing on *how* a situation arose.
- Make a segue. It is very effective to use a question and answer as a segue for the next subject. "This question leads to the next issue we need to address, which is…" This makes Participants feel that they are on–target, and it moves things in the right direction.
- Have set lines for specific response situations. To reach a conclusion: "It seems that there is consensus on this point." To postpone an issue: "Since we can't agree on this now, let's reconsider it later, after the next subject." To change the subject: "Due to time constraints, we really should move on to consider…"

Finally, with respect to asking questions, answering questions, or responding to Participants, always be sure to use the most appropriate Body Language and tone of voice.

Module XII discusses this subject in greater detail. For present purposes, remember that an open hand and smile are great for encouraging someone to answer a question or speak. Slowly nodding your head up and down encourages people to keep talking. Moving towards a Participant or raising eyebrows shows interest and engagement. On the other hand, frowns, lowered eyebrows, folded arms, and shifting away discourage Participants. The choice between "positive" and "negative" signals and the use of any specific signal should be calculated and deliberate. Unfortunately, many people are completely unaware of their non–verbal signals. For this reason, it is important to develop self–awareness.

Open to discussion?

E. What Are Energizers, and How are they Used?

Energizers are techniques that Trainers use to change the mood at a seminar, liven things up, alter the pace, or simply get Participants more engaged. When shoulders are drooping and Participants need to use their hands to hold up their heads, it is time for an energizer (or past time).

Use energizers on a regular basis and whenever appropriate:

- Think of energizers as new batteries for the seminar!
- Energizers should be dynamic and involve movement, to revive interest, restore motivation, and increase blood circulation
- The optimal energizer depends upon protocol, the characteristics of the group, the nature of their interactivity, and the objective
- Examples of methodologies and techniques that serve as energizers include: Working Partnerships, Collective Consultation, Voting with Stickers, and any other activity that requires standing, moving, or performing a task
- It can be stimulating to go around the room and let each Participant mention something that they have learned at the seminar
- Physical movement may be enough. The simplest approach is a very brief "comfort break", so Participants can stand up and stretch

F. **How can Trainers Deal With Difficult Participants (Difficult Behavior)?**

Good Trainers are practically psychologists, able to assess, understand, and deal with all different kinds of people. However, group dynamics create challenges, by bringing out both the best and the worst in people. Generally speaking, Participants want to benefit from seminars. They want Trainers to succeed, and they want the time to be used effectively. They appreciate the importance of a positive Learning Environment, and do not want to stand out in front of their peers as the source of complications or disruptions. However, live encounters are filled with variables, and much depends on the way Trainers deal with their audience and the individuals within it.

There are many typologies of different kinds of Participants, and they make interesting reading. But one of the most helpful approaches is to identify salient characteristics and kinds of behavior.

Therefore, Trainers should be most attentive to Participants who:

1. Talk too much
2. Know it all, and enjoy demonstrating their genius and showing off
3. Try to attract attention, using tactics from jokes to disruptions to gain notoriety
4. Disregard the seminar, in favor of personal activities or private conversations
5. Interfere with the seminar and the work of the Trainer
6. Challenge the Trainer

There are a) general principles for dealing with difficult Participants or behavior, and b) special techniques for dealing with specific kinds of difficult Participants or behavior.

First and foremost, **always distinguish between the behavior and the person**. In fact, it can be argued that the concept of "difficult participant" is unhelpful. At a seminar, it is the behavior which is at issue, not the Participant. The goal of the Trainer is to control or change behavior at the seminar, not to control or change the Participant beyond that scope. The following discussion should be understood in this light.

1) **General Principles for Dealing with Difficult Participants/Behavior**

Best practices for dealing with difficult Participants include:

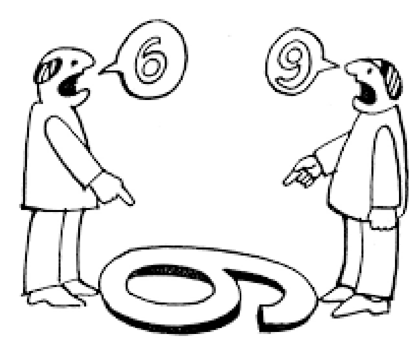
- Set and enforce Ground Rules. The important role of Trainers in setting and enforcing Ground Rules is mentioned above and covered in detail in Module XIII. Generally speaking, it is an ineffective use of precious and special time to abstractly discuss principles of courtesy at the opening of a seminar. Ground Rules are most appropriately raised in response to violations. Start by politely reminding Participants about a Ground Rule, speaking to everyone using general terms. Gracefully make it clear that common courtesy and common sense are expected from all, without exception. Appeal to conscience and collective interests.

- **Tackle problem behavior rather than problem people**. Never attack the person. Make comments general, not personal. For example, instead of directly confronting a Participant for speaking too long, announce to everyone that: "To be fair and provide equal opportunities to contribute, we ask that all Participants limit their interventions to a maximum of two minutes".

Or instead of telling a Participant not to talk when someone else does, tell the entire audience that: "As a matter of courtesy, and in order to give everyone a chance to speak in turn, we would appreciate it if only one person speaks at a time". Notice the use of the plural "we". This creates the impression and emphasizes that the request is collective, not just from the Trainer.

- Do not over–react. Avoid drawing excessive attention to an issue, unless or until you believe it is or will very soon be a problem. Sometimes the best approach is to ignore conduct one time (the first time), so as not to escalate a small or intermittent problem. However, sometimes it is important to nip problems in the bud. When Trainers acquiesce, they may actually encourage misconduct. And when it comes to enforcement, escalate as gradually as possible, taking into consideration the seriousness of the conduct and the total number of violations.

- Use positive affirmations instead of negative prohibitions. Tell Participants what is right to do or what is better, instead of what cannot or should not be done. Convert criticism or corrections into general positive statements. Instead of complaining that there is not enough of something important, inspire by saying that it would be better if there were more of it. Turn criticism of a situation into a positive and indisputable truism: "It would be great if…". Indeed, *truisms are a hallmark of diplomacy*.
- Reward compliance. Employ positive reinforcement and Body Language whenever Participants follow good practice. This reduces the chances of needing to use negative reinforcement.
- When all else fails, agree to disagree. Sometimes there is no absolutely correct answer, or multiple answers may be partially correct. Or different answers may be applicable under different circumstances. This is particularly the case for professional disciplines, and when dealing with ethical or moral issues filled with nuances. Trainers require facilitation and conciliation skills to politely manage disagreement, and point out how different approaches can be reconciled or still lead to positive results.



2) What if a Participant Talks Too Much?

This is one of the most common problems that Trainers face. Excessive speaking can be a result of loquaciousness, an exaggerated belief in self–knowledge (the "know–it–all"), or an excessive desire for attention. The following techniques can be applied:

- Politely ask for other opinions. Deliberately open up the discussion. Graciously state that everyone should have a chance to contribute once before some Participants speak again. Use the techniques described above for encouraging reluctant Participants to speak.
- Use the desire for attention to your advantage, by delegating/distributing useful tasks. Ask more active Participants to take notes at the flipchart, keep lists of points for guidelines or minutes, etc. Then, once the procedure is settled, assign similar tasks to others.
- Use Taking Notes and other interactive techniques, and call on Participants who speak less.
- If necessary, talk to over–active Participants during a break. Sincerely thank them for their interest and compliment them on their knowledge. Then point out that others are not as engaged, and respectfully ask for their ideas and assistance in broadening participation.

3) <u>What if Participants Engage in Private Conversations</u>?

This is a fairly common occurrence. Ignore it as long as you can, particularly if it is only an occasional quick and quiet comment. But take action when you must. If it becomes noticeable or disruptive, the first step is to raise the Ground Rule that one person speaks at a time with the entire collective. If that does not work, consider asking the Participants if they would be kind enough to share their ideas with the entire group. Try to show genuine interest rather than opprobrium, perhaps with positive Body Language. The next step, a more aggressive approach, is to ask the Participants a specific question about what was covered while they were not listening. This can motivate them to pay better attention thereafter. One of the strongest techniques is to stop talking, look directly at them, and perhaps even approach them, making them the center of attention, and then patiently wait until they stop talking before continuing.

4) <u>What if a Participant Challenges the Trainer</u>?

This could take the form of emphasizing factual disagreement, aggressively asserting contrary positions, or behaving righteously. Such behavior reveals disregard for the interests of the collective and the optimal use of seminar time. However, Trainers need to be extremely careful to take the moral high ground, and not alienate other Participants. <u>In response to challenges of a substantive nature (relating to the topic rather than any person), the best response is the **"CAP Process".** CAP is an acronym for "Complement, Agree, and Prod"</u>.

a) **<u>Complement</u>** the Participant for raising such an important point. Sincerely show gratitude for bringing attention to an issue or position that is worthy of being addressed. Be sure to use positive or reinforcing Body Language. Try to direct the complement towards the Participant, using his/her name. Complements usually disarm or pacify the Participant, and minimize further aggression.

b) **<u>Agree</u>** with at least some part of what has been said. No matter how off–track the comments, find something to agree with and support, and sincerely explain how and why you agree. This vindicates the Participant, and defuses tension. Direct your agreement towards both the Participant and the entire audience, by alternating eye contact. This minimizes confrontation, and has the added benefit of reinforcing the vindication to the collective.

The CAP Process

c) **<u>Prod</u>** the Participant towards accepting the most important part(s) of your position. Professionally and gently assert your points. Freely cite relevant authorities and documents. Direct comments more towards the entire audience, making somewhat less or even minimal eye contact with the Participant. This is to avoid challenging or provoking. It may then be appropriate to open the floor to other opinions. If the Participant appears likely to counterattack, seeking other opinions is the best way to avoid confrontation. If the Participant appears calmed, and would like to respectfully follow up, allow this. As a last resort, announce the need to move on to the next subject, due to time constraints, and politely offer to continue conversing with the Participant during the next break.

Paraphrasing is an excellent technique for dealing with challenging Participants. As discussed above, the Trainer summarizes what the Participant has said and/or the point that has been made. This is a form of validation or vindication, which shows that the Trainer has heard the Participant, and grasped the message. Paraphrasing in this context can be performed as a statement or as a question. It could begin with: "If I understand correctly…" or "Is it your position that…" If the Trainer paraphrases correctly, the Participant should feel respected, or at the very least acknowledged, and hopefully be more accommodating. At this point, after demonstrating active listening skills and respect for alternative positions, the Trainer can more safely diverge.

If the challenge to the Trainer is personal, rather than substantive or professional, that is to say related to skills and experience or personal traits instead of the subject matter, it is probably best to forego any defense and move on to the next topic. Defensive reactions can be provocative, and generate further confrontation. By taking the moral high ground, the Trainer can create an impression that the Participant is being disrespectful. Meeting disrespect with dignity and humility is difficult, but it often works best. After all, dignified behavior is much more likely to defuse confrontation, and to generate sympathy from other Participants, who probably do not want to see the Trainer subjected to personal attacks by one of their colleagues.

Throughout these processes for dealing with challenges on the spot, remember that the main objective in a confrontational situation is to win over the collective, not win against the Participant. This can best be achieved by:

1) Defusing tension
2) Showing tolerance and respect for divergence of opinion
3) Striving to deliver the highest quality training possible in the interests of the collective

If none of the above techniques for dealing with various kinds of difficult behavior work, it may prove necessary for the Trainer to speak directly to the difficult Participant(s) during a break. This must be done in a very constructive and positive fashion. To make the situation less personal, it is important to focus on the effect that the undesired behavior is having on the seminar and the other Participants, and claim to be acting on behalf of the collective. While it may be tempting to speak exclusively and confidentially with the Participant(s), this is not advisable. The best strategy is to bring along a colleague to act as a witness and to discourage posturing or "grandstanding". This could be an assistant, organizer, or respected senior figure.

Expulsion of a Participant is an extraordinary action. It should almost never be considered let alone attempted, except as a last resort under the gravest of circumstances, if the success of the seminar is jeopardized. In most training situations this is simply not feasible, since Trainers lack the necessary authority, and the repercussions would be too severe. If such a measure does appear necessary, the Trainer must call a short break, and immediately speak directly to supervisors, organizers, or a higher authority. The problem should not only be shared with such parties, it should be formally delegated upward to make it their responsibility, since in reality it already is. Severe sanctions can only be promulgated by an authority above the Trainer. And if sanctions happen, the Trainer must manage to stay above or outside the fray, and create an impression of having behaved reasonably, in order to keep the seminar on track.

G. Emotional Intelligence

The above principles for dealing with audiences highlight the importance of communication skills, and in particular Emotional Intelligence. There is a considerable amount of literature on this topic, and therefore many different iterations of Emotional Intelligence. The brief summary below can be considered a composite of the main features, which will hopefully encourage further research.

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to recognize and understand emotions and place them in the context of human interactions. It is applicable to both oneself (Self–Awareness and Self–Management) and others (Social Awareness and Situational Awareness). Mastery of these four practices facilitates sound Relationship Management.

Emotional Intelligence combines and serves as a bridge between intellect and feelings. It enables people to manage themselves and better connect with others, by sensing and reacting to both their own emotions and those of others. Perceiving and understanding emotions in others makes it possible to empathize and interact more appropriately. Practically speaking, Emotional Intelligence approaches people as a type of "operating system". In this context, people can be understood by connecting with the general emotions that govern and motivate *every* human interaction and the particular emotions that govern and motivate *each* human interaction.

The first element of Emotional Intelligence is directed inwards. It focuses on self–understanding and controlling your own emotions. The two main components are Self–Awareness and Self–Management. **Self–Awareness** is the ability to accurately and objectively recognize and understand a) your emotions and drives, and b) how your emotions and drives affect your behavior. **Self–Management** means learning to successfully control your emotions and thereby respond to others in the most objectively appropriate and effective fashion.

The second component of Emotional Intelligence is directed outwards. It focuses on understanding and reacting to the emotions of others. The two key elements are 1) Social Awareness and 2) Situational Awareness. **Social Awareness** is the ability to identify, assess, and understand the emotions and feelings of others. Empathy and respect are crucial. **Situational Awareness** is the ability to assess the overall context for the communication, and determine how it affects the participants and the process.

Relationship Management is the ultimate goal of Emotional Intelligence. This is the ability to use Self–Awareness, Self–Management, Social Awareness, and Situational Awareness to improve communication and strategically and effectively handle interpersonal interactions.

Relationship Management is the culmination and ultimate expression of Emotional Intelligence, and an important element of all communication.

It is very advantageous for Trainers to understand the basic principles and application of Emotional Intelligence, even though their relationship with Participants has a limited duration and scope. These skills are particularly useful in multi–day events, and for Learning Outcomes and methodologies which involve understanding and values. Further information on this subject is presented in Appendix 2.

H. <u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

Training is all about working and communicating with audiences. This means managing group dynamics and psychology, through understanding key factors such as group size, group composition, physical setup, space requirements, ambience, emotional and motivational factors, and behavior patterns. Key training skills include establishing and enforcing Ground Rules, serving as a Facilitator, setting the appropriate level of formality, encouraging participation, communicating effectively, knowing how to respond to the typical things Participants do, knowing how to manage questions and answers, and using energizers.

With regard to handling questions and answers, Trainers need to know how to ask questions, how to get Participants to answer their questions, how to get Participants to ask questions, and how to answer questions from Participants. These are extremely important skills. Bad or poorly posed questions rarely yield good answers. Negative reactions or responses to answers never promote dialogue. Poor interactive techniques and ineffective answers by Trainers stifle questions. On the other hand, well–managed Question & Answer sessions promote deep learning and are a great investment of time. Unfortunately, these skills and the benefits that they bring rarely receive the attention that they deserve.

One of the biggest challenges that Trainers face is handling difficult Participants.

The most common challenges are posed by Participants who don't respect the Ground Rules, talk too much (or know it all), engage in private conversations, behave negatively, or challenge the Trainer (on substantive or personal grounds).

In response, Trainers need to be patient, polite, respectful, measured, and conciliatory. If absolutely necessary, as a last resort, there may be no alternative but to coordinate a response with other key parties, such as supervisors, organizers, or a higher authority (and make it their problem).

The key throughout this process is to <u>focus as much as possible on the behavior rather than the person</u>. Promoting best practices in a universal fashion is preferable to enforcing discipline on an individual. The goal is to respectfully uphold the interests of the seminar, the organizers, and the collective at all times, and gain recognition from the Participants for acting towards this noble objective.

Considering all of the challenges and potential pitfalls inherent in working with live audiences, and the time that it takes, it is easy to understand why some Trainers prefer to place limits on interactivity, and confine themselves to presentations that end in limited Question & Answer sessions. After all, *the easiest way to impose control over an audience is through silence.* But this can only work (nominally well) if the Trainer's goal is to transmit knowledge, and if the audience is content to listen. Otherwise, placing limits on the Participants directly reduces the effectiveness of seminars. Therefore, it is best to take advantage of the interpersonal nature of seminars and the rewards from collective learning, and this means working effectively with live audiences.

MODULE XII
NON–VERBAL COMMUNICATION (BODY LANGUAGE)

Learning Outcomes:

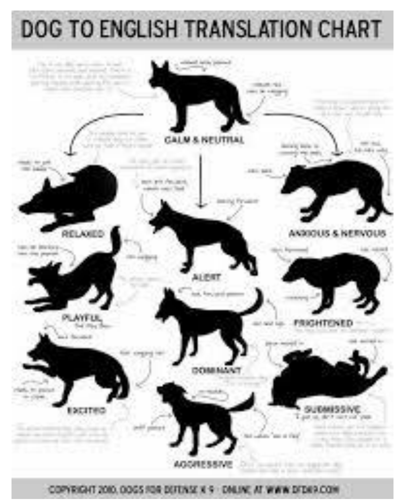
1) Trainers understand the nature and importance of non–verbal communication (Body Language)
2) Trainers know how to **a) employ and b) interpret** Body Language, so that they are more effective when working with Participants and in all interpersonal settings

A. Introduction

Body Language refers to any aspect or type of communication that does not involve words or word choice. It includes a wide range of facial expressions, physical movements (gestures and signals), and sounds. Body Language provides a supplemental and sometimes better indication of what people mean and feel than their words. This is because the conscious mind or neocortex carefully selects and controls words to achieve calculated goals. But the subconscious mind, or limbic system, which is the center of behavior and emotions, is connected to and hard wired to reveal itself through Body Language. As a result, Body Language is an autonomic/automatic function, which usually manifests itself without our awareness. **This makes Body Language a crucial element of human communication which Trainers need to understand, utilize, and interpret**.

Body Language can be considered our original and primordial form of communication. After all, humans communicated with each other long before they developed sophisticated vocabulary.

Body Language is part of our inheritance from the animal kingdom and our primate/hominin ancestors. Indeed, the study of Body Language originated in the analysis of animal behavior, and the various dances and rituals performed by all life forms on earth, from birds to primates. Charles Darwin is really the "progenitor" of this field. He was the first to systematically study what animals do, and notice comparable behavior in humans. Since his work, scientists have greatly expanded our understanding.



Many professions and activities depend on understanding and using Body Language. For example:

- Politicians must present a positive image and win people over, hide their true feelings, and be experts in everything from shaking hands to posing in photographs
- Salespeople must be able to send the right signals to convince potential clients to buy, and read their responses, to figure out how to overcome resistance and know when they will say yes
- Advertisers must precisely control the images they present in commercials and photos, and take care of every nuance, from placement to posture to clothing to the dilation of pupils
- Actors and actresses must know how to simulate every aspect of the roles they play
- Athletes must be able to deceive their opponents, for example by looking one way and going another, and then talk about it convincingly in the post–game interviews

- Ballet dancers must be able to tell a complete story with just their moves, gestures, and facial expressions
- Cartoonists must be able to present a full range of gestures and facial expressions. Indeed, every single frame in the early cartoons, like “Tom and Jerry” and “Bugs Bunny”, was planned and drawn by hand!

- Models must know exactly how to move and pose in order to sell their sponsor’s products
- Poker players must pick up “tells” of their opponents, while hiding their own strategies
- Security officials and law enforcement personnel must be able to determine who is dangerous and who is lying
- Judges and legal professionals must evaluate the credibility of everyone they deal with

In fact, almost all professional and interpersonal activities benefit from understanding Body Language.

This module looks at Body Language for Trainers. It focuses on how Trainers can a) improve the way that they present themselves, and b) better interpret audience reaction. This module is only a basic introduction to this complicated subject. Placing humans in their context as part of the animal kingdom was popularized by Desmond Morris in his 1967 book “The Naked Ape”. In recent years, there has been an explosion of information. Much can be learned from the literature, scientific studies, and internet postings. However, much of this material is of variable quality.

B. <u>What are the Key Elements of Body Language, and Why are they Important</u>?

Body Language is in many ways an imprecise and over–inclusive term. It covers too much and means different things to different people. Nobody would deny that a raised fist or a sneer send serious signals. But many people would misinterpret or underestimate the potential significance of a raised eyebrow, finger tap, or change in foot position.

We will focus on six major categories or elements of Body Language:

1) **<u>Expressions</u>.** This covers presentation and arrangement of the *face*, particularly the eyes, eyebrows, nose, and mouth. It includes combinations and links between them as well.
2) **<u>Gestures</u>.** This includes *movement* of the head, face, body/torso, arms, hands, fingers, legs, and feet. *Motion* is a key feature. Touching others can be considered an aspect of gesturing.
3) **<u>Stance</u>.** This includes *position and posture* of the head, body/torso, arms, and legs. Overall presentation is key.
4) **<u>Location</u>.** This refers to placement of the body, body space, and distance from others. The four zones are Public, Social, Personal, and Intimate. Their dimensions vary slightly by culture.
5) **<u>Vocalization</u>.** This involves the way we speak, and factors such as such as volume, tone, inflection, speed, and pauses.
6) **<u>Utterances</u>.** These are sounds that get mixed in with our words, such as grunts, sighs, and whistles (which can “speak” volumes).

<u>Each of the six categories of behavior listed above supplies meaning, feeling, mood, intention, and attitude to accompanying words</u>. When considering the use and interpretation of Body Language, pay

careful attention to the differences between these six categories, and our awareness of each of them. People are usually unaware of their facial expressions, but may notice their gestures and hear some of their vocalizations. When assessing others, different people may focus more on one category than another. Training and practice enhance the ability to use and interpret all of the six categories, and better understand how they are linked, in order to be a better communicator.

Body Language is often considered an aspect of **Paralinguistics** and paralinguistic communication. Sometimes all of the six categories are considered paralinguistic ("para" in Greek means "beside" or "beyond"). In other contexts, the term is used more specifically to refer to vocalization. This includes voice quality, volume, speaking style, rhythm, intonation, stress, etc.

These paralinguistic cues can be seen as the way in which the sounds associated with words affect the meaning of those words. It is comparable to the difference between how computers and real people speak. In our modern world, we often forget that words are actually just sound waves, which follow basic principles regarding the types of sounds which are found in nature.

The term "onomatopoetic" is used to describe words which are directly associated with sounds, such as "buzz" and "ring". It comes from Greek: "onoma" means "name" – onomastics is the study of proper names and their origins, and "poiein" means "to make" – leading to the words poem and poet). Paralinguistic cues can also be found in written and particularly handwritten texts.

Body Language experts try to apportion different percentages to the major categories of communication behavior. The following breakdown is typical:

- Body Language = 60%
- Vocalization and Utterances = 30%
- Word Choice = 10%

While this breakdown correctly highlights the importance of non–verbal communication, there is little empirical evidence or factual basis for exact or oft–repeated numerical values. It is difficult to set precise relative values for words and paralinguistic cues. What percentages apply to the importance of the word "No" vs. the volume and tone used to relay it? How can a relative value be placed on softness of voice or a hand gesture accompanying words? Under certain conditions, a slight eye tick might mean more than a sentence, no matter how it is vocalized. Much depends on the subject, context, and parties involved. The bottom line is that Trainers should appreciate the importance of Body Language, but avoid quantifying percentage values for situation–specific behavior.

Unfortunately, many people do not appreciate the importance of Body Language. They disregard the power of signals. They are unaware of the ways that subliminal messages are used to influence our behavior. This is especially true in certain countries, cultures, and social classes. Professionals in particular often place utmost emphasis on their choice of words, while neglecting other aspects of communication. This can significantly compromise their effectiveness in a multitude of settings.

It is important for Trainers to understand that a) the Body Language which accompanies our words and how we speak are a major part of the messages we send, and b) others communicate a great deal of information in addition to their words.

C. <u>What is the Mind–Body Connection Behind Body Language</u>?

It is crucial to understand that **<u>Body Language both *reflects* AND *affects* our thoughts</u>!**

There is a direct feedback loop between what our minds think/feel and what our bodies do/feel.

Thoughts, Emotions, and Sensations		Expressions, Gestures, Stance, and Location

Trainers can use an understanding of this feedback loop to their advantage:

- <u>Facial expressions display our feelings while also creating and reinforcing them</u>. To know how someone is feeling, simply mimic their expression and you will feel what they feel. This can be tested by imitating a face in a photograph. It is almost impossible to have one kind of expression and a different category of feeling (for example, to smile and feel angry). The old saying "put on a happy face" is right on target – if we look happy, we are likely to feel happy.

- <u>Posture and gestures display feelings, while also creating and reinforcing them</u>. Assuming a positive and confident "shoulders back and arms–up" posture, like the politician at left, accentuates positive and confident feelings. Assuming a dejected" or submissive "shoulders and arms/ hands forward" posture, like the person at right, accentuates feelings of intimidation and subservience. <u>Postures and gestures feel natural when they reflect feelings, but then they amplify those feelings over time</u>!

- To overcome nervousness, clasp your hands behind your back, plant your feet firmly and spread your legs slightly, and stand tall with shoulders straight. By demonstrating confidence and authority, we start to feel more confident and authoritative, and thereby dispel nervousness.
- To *look* like a leader, assume the stance and posture of a leader, and then start to *feel* like a leader.
- To demonstrate and build rapport, and send a clear message to others, mirror Body Language and feel the rapport. Mirroring (synchronization) is discussed further below.

This is powerful information for Trainers, who must control how they feel and how they are perceived via what they do. <u>Trainers have two choices for themselves when it comes to the feedback loop</u>:

1) **Trainers can do what they FEEL, and then feel what they do.** But this standard approach places Trainers at the disposition of their limbic systems and their feelings, and at the mercy of the feedback loop.
2) **Trainers can do what they CHOOSE, and then feel what they do.** This places Trainers in control, by consciously choosing what they do, and then using the effect on how they feel to their own advantage.

The conscious use of Body Language by Trainers is discussed in Section "E" below.

This information regarding the Mind–Body connection is also crucial for working with Participants. It can open the door to techniques which influence or modify their feelings. Once again, Trainers have two choices when it comes to Participants and the feedback loop:

1) **Trainers can let Participants do what they FEEL, and then let them feel what they do.** But this standard approach places Participants at the disposition of their limbic systems and feelings, and at the mercy of the feedback loop.
2) **Trainers can INFLUENCE what Participants do, and then let them feel what they do.** This places Trainers at least partially in control, by consciously modifying what Participants do, and then using the subsequent effect on their feelings for constructive purposes.

Responding to the negative Body Language of Participants is discussed in Section "H" below.

D. How Does Body Language Help Trainers to be Better Communicators?

Training and meetings of any kind are above all else venues for communication. Whether we are making a presentation or listening to one in silence, we are always communicating. The "volume" or "potency" of our signals may be different, but the communication is taking place nonetheless.

Whatever the goals, subject matter, group, or setting, there are two basic facts for all communication:

1. Communication is a skill which always yields results
2. Effective communication is both verbal and non–verbal, involving both use and interpretation

Trainers have two complementary techniques for improving communication via Body Language:

THE TWIN CHANNELS FOR MASTERING BODY LANGUAGE	
1	**Trainers should know *how to USE their own Body Language*, to obtain best results**
2	**Trainers should know *how to INTERPRET Body Language of others*, to obtain best results**

When it comes to "volume" and "potency", masters of Body Language can make what amounts to a whisper into something impactful, and can pick up whisper–faint signals from others in a crowded room. These two goals, use and interpretation, are discussed in Section "E" and Section "F" below, respectively.

E. How can Trainers *Use Their Own Body Language* to Communicate More Effectively?

Good Trainers use their physical presence for utilitarian purposes.

"All the world's a stage"

To successfully utilize Body Language, they view themselves and their bodies as a tool or prop, to be put to optimal use. One of the best ways to learn how to do this is through acting classes. Good actors know how to convince others by having a presence, making their Body Language flow with their words (congruence), and being present in the moment. Trainers are very much on stage, and in the spotlight, just like actors. Trainers are also playing a role, albeit more educational than dramatic. And just as with actors, Trainers can improve their skills greatly by reviewing film/video of themselves in action, or by practicing in front of a mirror.

The following best practices for the effective **USE** of Body Language are a good start for Trainers:

- Make Body Language suitable for the target group, subject, level of formality, and setting.
- Use positive Body Language to encourage Participants, neutral Body Language to conceal feelings or avoid offending Participants, and negative Body Language only when necessary.
- Make sure Body Language complements words. If there is incongruence, men tend to focus on words, and women tend to focus on Body Language. But everyone loses faith in the Trainer.
- Vary Body Language. Men in particular tend to be stiff and stone–faced, in an effort to hide emotion. This compromises effectiveness, particularly when communicating with women.
- Face audiences squarely and confidently. Never turn your back on them or talk to a screen.
- Keep your hands out of your pockets. This can give the impression of hiding something. At the very least, it prevents movement of the arms and hands to strengthen messages.
- Avoid distractions like pacing, shifting feet, tapping, rhythmic motions, playing with props.
- Do not stutter. Slow down, and enunciate clearly, to avoid repeating words and sounds.
- Smile whenever appropriate. Smiling is a universal signal that establishes rapport and encourages reciprocity. Smiles are both automatic and controllable (see below).
- Respect body space. Understand the different spatial zones and how to use them (see below).
- Avoid self–touching. Don't touch your eyes, ears, nose, mouth, or face. Don't grab, squeeze, or manipulate your fingers. These gestures indicate tension, nervousness, and possibly deceit.

We will now review how Trainers can optimally utilize each of the six key elements of Body Language.

1) Use of Facial Expressions and Eye Contact by Trainers

It is impossible to accurately count the number of different human facial expressions.

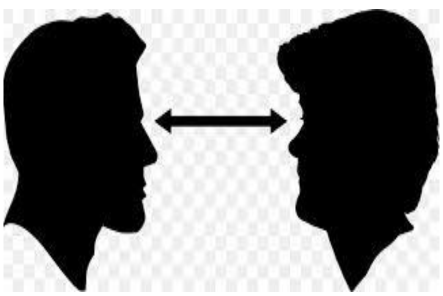
Researchers routinely identify around twenty main categories, including: Happy, Sad, Fearful, Angry, Surprised, Disgusted, Happily Surprised, Happily Disgusted, Sadly Fearful, Sadly Angry, Sadly Surprised, Sadly Disgusted, Fearfully Angry, Fearfully Surprised, Fearfully Disgusted, Angrily Surprised, Angrily Disgusted, Disgustedly Surprised, Appalled, Hating, and Awed. But nuances created by using our **42 facial muscles** expand possibilities into the thousands. According to some experts and computerized simulations, the total number of facial expressions runs into the tens of thousands!

From an historical perspective of human development as a species, it is remarkable that we have 42 facial muscles and such a large and varied repertoire of facial configurations for conveying messages. This cannot be accidental. Rather, it must serve our collective interests, promote survival of the species, or confer an evolutionary/hereditary advantage. But perhaps most intriguing is the fact that we use this incredible variety of facial expressions to send messages to others without knowing it. Indeed, most people are practically oblivious to their facial expressions and the clues that they constantly transmit to others, even when their own interests are at stake. A lawyer might spend hours perfecting a written brief, and then give it all away with a single wayward glance that is picked up by the judge or jury.

To overcome this, Trainers must develop awareness of and control over their facial expressions, including micro–expressions. It is beyond our purview to categorize all of the different facial expressions and discuss their optimal uses. Suffice it to say that Trainers can use facial expressions to show emotion, show the right kinds of emotion, show the right kinds of emotion to the right people, show the right kinds of emotion to the right people at the right time, and hide emotions if required.

Optimal use of facial expressions is a “balancing act”. When giving a presentation, it is best to use facial expressions that are engaging and personable, while remaining business–like and authoritative. When responding to Participants, it is best to use facial expressions that are respectful and supportive, and that offer encouragement, while softening any disapproval or disagreement. For social interactions, all such facial expressions come in handy, plus those that show congeniality and empathy.

One aspect of facial expressions that deserves special attention is eye contact. This is a key aspect of communication, notably in seminar settings. Proper eye contact maintains attention, shows respect, and makes Trainers appear sincere, credible, confident, and friendly. On the other hand, either excessive or insufficient eye contact can reduce credibility or cause offense. The best practice is to:



- Make regular and consistent eye contact with Participants
- When talking, try to make eye contact at least 50% of the time
- When listening, try to make eye contact about 70% of the time
- When giving a presentation, look around the room. Avoid moving systematically from one Participant to the next (this seems artificial). Instead, use semi–random movements throughout the audience. Go back and forth slowly in each direction.
- Give the impression of addressing each and every Participant

Very important messages are conveyed through eyebrows.

Raising eyebrows shows interest, attracts attention, or conveys pleading. It can be a very positive sign, particularly when first seeing someone. Technically, raised eyebrows signify submission. Lowering eyebrows or bringing them together shows disapproval or concern, and can even signify aggression. Differentiating the use or position of the left and right eyebrows can convey various messages, from puzzled to light–hearted.

Notice in the pictures above how eyebrows contribute to and accentuate different facial expressions. This is useful to know, since we have considerable control over our eyebrows. Notice also the importance of the mouth, and its many configurations, which are often coordinated with eyebrows.

Stares are an impactful and dynamic use of facial expressions. There are numerous variants. Like facial expressions, they blend into gestures by involving some motion/movement.

For example, Trainers can show authority or even intimidate others by lifting their heads, lowering and centering their eyebrows, and glancing downward, in effect looking “down their nose”. This discourages others and can even stifle dissent. Or Trainers can lower their heads and look up at Participants, in order to engender support or even sympathy. This gesture, combined with a neck display, was perfected and regularly used by Princess Diana, with great success.

It may sound silly, but practicing stares in front of a mirror can be well worth the effort.

Finally, there are social and cultural differences regarding eye contact, which obligate a tailored approach. For example, in some societies, particularly in Africa and Asia, extended eye contact is deemed to be a challenge and is therefore inappropriate. It can also be considered a sign of disrespect, especially when young people relate to elders or junior employees relate to superiors.

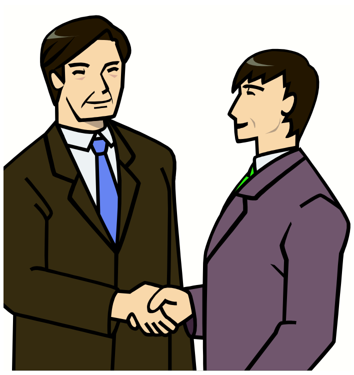
2) Use of Gestures by Trainers

The study of how gestures and movements contribute to communication is called **kinesics**. This term is often used to refer to Body Language in general, since to a certain extent all Body Language involves some motion. At seminars, Trainers are constantly moving, and therefore engaged in a continuing process of modifying their non–verbal communication. However, for purposes of understanding communication and developing training skills, it is useful to further categorize Body Language into the six components we have identified.

Gestures are identifiable and precise movements that convey messages. They can involve practically every part of the body, including the head, face, torso, arms, hands, fingers, legs, and feet. When we think of gestures, we tend to focus on hands and fingers. And indeed, hands and fingers provide a wealth of signals, many of which are extremely evocative. But to be inclusive, we need to consider a wide range of actions using other parts of the body, such as head shakes/nods/bobs, leaning forwards, backwards, or to one side, extending arms, hugs, leg motions, pointing the feet, etc.

As a general proposition, movements which are smooth, graceful, continuous, and performed naturally are a positive sign. They indicate comfort and confidence. Open or outstretched arms or hands (or any "spreading out" activity) also demonstrate confidence. However, expanding use of space (by placing hands on hips) can signal aggression. In contrast, withdrawing to smaller space can show uncertainty, timidity, or feeling intimidated. Unnaturally restricted or jerky movements reveal discomfort.

Self–protective gestures deserve special attention. Humans instinctively protect themselves when faced with danger. It is part of our innate programming to defend our vulnerable areas, such as the neck and torso (and for men the "lower torso"). Accordingly, we lean away, turn away, move away, or place something in front of us when we are uncomfortable or insecure. Typical self–protective measures can involve our arms, hands, objects we hold, or physical barriers such as desks and podiums. On the other hand, directly facing others without barriers or protective shields shows confidence, trust, and comfort. Protective gestures and positioning are a natural reflex, and consequently rarely noticed by those who employ them. However, others can notice everything, and in fact people may give more credence to natural reflexes than to controlled gestures. This is important for Trainers to know.



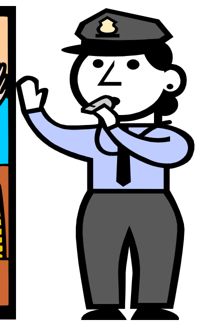
Handshakes are perhaps the most important gesture for Trainers to master. This customary greeting (except during pandemics) creates rapport and sets the tone for all subsequent interactions. The complexity and variety of handshakes is universally underestimated. Key variables include physical proximity, arm extension, hand orientation and angle, strength/pressure, duration, number of "pumps", use of two hands, etc. These variables are influenced by culture, gender, setting (business or social), class, profession, and intentions. Some cultures and religions restrict physical contact, particularly between genders, while others mandate shaking hands and even encourage holding hands.

Trainers must understand the different kinds of handshakes and what they mean, in order to use them properly and effectively, starting from the time that they first meet and greet Participants.

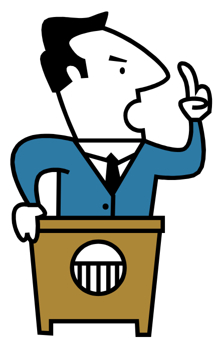
The human hands are remarkably intricate and refined instruments. They have 27 bones each (one–quarter of our total), 27 joints, 34 muscles, and over 100 ligaments and tendons. Plus, a multitude of direct nerve connections to the brain. Our hands and prehensile thumbs permit amazing feats. We make things, use tools, play music, play sports, hunt and fight with weapons, drive, type, and of course we communicate. Human hands are always talking! Particularly in certain cultures and societies. And we can hold a complete conversation with sign language. Our brains and our hands constantly send each other signals and feedback. Restricting the hands affects speech and behavior. Hand usage and movement send a myriad of salient and refined Body Language messages.

Trainers should communicate with their hands as much as possible and appropriate. As with all gestures, hand movements are best when deliberate and considerate, without appearing artificial. When hands are in pockets their value is limited, and hidden hands create suspicion. We are also programmed, for self–preservation, to pay particularly close attention to what others do with their hands. Effective use of hands can make a remarkable contribution to the success of training.

Here are some examples of hand usage and the messages that are conveyed:

- Holding one or both hands with palm(s) upward (supinated) or extended outward shows openness and builds rapport. It signals agreement, and indicates willingness to close a deal.
- Showing a palm plus sweeping motion offers encouragement.
- Facing the palms downward (pronated) establishes authority or control. It also shows assuredness, factuality, or finality. However, it can create an impression of being closed.
- Holding a hand up with the palm outward imposes restraint.
- Placing hands together as if praying indicates pleading, desire, hope, or the wish to show sincerity.
- Placing the right hand on the heart is a strong signal of fidelity.
- "Steepling" (aligning the fingers of both hands upward) shows confidence/authority/superiority. But it can be perceived as arrogance, so cautious and limited use is advisable.
- Rubbing the hands together signifies advantage or gain. But check the velocity. Rapidity indicates that the other person benefits. Slow movement indicates that the speaker benefits.
- Showing thumbs, holding them out, or pointing them upwards exudes confidence and success. Hiding the thumbs shows insecurity. Putting hands in pockets with thumbs out is a confident gesture, unlike putting only the thumbs in pockets.




Touching or **haptics** can be considered an aspect or continuation of gesturing. Proper touching greatly enhances messages and builds rapport. But inappropriate touching is extremely counterproductive, and creates a lasting negative impression. Touching should only take place when circumstances are fully accommodative. Generally, the most acceptable place to touch someone is on the arm, around or preferably just above the elbow. This can be done while shaking hands, to promote intimacy and gage the reaction to it. Rules for touching vary significantly amongst countries and social classes.

In addition to understanding the meanings and uses of gestures, Trainers should also know how to transition between them. Gracefulness is crucial. Ballet dancers are masters of graceful transitions. Sharp, jerky, or uneven movements are distracting and may interfere with messaging.

A sudden cessation of gestures can indicate that the brain is recalibrating its message. This is important to pick up. On the other hand, new and sudden movements can indicate that the brain is transmitting a new message. Remember that any deliberate movement or expenditure of energy, particularly when it works against gravity, is potentially meaningful.

3) <u>Use of Stance by Trainers</u>

<u>The way Trainers stand sends powerful messages about their attitudes and feelings towards themselves and their situation</u>.

Trainers can enhance their stature and presence by controlling their stance. As discussed in Module X Section "E" Point 4, with respect to Presentations, <u>how people hold their bodies speaks volumes about who they are, who they think they are, how they feel, how they expect to be treated, and what they can do</u>. Standing up straight with shoulders back can make a huge difference. Note how the matador at left demonstrates bravery and lack of fear by facing the bull directly, holding his head up, spreading his arms, planting and pointing his feet, and holding himself proudly. It may seem unfair, but Participants think less of Trainers who do not stand tall and show that they are in control.

Note that stance is actually a composite presentation of all areas of the body. When it comes to posing, nothing should be left out. If every other aspect of stance is authoritative but the head is oriented downwards, or the hands are clasped in front, the overall effect is greatly diminished.

Stance can be used in a number of productive ways. For example, Trainers can orient their body and point their feet in parallel in order to focus attention on a specific Participant, or point their feet outward to present a more expansive/inclusive approach. We demonstrate interest through torso direction.

4) <u>Use of Location by Trainers</u>

<u>Trainers need to be constantly aware of their location and their distance from Participants (**proxemics**), and use it to their advantage</u>. Coordination between movement/distance and interactions/activities improves communication and makes all methodologies more effective.

Two aspects of location are of utmost importance, as discussed in Module X Section "E" Point 4:

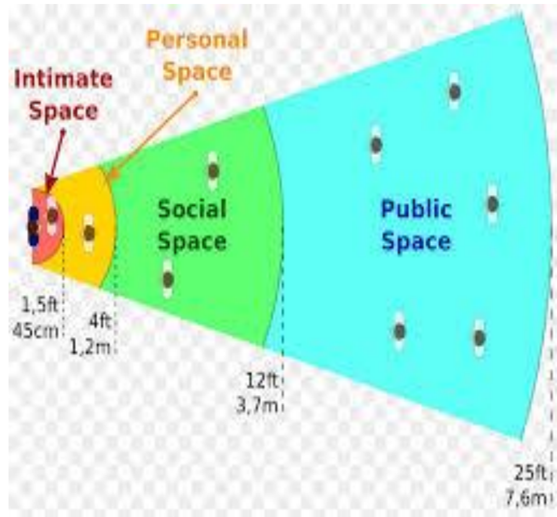
1) The juxtaposition of Trainers with respect to the room and set–up, including the arrangement of desks, chairs, podium, equipment, etc.

2) The distance between Trainers and Participants (and how/when it changes).

Trainers perform best when they stand in a central position of authority. From the right location, Trainers have a clear view of all Participants, and are fully visible to everyone. Ideally, there should not be any obstruction or barriers, and the lighting should be even. Proper placement makes Trainers the focus of attention, and enhances their message. Regular movement away from center stage is both acceptable and advisable, provided that it is purposeful, timely, and graceful, and culminates in a return to the starting position.

The distance Trainers keep between themselves and Participants is a key aspect of their non–verbal communication, and deserves special attention. As mentioned above, there are four different zones:

1. The **Intimate Zone** is anything less than 50 centimeters. This area is only appropriate for extremely close friends, relatives, or lovers. Trainers should studiously avoid entering Intimate Zones. Indeed, in many cultures this constitutes a challenge or offense.
2. The **Personal Zone** ranges from 50 – 100/125 centimeters. This area is appropriate for people who are personally close. Trainers should avoid entering Personal Zones during a seminar or presentation. But this may well be appropriate during interactive exercises or coffee breaks.
3. The **Social Zone** ranges from 100/125 – 300/350 centimeters. This area is appropriate for social interactions that are less formal than public appearances, but between people who are not closely connected. Trainers should be able to comfortably position themselves in the social zone for a reasonable percentage of time, to reach out to and connect with Participants.



4. The **Public Zone** is anything beyond 300/350 centimeters. This area is associated with public interactions and presentations that completely lack intimacy. Unless the setting is large and formal, Trainers should try to reduce the percentage of time that they spend in the Public Zone.

The concept of "social distance" has become widespread and engrained in the public consciousness as a result of the COVID–19 pandemic. It is usually set at two meters or six feet (for partially arbitrary historical reasons), but sometimes less. The idea is to reduce disease transmission by keeping people outside of each other's Intimate, Personal, and Social Zones, and closer to their Public Zones.

As with eye contact, the exact parameters of these four zones tends to vary between different countries and cultures. For instance, people in Asia tend to have smaller zones than people in Europe and North America. Also, people who live in cities tend to be more used to proximity than rural dwellers, since they spend more time in public transport and elevators. These differences oblige Trainers to be somewhat flexible regarding body spacing practices, and adhere to the following basic strategy:

1) Commence with maximum respect and caution by assuming a non–offensive distance
2) Adjust the approach slightly, seeking greater proximity, as opportunities arise
3) Closely observe the reaction and response to any increase in proximity
4) Immediately withdraw in the face of the slightest negative signals
5) Proceed cautiously towards greater proximity in response to positive signals

These techniques are valuable in all social settings, particularly when people first get to know each other. Indeed, one of the best ways to assess how others feel about us is to increase proximity and observe the reaction we elicit. The same holds true for an extremely casual and brief touch.

Approaching Directly

In seminar settings, Trainers send powerful signals when they vary their location and distance from Participants. For example, Trainers can enhance rapport by approaching the audience to say something informal or personal. They can focus attention on a particular Participant by moving closer, for example when asking a question or listening to an answer or comment. They can increase formality by moving away from the Participants, stepping up onto a stage, or going behind a desk or podium, and then addressing the collective. Whatever the choice, proximity should be managed according to layout, protocol, social sensibilities, and category of methodology, to achieve the optimal effect and the maximal/desired rapport.

It is clear from the above that Trainers who are constantly aware of their location and distance from Participants and who can strategically and tactfully modify them in accordance with their objectives have a powerful tool in their arsenal. On the other hand, Trainers who stay in one location, or who speak from behind a barrier, as in the picture on the right, miss out on this completely. The same holds true for Trainers who wander about their stage without a game plan, or who fail to correlate their distance/location to what they are doing.

Not Accessible

5) **Use of Vocalization by Trainers**

Voice control is an extremely important and often overlooked aspect of communication. But it is possible to dramatically alter the effect on others by making speech softer/harder, quieter/louder, faster/slower, melodic/monotone, etc. Think of singers, broadcasters, radio personalities, announcers, and advertisers who make a living from the way they use their voice. Of course, a professional quality voice is a rare gift. But many valuable principles and techniques can be learned and developed. Even experts need to practice and build their skills.

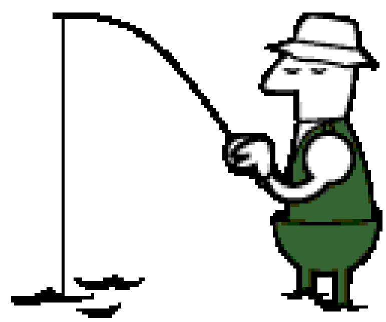
Here are some basic rules for effective vocalization:

1. Vary tone, pitch, and pace. Variety displays and generates interest, and it helps maintain attention. Monotonous speech, especially during presentations, is definitely a worst practice.
2. Keep speech straightforward/simple. Long and complicated sentences serve no purpose.
3. Show enthusiasm. This amplifies the effect of statements and enhances recall. Consider how enthusiasm and emphasis can make the following phrase more impactful: “Last year, ONE salesperson tried this technique and managed to increase revenues by FIFTY PERCENT”.
4. Enunciate clearly. Separate each word. Always pronounce words fully and correctly. Project words properly. Avoid mumbling and stuttering. It is impossible to learn what cannot be heard and understood. Enunciation is very important for introductions, presentations, questions and answers, and any engagement with people who speak a different first language.
5. Eliminate the unnecessary. Just as we edit documents to remove what doesn’t belong, economy of speech is an excellent skill. Unhelpful phrases, words, and sounds detract from the message and undermine credibility. They are also a waste of time.

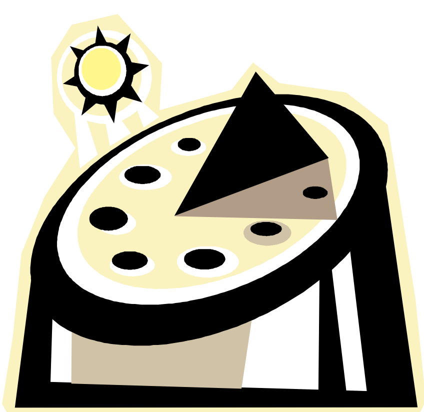
Trainers should be attentive to six aspects of their vocalization, known as "**The Six P's**". They are: a) Projection, b) Pitch, c) Pace, d) Pauses, e) Pronunciation, and f) Phillers (Fillers).

a) Projection. This refers to how far the voice reaches, and how well it is heard at a distance. To ensure that everyone can hear, Trainers are sometimes urged to "speak to the back wall". But projection is different from volume. Certainly, volume must be adequate. But the voice must also carry. Some experts are able to project their voices so well that a whisper travels as far as a shout. Think of ventriloquists and puppeteers. By properly combining and varying projection and volume, Trainers can emphasize the importance of subjects, create urgency or suspense, increase interest and motivation, and extend the attention span of Participants.

b) Pitch. This refers to the way tones move up and down the musical scale. Changes in pitch add variety to the voice, and bring emphasis and enthusiasm to important ideas. Lack of diversity in pitch results in a monotone, which is less interesting and less persuasive. There are exercises for improving pitch, like going up and down scales while speaking. It is also important to relate pitch to full stops. To maintain continuity or interest in a story, avoid lowering pitch excessively at the end of sentences.



c) Pace. This refers to the speed of delivery. It is characterized by a) the number and duration of sounds produced in a given period of time, and b) the number and duration of pauses between these sounds. For example, producing too many words per unit of time reduces comprehension, while drawing out words adds emphasis and increases retention. Most Trainers find a comfortable pace. But some speak faster when nervous, or more slowly when unsure of themselves. It is important for Trainers to adjust their pace to that of the audience, particularly during conversations. People do not respond well to others who speak faster than they do.



d) Pauses. Pauses create dramatic effect and add emphasis. As discussed in the context of making presentations and asking questions, they focus attention, increase observation, and provide time to think. Pauses at strategic intervals, such as after questions or important statements, and in accordance with rules of grammar, improve comprehension and retention. According to the rules of grammar, pauses are most appropriate where there would be a written comma, and at the end of sentences. Trainers who can confidently control the quantity of words and the number/duration of pauses are more effective. Indeed, experienced Trainers gracefully extend pauses to their full and appropriate length, without rushing, and get Participants used to this.

e) <u>Pronunciation</u>. It is crucial for Trainers to make their words understandable. As mentioned above, this is mainly a question of enunciation and articulation. But it also depends upon projection, pitch, and pace. Sometimes acoustics and room layout are unfriendly, and microphone systems can distort sounds. In such cases, it is necessary to speak slightly slower, with extra clear pronunciation, and definite separation of words (so they do not run together). In addition, pronunciation should always be adjusted to reflect the specific characteristics and capacities of the audience.

Notice once again the incredible variety of mouth and lip configurations (and how they engage cheeks). When we vocalize, there is little choice amongst them. However, the mouth and cheeks can be voluntarily arranged to form many different expressions when we do not vocalize.

f) <u>Phillers (Fillers)</u>. These are essentially meaningless sounds, utterances, or disjointed words that creep into or even permeate our speech. The most common sounds include “Um”, “Uh”, “Oh”, “Ah”, “Hmmm”, “Uh–Huh” and “Uh–uh”. The most common words (which are not really used as words since they do not convey any meaning) include “Well”, “I mean”, “You know”, “You See” and the like.

The actual function of these sounds and words is to keep the mouth busy while the brain is thinking. But such “disfluencies” a) clutter speech and interfere with or detract from the message, b) distract listeners from the content, and c) make the speaker seem less certain and authoritative. The disruption is particularly great when sounds have a long duration, are joined together, or are spoken into a microphone that amplifies small sounds.

In addition to being disruptive, distracting, and un–eloquent, it is also a waste of time when someone starts the answer to a question with “Aaaaaah, I mean, well, you know, as a matter of fact”.

As with stuttering, the proper approach is to slow down, find an even pace, stick to carefully chosen words, and replace Phillers with pauses when real words don’t form quickly enough.

This introduction to the use of Body Language by Trainers highlights its important role in communication and the profound effect it has on audiences. It also shows that <u>it is not just about *what* Trainers intend to show or convey, or *how* they transmit messages, but also about *what audiences perceive and feel*</u>. Just as “beauty is in the eyes of the beholder”, what matters most is the perspective of the Participants.

F. <u>How can Trainers *Understand and Interpret* the Body Language of Participants</u>?

The second side of the coin is how Trainers can understand and more capably work with Participants by observing and interpreting the Body Language signals which are sent their way. Remember that Participants transmit a constant stream of information through every aspect of their behavior, even when they are completely silent.

Trainers should start by noticing how each Participant behaves *before* the seminar starts. Consider who takes a seat and starts to read the materials, who prefers to mingle, who speaks most actively, who is focused on eating and drinking at the refreshment table, etc. Notice who is talking to whom, who is friends with whom, and whether certain Participants deliberately arrange to sit together. Be particularly attentive to signs of coordinated behavior such as mirroring (see below).

Where Participants choose to sit is informative. It can reveal whether they intend to be actively involved or to hide. Some will head right to the front, while others prefer to stay as far away as possible. Some will deliberately choose aisles, or seats closest to the exit. It is useful to know whether a Participant chose a location or had no choice due to a lack of alternatives. If chairs are moveable, the Trainer can consider some minor re–arrangements just before starting. For example, if nobody sits in the front row, removing all seats in the front row creates a new front row, and frees up space.

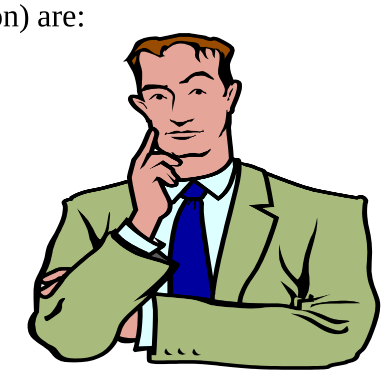
Once the seminar starts, Trainers should be cognizant of key indicators for the most relevant categories of non–verbal Participant communication. We will consider the following: 1) consideration signals, 2) disinterest signals, 3) aggressive/defensive/withdrawal/tension signals, and 4) deception signals.

1) Consideration Signals

Touching the face on or around the chin often signals reflection, consideration, pondering, or that a decision–making process is underway. The context for this signal indicates whether it is purely reflection, or accompanied by stronger feelings. A frown (mouth curved downwards or eyebrows brought together), finger on the side of the face, or thumb holding up the head can indicate a critical disposition or concern. A more relaxed face, hint of a smile, or raised eyebrows indicates a neutral or more favorable inclination. Consideration signals provide an opening for Trainers to solicit a question. When context is taken into consideration, a wide variety of messages can be discerned.

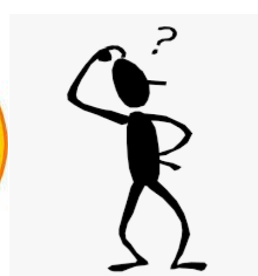
Additional or accompanying signals indicating consideration (or indecision) are:

1. Placing an object (like glasses or a pen) in the mouth. This is a stalling and pacifying tactic, which is used to avoid or delay finalizing a decision.
2. Head or eyes moving sideways (back and forth) slowly.
3. Touching or scratching the head.
4. Moving the mouth to one side and/or one cheek upwards.
5. Shrugging shoulders. This is predominantly a sign of uncertainty, submission, or defensiveness. It usually involves three body parts simultaneously: the hands, shoulders, and eyebrows.



Thinking but doubting





The gesture or posture that immediately follows a consideration signal deserves great attention. It can reveal the nature of any decision taken. Folding or crossing the arms indicates a negative decision or a return to square one. If the hands go down to the sides and the interior of the arms or palms are displayed, it is time seal consensus or close the sale. This is a prime example of a sequence of gestures.

2) Disinterest Signals

Body Language signaling disinterest, boredom, or fatigue can be readily noticed and recognized. Unfortunately, it is often not addressed adeptly or promptly. And sometimes it is not addressed at all.

The Trainer is losing the audience when Participants:

- Look around the room or towards the exit
- Check the time, on their watch, phone, or the wall clock
- Close their eyes or suffer droopy eyelids
- Yawn
- Lower their shoulders or heads, or let them fall to the side
- Rest heads on hands. More support means greater boredom.
- Slouch, lean back, lean to the side, or stretch legs
- Prune (fix hair or pick imaginary lint off clothing). This shows disengagement and possibly even disrespect.
- Point their feet towards the exit
- Twiddle thumbs, drum fingers, or tap feet. These gestures can also indicate impatience. Speed is relevant, since greater velocity tends to indicate more impatience.
- Take out and use their phones or computers
- Start reading printed material

Disinterest signals need to be addressed as soon as they arise. The longer they persist, the more they become reinforced through the Mind–Body connection. In addition, when people remain seated their muscles start to relax, and their blood flow slows down. Staying alert becomes a battle against gravity. Add to this the limited nature of attention spans, warm temperature, and a large lunch, and the challenge becomes compounded. Suggested remedial responses are covered in Section “H” below.

3) Aggressive, Defensive, Withdrawal, and Tension Signals

When people feel threatened/insecure/unsafe, their sympathetic nervous system instinctively resorts to one of three behavior modes:

a. Fight. This is to *attack* or perhaps *protect*. It can be manifested in offensive or defensive actions or words. Typical Body Language includes taking a provocative stance or defensive posture, expanding arms or legs to occupy more space/territory, clenching fists, making mean/menacing facial expressions, or any kind of self–grasping. Note that the strength of the grasping indicates the level of tension. Obviously, behavior in seminar settings is toned down. But the same principles apply. So, Trainers need to be alert to micro–expressions and micro–gestures.

b. Flight. This is to *escape*. Obviously, running away is not a customary or necessary alternative at seminars. So once again, we rely upon subtle or toned–down adaptations. The most obvious are blocking measures (using a physical barrier or object) and less obtrusive stance/gestures. These include raising the shoulders to protect the neck, lowering the head or neck, or protecting other vulnerable areas by clasping hands in front of the body. Orientation of the gaze, body, or feet away from someone or towards an exit, and submissive facial expressions are indicative.

c. Freeze. This is to *withdraw or hide*, without changing location. Body language that reduces visibility or shrinks away includes minimizing the space/territory that is occupied (similar to the flight response), assuming a neutral expression, and of course holding still, or ceasing all gestures and movements. A sudden cessation of Body Language can be indicative.

The third category, freeze, is usually omitted, making "fight–or–flight" the main "hyper arousal" or "acute stress" responses. However, for Body Language purposes, it is useful to include freeze as a third type of instinctual response. Like fight and flight, it has roots in the animal kingdom. Hiding in place, rolling into a ball, and playing dead are all viable strategies under the right circumstances.

Truly aggressive or offensive Body Language is not normally an issue in the seminar setting. Particularly with professionals, who are restrained and rely heavily on words. However, aggressive feelings and emotions manifest themselves in tension, which is visible. Common tension signals include clenching the hand or making a fist, and gripping something tightly. This could be a pen, a cup, a seat/chair, the ankle or shin of a crossed leg, or the opposite hand or arm. Tightly clasped hands or one hand clasping the other arm can be in front or behind the back.

To understand this process better, we can identify two main categories of posture: "open" and "closed". Open posture is expansive and creates vulnerability. It shows confidence by eliminating preparations for defense. Closed posture is defensive, characterized by careful use of space and blocking gestures.

Closed postures often resemble the letter "X", or a line blocking passage, indicating "do not enter". Both arms and legs can be configured to block, as shown in the pictures below. Typical closed positions include folded arms, one folded arm with the other hand on the face, crossed legs, crossed ankles (in front of a seated person or underneath the chair), a hand grabbing the opposite arm in front of the body, a hand clasping the ankle or shin on a crossed leg, etc.

Note that touching/stroking signals and repetitive motions associated with defensive gestures and tension are often **<u>self–pacifying behaviors</u>**, designed to stimulate nerve endings, send re–assuring signals to the brain, and produce endorphins. They could be assigned to the freeze category, since they enable us to stay calm and still, and obviate the need to choose between fight or flight. Generally speaking, men prefer to touch their face and the back of their neck. Women prefer to touch their hair, the front of their neck, or their arms. Folding arms with both hands on the outside of the arms simulates the sensation of being hugged and creates reassurance (this gesture is more common amongst women, and should be avoided because it reveals insecurity). Since pacifying behaviors follow and serve to relieve stress, it is worthwhile noting exactly what is done and when, to help determine why.

4) <u>Deception Signals</u>

Detecting deception and obfuscation is the "Holy Grail" of Body Language. However, <u>although some signals are significant and warrant attention, there are no definitive indicators or absolute rules, and people's behavior varies greatly</u>. Some people are expert deceivers, and practice regularly. Everyone learns or is trained to control words and hide true feelings from an early age. After all, "white lies" are a vital element of daily social life. Some people get nervous in difficult situations, causing them to send signals that can be misinterpreted. Most unfortunately, **<u>even so–called "experts" are rarely able to detect deception much more than half the time</u>**. Despite claims to the contrary. This makes them only slightly more accurate than a coin toss. What kinds of challenges does this present for our legal system, including the work of police, prosecutors, lawyers, judges, and juries?

This uncertainty and variability make it important to carefully consider:

a) The context of all behavior
b) Clusters of signals that can be read together
c) Changes from baseline behavior, and the reasons therefore
d) Efforts to control or mask gestures, and
e) Lack of movement or exaggerated movement in specific context

Generally speaking, people can exercise greater conscious control over their eyes, facial expressions, and perhaps hand gestures. The extremities (particularly feet) may receive less deliberate attention.

Micro–expressions are short–lived signals that can easily be missed, because they arise and dissipate extremely rapidly. Yet they can be very informative and revealing, particularly when it comes to deception and visceral reactions. For this reason, videos are well worth studying. Professionals who are recorded when they work need to pay extra attention to this. Recordings of court proceedings (in jurisdictions where this is allowed), interrogations, and job interviews can be extremely valuable.

<u>Because of the uncertainty inherent to detecting deception, *it is preferable to evaluate discomfort rather than deception*, and then seek the cause</u>.

The best place to start understanding deception signals is with "<u>the three wise monkeys</u>". "See no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil". Like the monkeys, Mizaru, Kikazaru, and Iwazaru, people cover their eyes, ears, mouth, or face in response to unwanted sights, sounds, thoughts, or situations. These gestures are exaggerated by children, and toned down by adults. A light touch replaces covering.

The following signals may be significant or noteworthy, and warrant further consideration:

a) People rub their eyes, dart their gaze, look away (perhaps towards the door), close their eyes, stop blinking, or blink rapidly (over eight times per minute) when they do not want to see or acknowledge something, or wish to escape a situation. Eye movement patterns are related to personality, and the direction of glances can indicate mental processes. But eye movements are variable, controllable, and have multiple causes. Good liars may deliberately increase eye contact and control glances to stylize deceit. Baseline analysis must precede interpretation.

b) People touch or grab their ear when they have heard enough, or doubt what they are hearing, even sometimes from themselves. However, this may also mean that they wish to speak.

c) People cover or put a finger over their mouth in a symbolic effort to either silence themselves or silence others. In the first case, they are probably trying to hide their words or suppress their thoughts. They may have something to say or a question to ask, but for some reason intentionally silence themselves. Knowing this reason can be very useful. On the other hand, a finger over the mouth can also indicate a lack of desire to hear the other person or disbelief in what that person is saying. More than one finger, an entire hand, or two hands means the motivation is stronger. In any case, this is one of the most important signals for Trainers to recognize and respond to.

d) People may touch their nose more often when lying. Lying causes the release of catecholamines, and changes in nose and forehead temperatures and their differentials. Thermal imaging clearly shows that <u>the "**Pinocchio Effect**" is real</u>! Touching alleviates the sensation, like scratching an itch. However, nose touching occurs for many reasons, and does not automatically indicate deceit.

e) Using barriers can indicate the desire to hide something.

f) Deliberately or inadvertently limiting movements can be an attempt to hide something. Gesticulating less when discussing an emotional subject is worth noting.

g) People move their feet and hands in order to release tension. Sudden motions arising from a still position stand out as an involuntary release. Repetitive motions play a similar role, and changes in velocity or strength always have an underlying cause.

Some experts claim that women are generally more successful at deception than men. Women tend to weave more elaborate lies that are full of details, which men cannot often decipher. Men, on the other hand, present more simple and straightforward lies, which women may more easily see through.

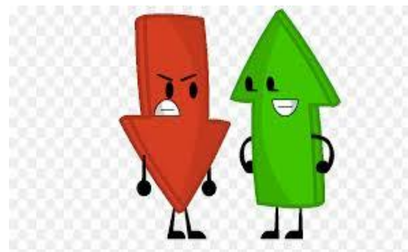
It is important to be cognizant of the dangers of drawing conclusions regarding honesty. <u>The behaviors listed above are often significant, but it is their cause which is determinative</u>. And there are multiple potential explanations for most Body Language. For example, a signal of nervousness is just that, and there are multiple explanations, only a few of which are nefarious. Tapping releases nervous energy, but once again there can be numerous origins. So, the root causes must be identified through analysis of context and clusters based on behavioral baselines. Furthermore, people are most attentive to their Body Language when they deceive. Habitual liars know to make steady eye contact and avoid touching their face. This makes their Body Language a less reliable indicator. Some experts believe conversation is the best way to identify deceit, and recommend asking people if they are honest to set the stage, and then using open ended questions to probe for contradictions. In any event, detective work is in order.

G. **What are Positive and Negative Body Language?**

The above review of how Trainers can most effectively use and interpret Body Language clearly demonstrates how important it is to a) understand and distinguish between positive and negative Body Language, and b) display and deal with both of them appropriately.

First of all, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of “positive” and “negative”. These are *descriptive* terms that *categorize* Body Language and highlight key similarities. (There is also a neutral category, but it is not widely utilized). The distinction between open and closed gestures was introduced above. Generally speaking, open signals are considered positive, while closed signals are considered negative. However, **the terms positive/negative and open/closed are not judgmental**. Positive does not mean good, and negative does not mean bad. To the contrary, neither category is good or bad. They are simply different types of behavior. The key issues are how are they used, and if their use appropriate.

Positive Body Language generally shows agreement, approval, comfort, or optimism. Negative Body Language, on the other hand, generally shows disagreement, disapproval, discomfort, or pessimism. Which of these choices is more *appropriate*, however, depends completely on the specific circumstances surrounding the interaction. This includes the setting, the relationship between the parties, intentions and objectives, and related relevant factors.



From a behavioral perspective, selecting between these two categories can be considered a matter of *operant conditioning*. Trainers should reinforce behavior that they wish to perpetuate, and discourage behavior they wish to terminate. The only relevant question is whether or not either positive or negative Body Language is appropriate for the occasion, since for behavioral purposes they are categories of tools. There is little point in using a hammer on a screw, or using a screw driver on a nail.

As always, there are two areas of focus:

1) How Trainers *use* positive or negative Body Language
2) How Trainers *interpret* positive or negative Body Language

This should be kept in mind as the two categories of Body Language are considered.

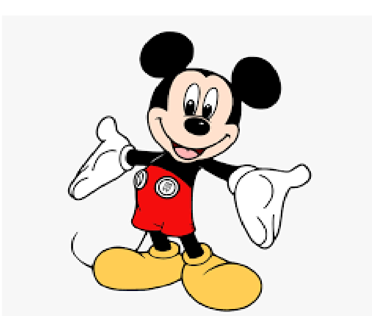
1) POSITIVE BODY LANGUAGE

Positive Body Language indicates agreement, acceptance, interest, engagement, favorable disposition, comfort, and feeling confident or secure/safe. Trainers can use positive signals to encourage Participants. Positive signals from Participants indicate that Trainers are on the right track.

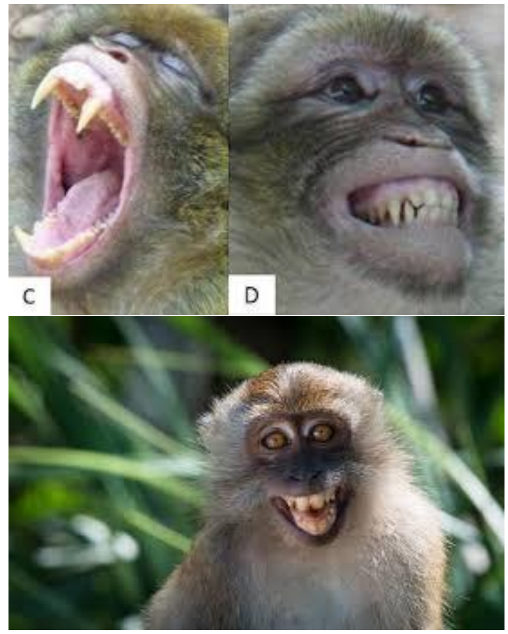
Trainers need to properly use and recognize positive signals. The following are most noteworthy:

- Head nodding is the most positive non–verbal signal of agreement. The speed is significant. Slow head nodding shows extra attention and a sincere desire that the speaker continue. This gesture keeps people talking and sharing information. Fast head nodding shows complete agreement and a desire to move on. This gesture combines concurrence/assent with impatience.

- Eye contact shows interest, engagement, and respect (provided it is not overdone and does not pose a challenge).
- Dilated pupils show interest and attention, including romantic intention. This helps make candlelight romantic.
- Raised eyebrows show interest, amusement, astonishment, or recognition. They highlight the face and attract attention.
- Holding the head up/upright shows confidence, poise, presence.
- Head tilting shows attention, comfort, interest, or puzzlement. This gesture is noteworthy in canines. They may just be adjusting their pinnae (outer ears) to hear better or attempting to reorient their vision to see our mouths better. But the result is a display of engagement and desire for further human input, and they know it. However, as stated before, showing vulnerable points like our necks signifies submission, or desire for sympathy/protection.
- Open arms are welcoming, and show acceptance/engagement.
- Showing palms or the inside of wrists/arms strongly indicates trust or agreement. It is time to stop talking and start signing.
- Sitting up straight shows attention and energetic interest.
- Standing up straight with legs firmly planted shows confidence.
- Pointing the feet towards someone shows interest and attention.
- Moving or leaning forward or toward another shows interest, engagement, comfort, and possibly also empathy.
- A slight touch is a great way to reach out and show empathy. If it is done appropriately and in an acceptable place (such as the arm, around or preferably just above the elbow).
- Handshakes that are friendly, comfortable, and close are very positive, and a good start for interactions (outside of pandemics).
- Thumbs up is very positive. It previously had a negative connotation in some cultures, but globalization has changed this.



Smiles are perceived as one of the most positive of all gestures. They make us appear friendly, genuine, and trustworthy. As stated in Module I, "a smile is the shortest distance between two points".



However, in the animal kingdom, and especially amongst primates, genuine smiles are a sign of submission. Showing (baring) the teeth only becomes aggressive when the mouth is open and the upper and lower jaws are separated, as if preparing to bite. Primates can also curl their lips back when separating their teeth. This indicates that relaxed jaws and lips are naturally associated with non–aggression.

It is quite useful to compare human and primate Body Language. When doing so, it is useful to remember that:

1) We descend from common ancestors
2) More than ninety-five percent of our genetics is shared
3) Macaques monkeys are crucial for testing our vaccines
4) Primates are social animals who communicate with each other in sophisticated and multifaceted ways, both directly and as part of defined groups

The study of Body Language in primates is therefore very useful. Particularly for understanding the fundamental elements and characteristics of positive and negative categories.

Not surprisingly, given the above, smiles are a universal human gesture. They are recognized in all societies and cultures. Amazingly, the smile reflex is actually inbred/inborn. Even babies who are tragically born blind display smiles.

Of course, the "smile technique" has been refined through thousands of years of socialization, group activities, and direct interactions.

Indeed, humans have evolved the smile into an incredibly diverse, complicated, and highly communicative gesture.

Dozens of categories have been identified. For example, smiles can be classified on the basis of whether they are for reward, affiliation, or dominance. Interestingly, not all smiles are identified as positive. Some smiles derive from embarrassment, are coy, or are even designed to deceive.

Studies show that most people are attentive to smiles, but often fail to categorize them and determine their true nature. This is due to the diversity of smiles and the large number of facial muscles which they engage.

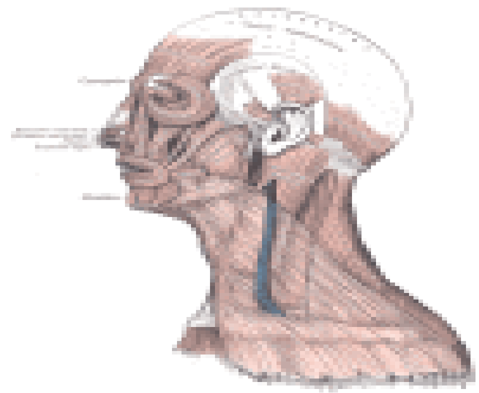
For this reason, it is extremely important for Trainers to develop their skills for using and identifying the different categories of smiles.

For present purposes, the main distinguishing feature of smiles is whether they are real/genuine/natural/enjoyable or fake/artificial/intentional.

Real smiles are the only ones that engage the **orbicularis oculi muscles**, which are located in the eyelids and surround them in concentric bands. These muscles control blinking and affect the tear ducts.

When a real smile involves the eyes, it is called a "Duchenne smile", after the French anatomist who first studied the subject extensively. This "smile of genuine enjoyment" is the gold standard, because it involves the mouth, cheeks, and eyes simultaneously. The skin above and below the eye is pulled inwards, the cheeks are pulled up, the skin below the eye may bag or bulge, the lower eyelid moves up, and the eyebrows move down very slightly.

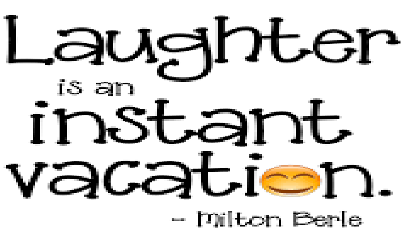
"The eyes have it"



But the key determinative characteristic of a real smile is that it creates visible wrinkles ("crow's feet") going backwards from the corners of the eyes to the hairline. See the photo on the right.

In effect, real smiles engage and light up the entire face, but most particularly the eyes and the surrounding area. When it comes to smiles, the eyes are indeed the windows to the soul.

Both real and fake smiles engage the **zygomaticus major muscles**, which are located in the cheeks. These muscles a) raise the corner of the mouth towards the cheekbone and b) pull the lips apart, drawing the upper lip backward, upward, and outward. What is the difference? Fake smiles are created by deliberate engagement of the zygomaticus major muscles, which are subject to our control. If the effort is exaggerated: a) the bottom teeth can be revealed, b) the smile can be asymmetrical/lopsided (more prominent on one side), or c) the smile can last longer than would be natural (a genuine smile dissipates relatively quickly). Fake smiles can also be accompanied by tense (pursed) lips. Knowing these features can help Trainers to identify fake smiles.



Numerous physiological advantages result from smiling, and especially laughing. These gestures produce endorphins (neurotransmitters) that make us happy and reduce stress. They reduce the production of stress hormones like cortisol. Laughing and to a lesser degree smiling expand the lungs and release emotions. They are attractive. They reduce tension. They support bonding, by making us agreeable to others.

It is worth noting that children laugh and smile often, while many adults (most unfortunately) reduce the practice, often drastically. Think of a playground where the children are having a great time, while many of the adults sit around the sides preoccupied with other matters. Furthermore, according to the **facial feedback hypothesis**, even a fake smile can produce similar positive effects, yet another demonstration of the Mind–Body connection. For all of these reasons, Trainers should try to introduce smiles into their seminar, while still observing protocol and respecting the cautions regarding humor that are discussed in Module X, and particularly Section "E", in the context of presentations.

Perhaps the most positive demonstration of rapport between people is mirroring Body Language (mimicry, synchrony, or isopraxism). This occurs when people intentionally, reflexively, or unconsciously share the same movements, positioning, posture, gestures, expressions, or speech patterns, or when one person imitates/follows another. This is shared Body Language at its best. It is also revealed through voluntary attributes such as clothing, grooming (hair styles or body decorations), accoutrements such as jewelry or watches, and personal possessions (sports equipment or cars/ motorcycles/bicycles). Like many aspects of Body Language, mirroring in regular daily interactions (in contrast to structured group activities) is usually automatic and unnoticed by the parties.

Mirroring is hard–wired in the human species. It is an evolutionary combination of neurohormonal, cognitive, and perceptual factors. Specific nerve cells in the brain called mirror neurons activate when we act in the same way as others and when we observe others performing the same actions that we do. Some mirroring, such as smiles and yawns, is automatic and contagious. Studies show that babies mimic from a very early age. Once again, this is an inbred/inborn practice that is fundamental for building social relationships.

Amongst our earliest and still to this day most impactful common rhythmic activities are dancing (synchronized moves) and singing (synchronized vocals).

Not surprisingly, music plays a key role in synchronizing both dancing and singing (and also making dates romantic).

Mirroring plays a comparable role to grooming in other primates. Both practices show empathy and are crucial for bonding (and thus collective self–defense). Interestingly, mirroring and grooming practices both seem to set the parameters for optimal and maximal group size in humans and primates.

When we mirror, it positively affects our mood and feelings. This is yet another manifestation of the reciprocity and positive feedback loop of the Mind–Body connection. On a biochemical level, mirroring causes the body to produce hormones (like endorphins and oxytocin) that a) create a natural euphoria, b) serve as a powerful reward mechanism, and c) increase tolerance to discomfort and pain. Measurements of cerebral oxygen flow via functional near–infrared spectroscopy reveal that mirroring triggers a bi–hemisphere response. And magnetic resonance imaging indicates that synchrony stimulates specific brain regions, such as the right caudate, involved in reward functions. Studies indicate that after people synchronize, they are more cooperative when engaged in common tasks.

This means that when people work together harmoniously and/or communicate effectively, and are in the same "mind set", they naturally assume similar body movements and display comparable gestures and facial expressions. In addition, and very significantly, they coordinate the timing of any changes in their mirroring behavior. This is the limbic system in action.

We see synchronization and mirroring in group action and activity all of the time. Military drills, marching bands, synchronized sports (such as skating, swimming, rowing), exercise regimes, musicals and dance routines, choirs, and a wide range of collective group activities.

Think of soldiers marching in lockstep, cowboys walking down the street together in the Old West, sportsmen strutting in unison, the orchestra playing Mozart to perfection, musicians dressing alike, the crew team rowing in perfect time, and the choir performing in harmony. These groups are literally "singing from the same page".

In addition to building rapport and promoting bonding, mirroring and synchronization promote discipline. They demonstrate and enforce authority.






How can Trainers put their understanding of mirroring to positive use?

1) Trainers can use mirroring techniques to demonstrate empathy/rapport and better bond with Participants. During the seminar, this can be done whenever a Participant makes a significant contribution. Opportunities also present themselves during luncheons and coffee breaks. But it is important to be genuine. Insincerity or lack of congruity between gestures and words is noticeable. The best way to show that feelings are genuine is to make them genuine.
2) Trainers can discern mirroring amongst Participants. Participants constantly provide clues concerning their inter–relationships. This includes both positive and negative Body Language, from mirroring to dissonance. Knowing how Participants feel about each other can be helpful in many different contexts, and particularly for interactive methodologies.
3) Trainers can build upon mirroring directed their way. When Participants display mirroring or positive Body Language towards the Trainer, during or outside the seminar, this is an extremely good sign which deserves to be recognized and reinforced.
4) Trainers can use mirroring to motivate Participants. If there is a motivational or inspirational element to the seminar, Trainers should get their audience moving synchronously and mirroring each other, and take advantage of the positive energy that this unleashes.

Mirroring is also a key element of successful teamwork. When a team displays synchronized Body Language or mirrors its leader, it projects strength and unity, and generates respect. This can be highly useful in business settings, particularly during negotiations between different parties. Diplomatic teams are trained to act in unison, and show respect for the senior personalities at all times. A team of lawyers or businessmen can also enhance their chances of success through synchronized behavior.

The same principle applies to groups of Trainers. When several Trainers work together, it is important to provide mutual support via mirroring, or at the very least by displaying positive behavior. For example, Co–Trainers can demonstrate team spirit by paying attention and displaying approving Body Language while their colleagues speak. Such support is vital whether they are part of the same panel, or simply sitting in the audience. After all, what will Participants think if a Co–Trainer is not paying attention, or is leaning back with arms crossed and a sour expression?

Finally, Trainers should be aware of the most effective test for mirroring. Interactional synchronization is proven if a change made by one person results in some form of reciprocity by the other(s). Indeed, this can also reveal who is the point person (the most important person to convince) in a group.

2) NEGATIVE BODY LANGUAGE

Negative Body Language signals rejection, disagreement, defensiveness, tension, distance, disinterest, lack of engagement, discomfort, disagreement, unfavorable disposition, or feelings of vulnerability/ insecurity. They can also blend into or combine with signals of aggression. Trainers must carefully limit and control their use of negative signals, and be able to recognize and respond to them promptly and effectively. Negative signals from Participants indicate that Trainers are not on the right track.

Before discussing specific negative signals, it is helpful to elaborate further upon their use. Trainers are the center of attention, and public speaking generates scrutiny. Consequently, everything that Trainers do gets magnified. Particularly if it is recorded and subject to rebroadcast. Therefore, Trainers benefit from developing a high degree of self–awareness and vigilance, so they know and can confront their natural tendencies or instinctive reactions. As discussed previously, sometimes negative Body Language is not only appropriate, but required. If this is the case, Trainers should employ it only when absolutely necessary, for well–defined strategic or tactical purposes, and in limited doses.

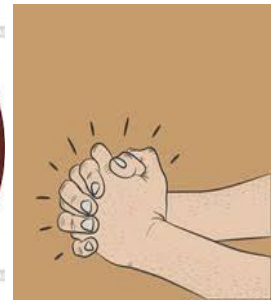
Many negative Body Language signals are essentially the opposite of their positive signal counterparts. For example, closing and blocking maneuvers replace open posture, and moving away replaces seeking proximity. However, there are additional and special negative symbols to recognize and understand.

Trainers need to properly use and recognize negative signals. The following are most noteworthy:

- Head shaking is the most negative signal of disagreement. Once again, the speed is relevant. Slow head shaking shows general disagreement or disapproval, and is a way to gently discourage. Fast head shaking has a much more dramatic and immediate impact, indicating opposition, displeasure and probably also impatience.
- Negative facial expressions come in a wide variety. They are the opposite of smiles. Typical examples include frowns, downturned mouths, lowered and/or inward pressed eyebrows, scrunched nose, squinting, etc. They show disagreement, displeasure, or concern. Negative facial configurations often manifest as short-lived micro-expressions. Note that most genuine facial expressions are bilateral/symmetric on both sides. Unilateral expressions are less likely to be genuine. Only feelings of contempt and doubt are displayed more to one side.
- Lack of eye contact or looking away indicates disinterest, disengagement, distraction, evasiveness, or perhaps desire for change. People (and especially women) often gaze where they want to go. Looking towards the exit (even a quick glance) is an obvious signal. Pointing the feet can indicate similar feelings.




- Extended/unnatural eye closure (for longer than a normal blink) indicates rejection of what is being seen or a desire to escape. The longer the closure, the stronger the emotion. Squinting is also a form of "eye shielding" that can indicate skepticism, disagreement, or a desire to withdraw. Insufficient or excessive blinking can also be relevant.
- Rolling eyes signifies disbelief, skepticism, amazement, or being "flabbergasted".
- Blocking gestures include crossing the arms, bringing the arms or hands together in front of the body, turning the shoulders inwards, closing articles of clothing such as jackets, crossing the legs, or putting one foot on the opposite knee (unless the foot points towards something special). Holding the hands together in front of vulnerable areas of the body is defensive, subservient, and penitent. Grasping the ankle or shin of a crossed leg shows resistance and obstinacy. Self–hugging gestures reveal discomfort and insecurity.


- Blocking with an object includes holding something in front of the body with one or both hands. Placing the dominant hand or arm across the body is particularly negative. Objects can also be used as barriers, in addition to furniture.
- Grasping the body or an object, or fiddling with an object displace tension or nervousness. *The stronger the grip on an object or body part, the greater the tension.* Fidgeting often involves pens, glasses, or similar objects. It also shows frustration or impatience. *The speed of finger movements corresponds to the strength of the emotion.* These are very visible gestures, and should be avoided.


- Putting an object in the mouth shows insecurity, indecisiveness, or a need for reassurance (as babies use their thumbs). It is also a delaying tactic.
- Pursed/pressed lips, lip biting, or curling the upper lip back show stress, disagreement or even anger.
- Slapping the head is a form of self–punishment. If it is the forehead, it may be possible to discuss the subject further. If it is the face, the subject should not be mentioned again.

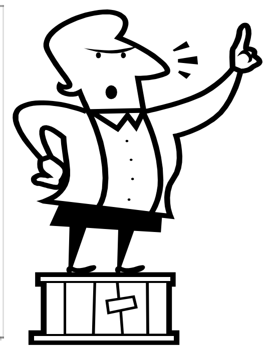


- Neck touching is an extremely significant signal that must be noticed. When arrector pili muscles attached to all hair follicles engage, they change the angle of orientation and cause hair to stand on end. This autonomic nervous system function, designed to keep us warm, results in "goose flesh". But disagreement, irritation, stress, fear, concern, nervousness, or aggression cause arrector pili muscles on the back of the neck to trigger (in cats as well as humans). This provokes self–pacifying and touching gestures.

Men are more likely to touch the back of their neck or adjust their tie or collar. Women are more likely to touch the suprasternal/jugular notch on the front of the neck (to pacify the vagus nerve), or manipulate a necklace or clothing. Women may do this when an intimate or personal subject is breached. Either gender may "ventilate" the neck by loosening clothing or lifting hair. Neck touching may also be a way to divert the arm from what starts out as aggressive action. These responses are colloquialized in the expression that someone is "a pain in neck".

- Backing or leaning away reduces proximity and creates distance, literally and figuratively. This poignantly demonstrate discomfort and rejection.
- Stepping or leaning into personal body space or violating the rules of proximity is an intrusive negative gesture (but there are circumstances where it might be useful).
- Putting hands on hips is a generally an imposing/aggressive move to take up more space. But it can also be an effort to accentuate positive body features, so must be assessed in context. This gesture (with wings and beaks) is a notable sign of aggression/intimidation in birds.
- Sudden motions, like tapping something, indicate a release of tension. Depending on context, this can be highly significant.

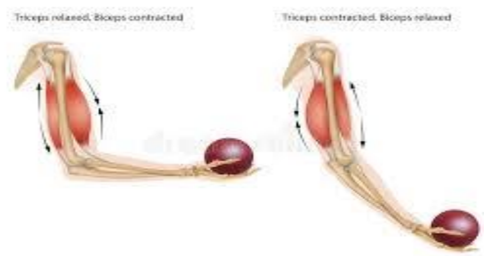
- Crossing legs or ankles beneath a chair can be a sign of tension, distance, or disagreement.



- "Battoning" or finger pointing, especially pointing a finger downwards, like cutting motions, is a put–down, effort to show authority/ superiority, and potentially aggressive. Such gestures are universally considered offensive.
- Holding an arm behind the back is an attempt at self–restraint. The further up the arm is held, and the stronger the grip, the greater the antagonism. When exaggerated (not relaxed), this gesture can precede aggression.
- Remaining still (the freeze response) also deserves mention. This is a defensive gesture, and implies withdrawal. It can be particularly noteworthy during criticism.
- Power stares can be used to intimidate. There are many varieties. They include a) moving the eyes to the side, focusing on someone, and then following slowly with the head, all without blinking, or b) constantly focusing between someone's eyes and forehead.
- Negative handshakes can be intentional, in order to intimidate or dominate, or can accidentally cause discomfort. Common varieties include an excessively tight grip, an overhand grip, improper distancing, sweaty palms, too many pumps, insufficient or excessive duration, pulling or pushing, failing to make eye contact, using both hands, etc.
- Thumbs down is a universal negative signal. It is extremely powerful and noteworthy, even from a distance.

If it is truly necessary or advantageous to employ negative Body Language, Trainers are advised to temper it as much as possible. For example, raising the eyebrows in puzzlement can be deliberately used to replace the much stronger negative signal of head shaking. Adjusting speed can also diminish negativity. For example, head shaking can be slowed down, and be combined with raised eyebrows to indicate doubt rather than outright disagreement.

Trainers should be attentive to all positions and gestures that indicate tension. In addition to those discussed above, it is important to pay careful attention to the **Law of Gravity of Body Language**. Simply stated, when people are relaxed, they tend to accept gravity. Whenever people work against gravity or expend extra/unnecessary energy, even the slightest amount, there is a reason.



The most noteworthy example of this is holding a glass up and/or in front of the person when not actually taking a sip. This is customary practice at events where beverages are served. In addition to being a blocking gesture, it also requires the contraction of muscles. If this seems trivial, try holding a glass out for five minutes (or until it hurts). A relaxed person holds a glass (or any other object) at his or her side, and moves it upwards (expending energy) only when required (to sip). In addition to drinking containers, people also hold up papers, clipboards, props, or even just their hands. No matter what is being held, the higher the hands, the greater the expenditure of energy, and therefore the stronger the emotion behind the gesture.

Trainers can show relaxation (and thus feel more relaxed) by avoiding positions that work against gravity, regularly reverting to neutral stances/positions, and making transitions graceful. And Trainers can notice and respond whenever Participants do anything requiring extra work. Even a small amount.

Finally, remember that like all other muscles, facial muscles strengthen with practice. The ones we use are the ones we see. This exemplifies the **Imprinting of Body Language, or Expression Etching**.

Simply stated, people who constantly make specific facial expressions tend to have their practice imprinted on their *resting* face. This is not an expression or a gesture, made in a specific moment in response to external stimuli and internal mechanisms. It is a static and perpetual condition. We carry it with us wherever we go.

Studies show that when people see an imprinted downturned mouth, they tend to form a more negative first impression (which is difficult to overcome). They may consider the person "grouchy" or "dour".

On the other hand, people who smile often have more relaxed faces and cheek muscles when at rest. Putting on a happy face isn't just good for the moment. It also leaves a lasting impression on our faces, and those we meet.

On the invitation list for dinner tonight?

H. What Should Trainers Do In Response to Negative Body Language from Participants?

Body Language cannot be ignored, particularly when negative or closed. Not even for a moment. If allowed to persist, the Mind–Body feedback loop will prolong and exacerbate the results. In other words, negative emotions that are manifested physically can fester unless and until they are addressed. Trainers need to be attentive to such signals when they first arise, and respond promptly and proactively. In this fashion, Trainers can make the Mind–Body connection work to their advantage.

We will address two categories of behavior: 1) general disinterest, and 2) tension, rejection, disagreement, or opposition. The first category is by far easier to deal with.

Note that many of the appropriate responses to general disinterest also serve as a first/preliminary step for dealing with stronger emotions. This is because **the primary rule for dealing with negative Body Language is that something different must be done to generate change and modify behavior.**

In the face of disinterest, Trainers can either:

1. *Say* something more interesting. This means making the subject more interesting or important for the Participants, or simply moving on. Before changing the subject, it may be acceptable to briefly summarize the most salient points or quickly cover remaining key points.
2. Change *delivery*. This means using an audio–visual aid, dramatizing vocalizations, using more dynamic Body Language, augmenting eye contact, moving closer to the Participants, etc.
3. Change what Participants are *doing*. This generally means altering the methodology and making the Participants move. Since this involves Body Language, let's take a closer look.

Changes in methodology are perhaps the most expedient and effective way to address disinterest. They can also be a good start towards countering stronger negative emotions. **Energizers** have been addressed previously, particularly in Module XI. To recapitulate, Trainers can:

- Start an interactive methodology or exercise. This includes Working Partnerships, Collective Consultation, Voting with Stickers, Interviews, discussing a case study, or the like. The goal is to get the Participants moving, standing, talking, or performing a task. Having Participants provide input by getting up and placing stickers on a flipchart is very effective. Giving each Participant a chance to make a statement about a key issue also works well. Questions and Answers can be used, as described in Module XI.
- Use Taking Notes to force movement. The simple task of taking out a piece of paper and using a writing instrument forces Participants to move, and thereby modify their Body Language patterns. If time is short, comparable results can be achieved quickly by asking Participants to open their seminar materials to a certain page, perhaps to look at a chart, or by distributing a handout to each Participant.

- Take a break. A short "comfort break" in the middle of a session can be used to get Participants moving, provided that its nature and duration are specified. If a scheduled break is approaching, it can be called/announced early (provided that refreshments are already available, so that the caterers are not inconvenienced). If beverages are continually available inside the seminar room, Participants can be invited to pick something up and return to their seats.

The bottom line and most important point is that Trainers should never let crossed arms, heavy heads, sagging shoulders, or slouching persist. They only get worse, as seminar effectiveness declines.

Tactical and verbal techniques for dealing with difficult Participants have been addressed in Module XI. This section will focus on non–verbal techniques.

In response to any display of strong negative emotions such as tension, rejection, disagreement, or opposition on the part of Participants, Trainers should use Body Language to help defuse and ameliorate the situation.

Before reacting, Trainers should decide whether the negative Body Language really deserves to be addressed. A negative but short–lived micro–expression by one Participant, for example, should be noted and remembered, but may not merit an immediate formal reaction, particularly if time is short. On the other hand, behavioral modification is completely warranted if prolonged negative Body Language by more than one Participant is making the Mind–Body connection work against the Trainer.

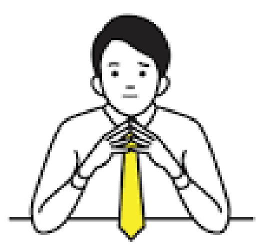
Sometimes the use of techniques for addressing disinterest described above are sufficient. If not, then Trainers should proceed to a strategic response directed towards the negative Body Language.

The first step is to *lower the temperature* by:

1) Eliminating any aggressive Body Language (controlling the fight response)
2) Assuming a more neutral, defensive, or withdrawn posture (demonstrating the flight response)

For example, Trainers can reduce territorial displays by moving backwards, placing their feet closer together, turning slightly sideways, lowering their head and/or shoulders, letting their arms relax down to the sides, etc. It can also be useful to avoid eye contact, maintain a neutral expression, and employ tentative gestures such as shoulder shrugging.

But keep in mind that the objective in such instances is to defuse tension, not to display weakness.



The second step is to *promote tranquility* through the use of positive or open Body Language. Open hand gestures (such as showing the palm) and raising the eyebrows can be particularly useful in this regard. These gestures should be combined with positive words, perhaps using the “CAP process” described in Module XI.

If the Trainer believes it necessary to prevail during such a discussion, gestures indicating knowledge and confidence can be employed. The most useful of these is “**steepling**”, discussed previously and demonstrated in the pictures on the right. It is frequently employed by professionals, scholars, and politicians.

The final step after employing these Body Language techniques is to move on to the next subject. Trainers can always use the justification of needing to meet challenging Learning Outcomes in limited seminar time to forego extended discussion or debate on any subject of dissension.

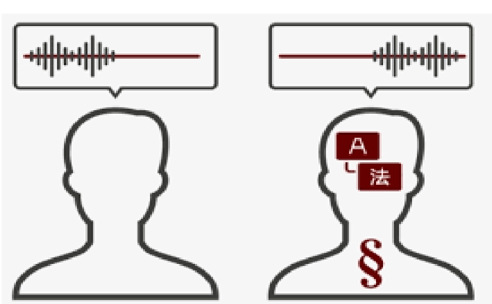
If appropriate or necessary, Trainers can provisionally close the matter and demonstrate good faith by politely offering to discuss the subject further with anyone who is interested during the next break or after the seminar. It is important to use positive or open ‘invitational” gestures, such as a gentle sweeping arm motion with an open palm, while making this offer. Then be sure to honor this proposed postponement, by keeping the promise (perhaps with an assistant or witness, if circumstances require).

I. What are the Limitations of Body Language?

Although Body Language clearly plays a major role in communication, interpretation of the precise meaning and exact message behind it is actually extremely challenging. Human behavior is a matter of both *what* and *why*.

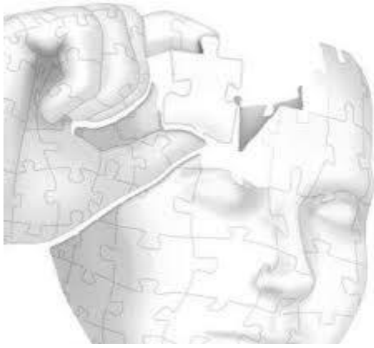
The following limitations are important to keep in mind:

- The *overall value* of Body Language is often overstated by pseudo–scientists and amateur experts relying upon unproven theories and anecdotal evidence rather than scientific investigation and demonstrable facts.
- The *utility* of Body Language is often overstated by unsubstantiated “special techniques” that are based on questionable or inaccurate premises, or make improbable claims concerning applicability to specific circumstances. This is most prevalent with respect to expert guidance regarding the detection of deception. Many of the current techniques for detecting deception are sure to go the way of the old–fashioned “lie detector” (polygraph) tests.
- The *accuracy* of Body Language is often exaggerated on the basis of unjustified assertions or conclusions regarding an exact correlation between specific thoughts/emotions and specific actions/gestures. Sadly, its credibility is also undermined by rampant misinformation, much of which is targeted towards laypersons who are looking for quick or simple answers.
- The *complexity* of Body Language is often understated and oversimplified, without adequate reference to the numerous factors which underlie it and the many nuances which can dramatically alter its meaning in practice.



At the end of the day, as with all communication, the meaning behind Body Language is subject to interpretation. Therefore, while science is the foundation and starting point, *intuition* has and indeed must play a significant role. Indeed, certain people (and it is often claimed women in general) place a greater emphasis upon intuition, or the “gut feeling” which Body Language generates. Particularly when there is incongruence between actions and words.

To compound this situation, many self–proclaimed Body Language experts are more interested in selling their programs/books and gaining publicity than in doing research and promoting science. And no wonder, the science behind Body Language is complicated and multi–disciplinary right from the start. It involves communication, sociology, biology, anatomy, physiology, neurology, anthropology, psychology, psychiatry, criminology, sociopathy, computer science and artificial intelligence, and the application of medical technology to physiology. Not to mention cross–cultural factors and personal/ idiosyncratic specificities.



As if it were necessary to add to this list of challenges, proponents of direct correlation between specific gestures and specific meanings have created an entirely new science, called “**<u>synergology</u>**”.

Not surprisingly, synergology is criticized for being un–scientific, and largely unsupported by well–designed research and peer–reviewed published studies. Furthermore, critics contend that over–reliance upon unfounded science combined with confirmation bias, produce extremely negative results. Particularly in settings such as the criminal justice system (which decides who goes to jail).

Therefore, conclusions on important matters that rely upon Body Language analysis must be carefully reached and properly substantiated. They must take account of the big picture and the specific situation.

However, having said that, there is a significant difference between a) security/law enforcement officials and legal professionals using Body Language to determine someone’s innocence or guilt, and b) Trainers trying to make a positive impression on Participants and determine how those Participants are reacting to the seminar.

When assessing Body Language, Trainers need to be aware that <u>certain categories of Body Language are much more variable across cultures</u>.

Five of the main cross–cultural differences relate to:

1) <u>Body spacing practices</u>. This includes a) which of the four zones is most appropriate under specific circumstances, and b) the precise width or dimensions of each zone. As a general rule, people who live in populous countries or spend time in urban agglomerations are less protective of their body space and more forgiving of intrusions. Climate can also be a factor.

2) <u>Eye contact and glancing</u>. This includes both the percentage of time that eye contact is made and the direction/intensity of gazing when not making eye contact. Social status and traditions regarding certain categories of interactions can also be highly relevant.

3) <u>Touching in public</u>. This includes the amount of touching and the acceptable places for touching. For example, there is much less public touching between non–partners in northern European countries than in southern European countries, with Italy leading the world. Some cultures and religions prohibit contact between genders, or at least those who are not married. In certain Asian countries, touching on the top of the head is extremely offensive.

4) <u>Finger gestures</u>. The exact meaning of specific finger configurations can vary greatly. In addition, the most customary finger configurations or those which are used in specific contexts can diverge. However, globalization and the popularization of movies have created a tendency towards universalization. Both the “thumbs up” and “OK” (thumb and index finger making a circle) gestures used to be offensive in certain cultures. But this is much less the case now, due in part to globalization, except perhaps for the older generation.

5) Facial expressions. The basic categories of facial expressions are universal and cross–cultural. Indeed, with only a few exceptions, they are readily discernible worldwide, and from an early age. Evolution and natural selection of social animals such as primates clearly play a role. Scientists such as anthropologists have confirmed the universality of facial expressions and their inborn nature by studying people who live in isolated tribes as well as children born without sight. However, recent studies using artificial intelligence indicate that aside from the basic categories, there are many nuances and variations, depending on the exact use of our many different facial muscles.

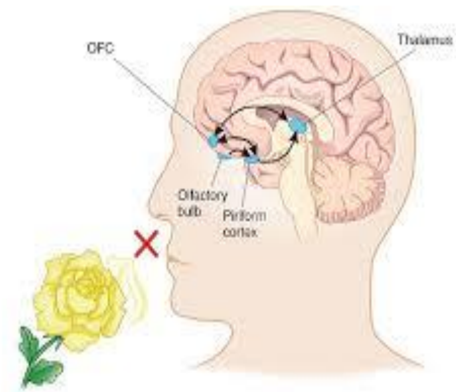
These variations highlight the need for caution and precision when making judgments concerning the meaning of Body Language.

Here are some key principles concerning the limitations of Body Language, and how to address them:

- Never apply absolute rules. Body Language is generally indicative, but always variable. It is far too simplistic to definitively correlate specific gestures with exact thoughts or emotions. Yes, Body Language is a manifestation of "emotional leakage". But emotions are complicated.
- View Body Language in context. Consider four factors: 1) personal characteristics (like age, gender, profession, social status, place of origin, urban or rural residence), 2) cultural factors, 3) group behavior, and 4) ambience and circumstances. Context may provide a simple explanation for Body Language. For example, crossed arms may result from being cold. Face or nose touching may result from an itch or allergies. Looking away may be an effort to avoid offending by staring directly. Participants seated in the front row may block automatically simply because they are very exposed to the Trainer (see on the right).

- Look at the big picture, including clusters and combinations. Consider expressions, vocalization, posture, and placement in their totality, as if piecing together a jigsaw puzzle. Individual signals can have different meanings, depending on what accompanies them. When four signals coincide, the accuracy percentage maximizes. For example, if someone crosses legs in figure four style, links fingers in steepling, leans back in the seat, and looks down the nose with the head tilted back, it is reasonable to identify feelings of arrogance and superiority.
- Be attentive to baselines. Only by knowing baselines is it possible to identify potentially significant patterns and deviations from them. For example, someone may engage in foot bouncing regularly, in which case changes in velocity or direction may be very worth noting. Baselines are more easily identified in continuing relationships. Unfortunately, seminar settings rarely provide enough one–on–one interaction to establish accurate baselines. But an effort can still be made, and important information can still be gleaned.
- Consider the actual probity of each signal. Not all Body Language signals are created equal. Some, such as neck touching, have a high degree of relevance. Others, such as the direction of brief glances, are far less indicative or correlated to specific thoughts/emotions.
- Look at sequences. The meaning of signals can sometimes be confirmed by what follows. This is particularly true of consideration gestures, which are often followed by signals of the result.

- Categorize before designating causation. Distinguish Body Language signals on the basis of category before searching for their meaning. For example, do they indicate nervousness, surprise, comfort/discomfort, interest/boredom, etc.? With the category clarified, it is easier to postulate and confirm possible or actual causes.
- Notice incongruence. Be aware of any contradictions between signals and words. This is a red flag which warrants attention. Generally, women place more emphasis on signals, whereas men consider words. Some studies indicate that women are more perceptive of incongruence.
- Avoid reading too much into micro–expressions or micro–gestures. They can be revealing, but are not easy to pick up live, particularly in busy seminar settings. Conclusions regarding micro–expressions are ideally predicated upon video analysis. Video recordings of job interviews, for example, are very worthy of scrutiny. Particularly the initial reaction to questions about relationships with previous bosses.
- Pay attention to all of the senses. Body Language studies and information generally focus on visual and auditory input. The senses of smell and taste (which are closely related) get less attention. But they are very important. Only the **olfactory system** (olfactory bulb) is directly connected to the brain (amygdala and hippocampus). Physiologically, the olfactory complex is actually part of the limbic system. Pheromones are very important for animals, and affect humans as well. Smells can trigger memories or immediate/intense emotional reactions.



- Be subtle. Avoid the practices shown on the left. Telegraphing the practice of assessing Body Language by announcing it or focusing on it too intensely can make others nervous or self–conscious. This also affects and undermines the probative value of their signals. Neutral and unobtrusive observation is the best way to obtain accurate readings.
- Don’t read too much or jump to conclusions. It is extremely important to verify initial impressions, consider multiple explanations, and carefully confirm conclusions before any irreversible action is taken.
- Be skeptical. Some people control themselves very well. Learn to be attentive to masking efforts, and signals which are less subject to intentional manipulation, like foot orientation and reflexive movements.

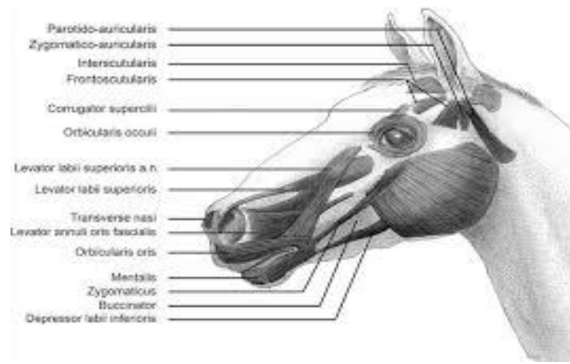
The above principles highlight the fact that **Body Language is more indicative of *what* than *why***. Noticing and identifying our constant signals regarding emotions, feelings, likes, and dislikes is useful for immediate purposes, particularly in settings such as seminars. But in reality, it is only a first step. The greatest benefit is derived by looking into and understanding the root causes of Body Language signals. Why is someone smiling or nervous or blocking or glancing at the exit? In a real sense, it is detective work.

Nonetheless, with the above limitations in mind, Trainers who are attentive to Body Language can use it more effectively and gather extremely valuable information from others.

J. Summary and Conclusion

Evolution has physiologically designed humans to communicate, and interactive skills are constantly being developed through our extensive social interactions. And much of this communication is non–verbal. Curiously, the intricate design of our nervous system, faces, and hands is actually of relatively limited direct value when it comes to the survival of individuals in nature. Indeed, some of these design features actually constitute a *disadvantage* for individual survival outside of social settings! For example, only humans have a large white **sclera** section of the eye, which makes it possible for *others* to determine exactly where we are looking. If human eye structure does not confer a hereditary advantage under social living conditions, then it violates the fundamental principles of evolution, since it clearly serves individual interests to be able to hide the direction of gazing.

Body Language, as an expression of the limbic system, is a constant feature of behavior throughout the animal kingdom. But it is most intricately demonstrated in mammals. There is great similarity between humans, other primates, dogs, and cats, as discussed above.



But perhaps the most interesting example is provided by horses. Researchers at the University of Sussex have determined that horses use seventeen discreet facial configurations to communicate. Their Equine Facial Action Coding System and extensive studies of videos of horses reveal similarities with humans. These include raising the inner eye to indicate fear, surprise, or sadness, pulling back lip corners for greetings or to show submission, and opening eyes wide in the face of alarm. Indeed, studies show that horses can interpret human facial expressions and remember them, when first shown a photo and later meeting the person. Not surprisingly, horses in the wild have highly sophisticated social interactions.

This is no surprise to animal trainers, breeders, farmers, ranchers, "horse whisperers", or those who admire what Dr. Doolittle did in the popular books written by Hugh Lofting (that is to say read the Body Language of animals). Most dog owners can confirm that their pets pay strict attention to how they gesticulate, and often respond to something as subtle as an eyebrow movement. These are "evolutionary parallels", and they are reinforced through the process of domestication.

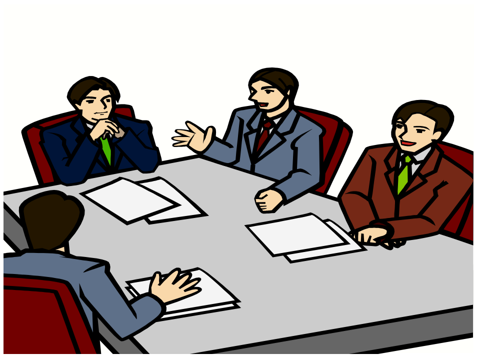
This module has covered how Trainers can use and interpret Body Language during seminars. However, it should be clear that *most of the information in this module is fully applicable to any setting where we communicate with others and/or have an audience*. It is even applicable to virtual or on–line communication, at least with respect to facial expressions and shoulder/hand movements which appear on–screen. This is because Body Language can reveal a great deal about our inner thoughts and our true feelings and emotions. Our signals not only completement our words, sometimes they actually reveal more. This is why **incongruence** between word and deed can severely compromise messaging.

There is a direct inter–relationship and feedback loop between what we feel and what we do. This **Mind–Body connection** is a dynamic element of Body Language and a powerful tool for Trainers.

Effective *use* of Body Language helps Trainers achieve results and makes them a more positive and authoritative role model. Proper *interpretation* of the Body Language of others enables Trainers to understand their audience, monitor progress, assess results, and improve effectiveness. For these purposes, it is necessary to develop constant awareness of non–verbal communication and behavior, including expressions, gestures, stance, location, vocalization, and utterances. The focus should include signals that are a) universal to humans, b) prevalent in different target groups, and c) idiosyncratic to specific individuals.

Amongst the <u>most important skills for Trainers</u>, we can identify the following:

- Being able to identify and respond to four of the most the most salient categories of Participant Body Language, which signal 1) consideration, 2) disinterest, 3) aggression/defensiveness/ withdrawal/tension, and 4) deception
- Recognizing key positive/open and negative/closed signals
- Recognizing incongruence between actions and words, and efforts to mask signals
- Being able to discern and identify micro–expressions and micro–gestures
- Knowing how to respond effectively and promptly to negative Body Language signals, and
- Understanding the limitations of using and interpreting Body Language



Unfortunately, Trainers do not always pay sufficient attention to the signals being sent by Participants. They may proceed as usual or continue executing their plans without adequately considering clues about their results. Nonetheless, Participants always show their thoughts and feelings through their expressions, posture, and use of hands. Good Trainers can take one look at a group, such as the people at left, and get a good idea of what is really going on. Who is open? Who is reaching out? Who is thinking? Who is blocking?

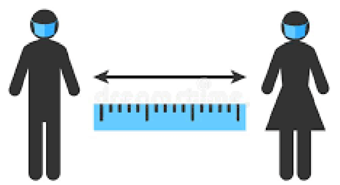
In fact, diligent attention to Body Language is a key to success in all interpersonal relationships and exchanges. It is not just for Trainers. In a very real sense, <u>we are all Trainers when we speak to others, and everyone around us is a Participant when they watch us and listen to us</u>.

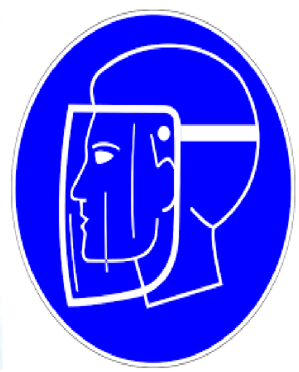
The list of professions currently learning about Body Language in order to be more effective is illustrative. It includes public figures, politicians, entertainers/actors, businesspeople, marketers/advertisers, salespeople, security personnel, legal professionals (such as judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and mediators), artists, animators, video game designers, poker players, journalists, receptionists, and anyone who deals with the public regularly in any capacity. In point of fact, <u>everyone can benefit from a) watching ballet, silent movies, or mimes, b) watching a video of themselves “performing”, or c) practicing in front of a mirror</u>.

When studying Body Language, keep in mind that there are many different forms of non–verbal or symbolic communication (which do not rely on spoken words). They are practiced all over the world.

For example, we can identify music (including drums, bugles, etc.), sign language, signs and pictograms, emoticons, logos and insignia, coats of arms, mathematical numbers and equations, chemical formulas and symbols, codes, auditory signals (such as Morse Code), flags (semaphore), numerous computer programming languages, maps/plans/charts/graphs, smoke signals, and even whistling ("Silbo" is the whistling language of the Canary Island of Gomera).

Finally, it is important to stay up to date with current developments. Scientific studies, social dynamics, and nature make Body Language an extremely dynamic discipline. For example, pandemics create new parameters. These include social distancing, salutations (the elbow bump or fist bump), hygienic practices, and the use of facemasks.





All over the world, people are sending signals through a) the colors, designs, and logos on their facemasks, b) the way they wear and carry their face masks, c) how and when they touch their facemasks, and d) the way they react to the facemask usage of others.

This module is only a brief introduction. Further and continuing study of Body Language is requisite for Trainers and for anyone who works with the public or with others, or who wants to improve communication skills. The books written by Barbara and Allan Pease are highly recommended.

Specific information about Body Language in various cultures is also widely available. In recent years, there has been an explosion of documentaries, articles, and video postings on the internet. While many of these are informative, their quality is variable. Always verify credentials and question conclusions.

What is the best overall approach? Understand that while there is a definite relationship between thoughts/feelings and non–verbal communication, it is variable, not always exact, and requires confirmation. Be wary of excessive or dubious claims by people who overstate their expertise and exaggerate the precision of Body Language interpretation. Learn as much as possible from the available information, but take it several giant steps further. Practice Body Language awareness on a daily basis, in a multitude of settings. Improve skills through personal observation and direct experience. Become familiar with the baselines and deviations of regular contacts in professional circles and personal life. And learn to listen to intuition, because non–verbal communication is understood through feeling as well as analysis.

MODULE XIII
SEMINAR DELIVERY

Learning Outcome: Trainers know how to manage their seminars and deliver effective training.

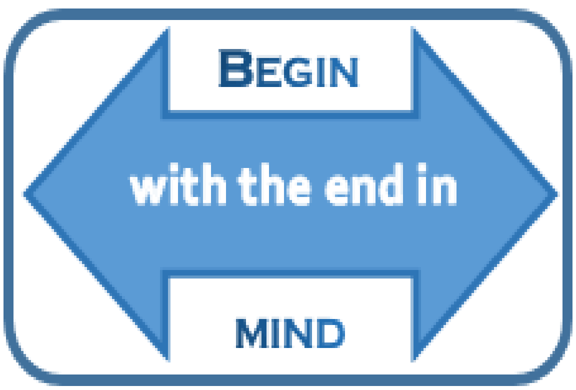
A. Introduction

The Training Needs Assessment is done, the Learning Outcomes are designed, the Seminar and Lesson Plans are finalized, the presentations and interactive methodologies are prepared, the agenda has been distributed, the materials are finished and ready for distribution, and the Evaluation Questionnaires are drafted. Now it is time to deliver the training. This module covers what needs to be done prior to and at the seminar in order to make everything work. It also looks at how to handle some practical issues and considerations that inevitably arise.

Time to get the ball rolling

B. Advance Preparations Before the Seminar

The best way for Trainers to ensure that they fulfill all of their responsibilities and complete all of their preparations in a timely fashion is through checklists and reverse planning.



As discussed in Module VII, in the context of seminar materials, **reverse planning** (planning backwards) involves starting with the final result on a specific date, and then listing every intermediate step upon which it depends, indicating for each of them an exact date based on ample timeframes in between. This is the best way to know what needs to be done, in which order, and when. It also makes it easy to inform all other relevant parties of scheduling requirements and their responsibilities in a timely fashion.

Generally speaking, all of the previous modules address pre–requisites for successful training. However, it is useful to review some key mandatory steps prior to seminar delivery:

1) Make sure that the Lesson Plan is finalized, clear, and correct. Check computer files and notes for presentations. Make back–up copies. Everything should be ready for delivery.
2) Ensure that seminar materials are ready for distribution to the Participants. Extra copies should be available, even if the materials were disseminated in advance.
3) Finalize and verify all logistical arrangements. Communicate with organizers and contact persons regarding facilities, set–up, seating arrangements, equipment, and meals/refreshments. Confirm the availability of necessary supplies such as paper, pens, flip charts, name tags, small prizes for competitions, etc. Agree on backup support in case of technical problems during the seminar. Trainers in front of Participants without logistical support are vulnerable. Re–confirm as often as necessary. "Trust but verify". Avoid becoming a victim of "Murphy's Laws".
4) Finalize and organize handouts and other materials that will be used at the seminar. Everything needed for delivery must be ready and organized. This includes the agenda, handouts (such as case studies), instructions (such as for Working Groups), etc.

5) Fully plan and rehearse the seminar opening. Trainers should meticulously prepare the opening session and memorize/rehearse their opening remarks. This enables them to confidently take charge and get the seminar off to a great start.
6) Coordinate with co–Trainers. Regular contact well before the seminar is necessary to coordinate respective obligations, harmonize scheduling and delivery, and agree on methodologies and activities. Face–to–face meetings are preferable for this, if possible.
7) Finally, visit the facilities the day before the seminar, if possible. Especially if you cannot arrive extra early on the seminar day.

Advance familiarization with layout and setup helps Trainers feel comfortable, and a brief inspection makes it possible to proactively address any significant issues. Why wait until the last minute on the day of the seminar to deal with matters that can and should be handled earlier? Typical examples include seating arrangements and safety requirements.

It is sometimes appropriate or necessary to contact Participants before the seminar. This is particularly advisable when there is an on–going relationship between Trainers and Participants. Or when Trainers have a specific objective or rationale, like obtaining/providing information or assigning advance work.

The following principles apply to contacting Participants *prior* to the seminar:

- It is acceptable and sometimes advisable to send an introductory message to Participants. This can be an effective way to provide basic information about the seminar, share the agenda, introduce Learning Outcomes, pose an important/intriguing question, or present an assignment. It is imperative to cover everything required in one message. This obviates repetitive communications, which can create an impression of disorganization. The Trainer's contact information should be included if direct responses are preferred. The organizers can provide a contact list, or handle distribution directly. It is best to reach as many Participants as possible. Indeed, it is probably advisable to refrain from making contact in the first place if only a small percentage of the actual Participants can be reached.

- If you request that Participants read something in advance, make sure that it is short and generates maximum interest. Long or detailed background materials will be read by only a few Participants, at best. At the seminar, these Participants will be ahead of the rest, bored, and wondering why they bothered with the advance reading. Meanwhile, the rest may be resentful, especially if they find themselves behind others right from the start. And the Trainer will have to deal with differences in preparedness, as well as non–compliance with the first assignment.

- It is acceptable to ask Participants to think about specific issues in advance. But focus and prioritize. Also, avoid testing compliance by putting Participants on the spot early in the seminar. Even if they did advance work, they might not be ready to jump into the subject.

- Refrain from obliging Participants to prepare written documents in advance. This is likely to result in partial compliance and significant non–compliance. The only exception would be for information that needs to be gathered in advance, by its very nature, when there is good motivation to respond. For example, it can be helpful to send a very brief questionnaire concerning prior training on the subject, specific areas of interest, opinions on a key topic, or details concerning working conditions or observations that can only be made on the job.

C. Preparations on the Day of the Seminar

It is imperative to arrive as early as possible on the first day of the seminar. Even if facilities were inspected and advance arrangements were confirmed on the previous day! This is because any and every prior arrangement can be quickly undone, and new requirements can suddenly arise. For example, the housekeeping crew might have placed the chairs and tables back in their customary places, not knowing that they had been intentionally re–arranged for a seminar the following day. Or the weather might have changed, making the room temperature much colder or hotter than anticipated.

Remember that Participants sometimes arrive well before the scheduled starting time. This may be due to personal preference. Or perhaps they allotted extra travel time to ensure a timely arrival, only to find the travel conditions better than usual/expected.

It is absolutely essential that everything be ready before the first Participant arrives. Participants should not witness preparations. A relaxed and ready Trainer makes a great impression, and can start meeting and greeting Participants as they arrive, in a friendly and comfortable manner.

Participants see the Trainer as a Master of Ceremonies and host. Being prepared in advance and ready to welcome is the first duty of a good host, or the organizer of a show.

The following tasks should be taken care of as early as possible on the first day of the seminar.

- Meet with organizers. Do a final review of the agenda and timing. Re–confirm all of their responsibilities, including logistical matters, registration procedures, and meals/refreshments.
- Finalize room set–up. This includes a) making sure that tables and chairs are optimally arranged, b) testing the sound system, microphones, and interpretation equipment, c) placing materials, paper and pens, and handouts at the registration table or work areas, d) putting supplies such as water bottles, cups, and sweets within easy reach of Participants, etc.

- Test all IT equipment. Make sure that computers, audio–visual aids, and projectors function correctly. Open USB flash drives or other storage devices, check the internet connection for required web links, and open PowerPoint presentations. Make sure that all technical equipment is ready to go, and that there are no "incompatibility issues". Also, take time to become familiar with the equipment and set up, including display panels, remote controls, etc.
- Check out supporting facilities. This includes the registration table, restrooms, breakout rooms, etc. Clean up any mess left behind, and put waste paper baskets in convenient locations.
- Make sure that the temperature is right and that the room is ventilated. Air out the room by opening windows and doors. If this is not possible, maximize the ventilation (at least until the seminar starts). Wrong temperatures, stale air, and insufficient oxygen impede concentration.
- Make sure lighting is good. Open curtains or blinds and adjust electric lighting as necessary.
- Place announcements and signs. If necessary, indicate the seminar location at the entrance to the building or reception area, and at other strategic locations.

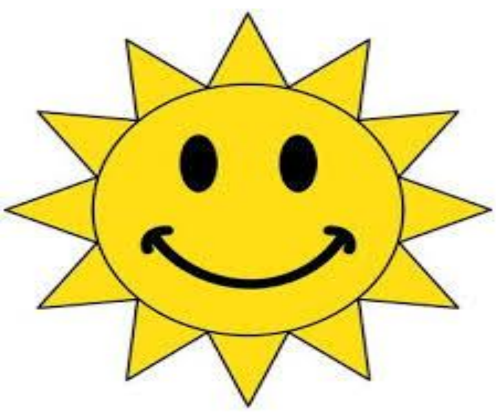
- Get comfortable with the training space. Walk around the training room and facilities. Make yourself at home. Sit in chairs that Participants will use, and check that their position and view are good. Deliver the first part of your opening from the exact location you will use.

Finally, and possibly most importantly, prepare for emergencies. Check and make sure that doors to stairways and emergency exits are unlocked and unblocked. Learn the layout, and best escape routes. Know where alarms and fire extinguishers are. Know what to do and who to contact in case of problems. Be aware that smoke can fill a room and make it impossible to see and breathe in a matter of seconds. Sure, the chances of an accident are small. But the repercussions of not being prepared are phenomenally large.

And if something does go wrong, Trainers may be responsible for saving lives.

This may sound far–fetched, but it is not. The author of this Manual once had to evacuate a large auditorium as the only entrance/exit for the building was filling up with smoke, and ended up being the last person out. And on several occasions, the author found emergency exits or stairwells locked on seminar day. One time, before a seminar on the twenty–fifth floor of a high–rise hotel, the management refused to even check out the locked stairwell door, until it was repeatedly pointed out that any emergency which knocked out the elevators could very well result in the death of 25 *judges*.

Notice that many of the aspects of seminar delivery mentioned above are closely related to the creation of a positive Learning Environment.



Having ensured that all arrangements are taken care of in a timely manner, Trainers are ready to welcome Participants with a smile. Take advantage of the Mind–Body connection, and the relationship between what we think, feel, and do. Think of something nice and pleasant, or imagine a positive experience. Remind yourself that the seminar is a fantastic opportunity to do something useful and positive for others who are important. Use a smile to create a relaxed and cheerful mood, in yourself and others. It can’t be said too many times: “Put on a happy face”, and remember that “a smile is the shortest distance between two points”.

The final task before opening the seminar is meeting and greeting Participants as they arrive or enter the seminar room, perhaps from the registration desk. A good host acknowledges the arrival of guests. In addition, we only have one chance to make a first impression. Studies show that people make judgments about others in a few short minutes, and often have a preliminary impression within a matter of seconds. Some recruiters maintain that hiring decisions are at least partially made within ninety seconds of meeting. If Trainers are distant and aloof, or tending to their own affairs while Participants arrive and get settled, it can create a first impression that will be difficult to overcome or modify later.

D. <u>Opening the Seminar</u>

As the saying goes, "well–begun is half done".

The first challenge is always starting on time. Sometimes it is necessary to wait for key speakers or late Participants to arrive and get settled, or for last–minute logistics to be taken care of. This is an unfortunate waste of extremely valuable time. Several steps can be taken to prevent or minimize delay:

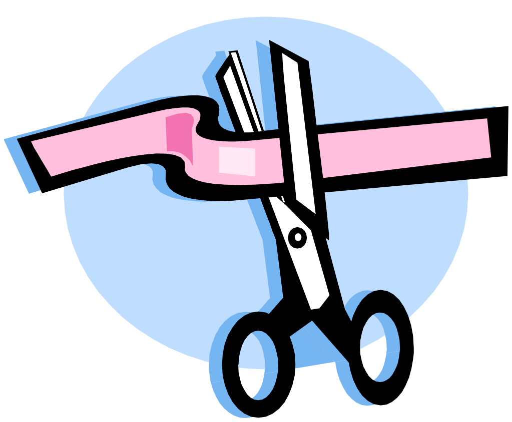
- <u>Try to get all key people to arrive on time</u>. If the seminar cannot begin until certain parties are present, be sure to contact them in advance, ask them for an early/timely arrival, and brief them on the situation and what is expected of them. Consider scheduling a short meeting with them prior to the seminar start, or giving them responsibility for a preliminary task.
- <u>Make sure registration goes smoothly</u>. The registration desk should be placed correctly, large enough, organized, and well–staffed. Participants should be registered without bottlenecks.
- <u>Round up the Participants before starting time</u>. Don't expect Participants to automatically take their seats at the right time. Particularly if they are enjoying refreshments and interacting with colleagues. Directly approach a few Participants who are known/trusted, and politely ask them to spread the word about starting. Encourage Participants to take refreshments to their seats.

If at all possible, set limits right from the beginning. Demonstrate that time will be treated like the valuable resource which it is, and that the schedule will be respected in a business–like manner. Otherwise, credibility with regard to such matters can be irrevocably lost.

<u>The best overall approach is to consider that **the seminar begins when the first Participant arrives**</u>. From that moment on, Trainers should be doing something that contributes to the results. Meeting and greeting the Participants serves this purpose. But what if the start is unavoidably delayed? First of all, it is better to make a brief announcement with a polite explanation than wait silently. And sometimes it is possible to make good use of the time. If appropriate, and not a violation of protocol, Trainers can start an informal dialogue with the Participants, making it clear that this is not the opening or real start. One way to do this is to pull up a chair, sit down near the front row but off to one side, and ask the nearest Participants a general or background question. "While we are waiting, I would like to ask a question". Certainly, the worst thing to do is to let the time pass without taking any action.

There are basically two genres of openings:

1) Formal welcome speeches or introductions by Very Important Persons (VIPs) or organizers
2) Informal openings delivered by Trainers themselves (perhaps after a short introduction)



<u>Formal openings</u> add gravitas to a seminar, particularly when delivered by people with status. But there can be protocol issues, particularly relating to speaking order and allocated time, when it is necessary to diplomatically respect the level/status of different institutions or people with different job positions. Delays in commencing formal openings always create an uncomfortable atmosphere. In any event, opening formalities should be kept reasonably brief, to avoid undue delay or distract from substantive work. Unfortunately, there is little that can be done once a VIP takes the floor.

The following tasks are traditionally or often taken care of during a formal seminar opening:

- Welcome of Participants
- Introduction of key parties, including Trainers and organizers
- Delivery of welcoming speeches or opening statements
- Acknowledgment and expressions of gratitude for sponsors and key counterparts
- Review of the objectives
- Explanation of the agenda
- Provision of key logistical information
- Introduction of the Participants

Especially if these tasks are taking too much time, the introduction of Participants should be pushed back until after the Trainer opens.

Informal openings are more conducive to promptly getting to work. For this reason, they are usually appreciated more by Trainers. But Trainers should carefully consider their opening remarks. When Trainers start with acknowledgments, background information, Ground Rules, and logistical details, they are in effect carrying out a formal opening, delaying the work, and failing to generate interest.

Here are some practices that do **not** effectively utilize seminar opening time:

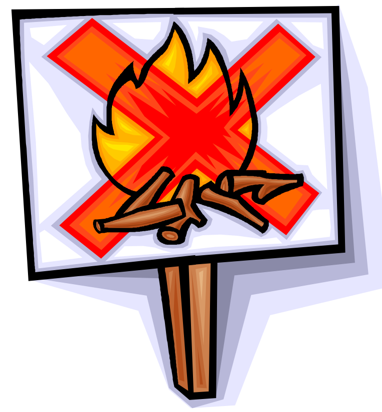
1) Excessive diplomacy. **Diplomacy is very important.** But Trainers can be prone to excessive diplomacy, just like VIPs. They may spend too much time thanking the organizers, expressing pleasure at having a chance to address the audience, talking about a previous visit to the location, praising the audience for coming, or highlighting the importance of the event. *The best approach is to keep acknowledgments concise, and then weave regular brief comments on these topics into delivery of the seminar.* "I am very grateful to the organizers for enabling us to discuss this next topic, which is extremely important". "At the seminar I delivered on my previous visit to this very special city, last year, there were several questions about this point".

2) Detailed background information. Nobody wants to listen to a long description of a Trainer's professional background, or to Trainers talking at length about themselves. Therefore, introductions should be brief. Besides, Participants should have already received a brief biography of the Trainer(s), ideally as part of or attached to the agenda. *The best approach is for the Trainer to mention qualifications in context, thereby adding authority to the points being made.* "This issue has arisen regularly during my thirty years of work with [provide brief details]". Statements such as this demonstrate relevant qualifications, which is better than listing them in an abstract summary.

3) Ground Rules. Some Trainers like to cover Ground Rules during the seminar opening. While we always hope that Participants understand and respect basic rules of protocol and communication, experience proves that this is not always the case. And, even if the overwhelming majority of Participants behave perfectly, a few who do not can establish a "lowest common denominator". However, it is not an efficient use of valuable time at the start of the seminar to go over too many rules and procedures. Participants are unlikely to focus on this subject, and it can make Trainers seem authoritarian and petty. Naturally, quick mention of an important matter of courtesy is acceptable. For

example: "Out of respect for colleagues, we would like to ask you to put your phones in silent mode, and step outside if you must take an important call". Or: "In order to give everyone multiple opportunities to speak, we request that each comment or question be brief and concise". Otherwise, save Ground Rules for a more opportune time, or mention them in response to a violation. In the latter case, remember that a rule or principle is general and universal. There is a big difference between "you should" and "everyone should".

Generally speaking, the following subjects are covered in Ground Rules:



- Requirements for attendance
- Adherence to the schedule, and starting/stopping on time
- Showing mutual respect, courtesy, and keeping an open mind
- Giving priority to speakers (only one person at a time)
- Avoiding private conversations
- Maintaining confidentiality about what is said at the seminar
- Keeping mobile phones in the silent mode, and leaving the seminar room to hold phone conversations
- Being open to questions and comments
- Feeling free to move around if necessary, to get a beverage and bring it back to the seat

4) Logistical details and housekeeping information. Attention quickly dissipates when Trainers start out with information about breaks, lunch, the location of meals and refreshments, how to find the bathrooms, parking, etc. This can also create a negative impression of the Trainer's priorities and capacity to focus. It is of course acceptable to briefly mention urgent information. For example: "If anyone parked in front of the building, please move your car right away since they are quick to give parking tickets these days". Otherwise, cover these points just prior to the first break, when they are more likely to be relevant or needed.

It is clear from the above that the best approach is to treat the opening as if it were a presentation, and follow the principles discussed in Module X Section "D". Start with an intriguing statement, probing question, or fascinating story. Summarize the Learning Outcomes and content, and point out their importance. Mention if there will be professional recognition, a license, or certificate. Advise Participants if there will be a test of any kind (anonymously for "research" purposes or for attribution). In other words, start by impressing Participants with regard to what is in it for them. Then combine substance and formalities, and weave brief formalities into delivery of the seminar as much as possible.

During the opening, *how* things are done can be as important as *what* is done. So, be sure to:

- Establish a suitable level of formality/informality
- Create an accommodating and if possible participatory Learning Environment
- Build interest and excitement, by highlighting and promoting what is to come
- Set an appropriate pace
- Demonstrate credibility

Finally, Trainers should watch Participants extremely closely during the opening. Their reactions and Body Language can give important clues as to how well they understand and agree with the rationale and planning for the seminar. If it appears that they expect something different, this should be explored promptly, perhaps during personal introduction of the Participants. Trainers who rehearse their opening comments well find it easier to pay attention to Participants at this crucial moment.

E. **Introduction of the Participants**

After the above preliminary matters are covered, the next (and sometimes last) part of the seminar opening is the introduction of Participants. The amount of time devoted to this process and its intensity should reflect the number of Participants, the length of the seminar, the objectives of the seminar, and the methodologies to be utilized. When a small number of Participants are going to spend several days together and engage in regular interactive exercises, it is very important for them to learn about each other and develop positive personal relationships. Introductions also facilitate a valuable mini–Training Needs Assessment or Audience Analysis (see Module IV Section "I"), and make it possible to adjust seminar delivery to better meet the needs and expectations of the Participants. However, for a large one–off seminar lasting one day and mostly using lectures/presentations, introductions may be unnecessary, needlessly time consuming, and unlikely to develop useful information. Trainers should adjust introductions according to the actual circumstances and these criteria.

There are many ways to get people in a group to introduce themselves or each other:

1) Self–Introductions. This is the simplest, fastest, and most common technique. It can also be the least effective. Far too often, Participants fail to enunciate their name clearly. Then, due to reluctance to talk about themselves, they limit their remarks to perfunctory information such as name and job title. Unfortunately, it is not very interesting for Participants to hear a litany of names and job titles. As a result, few Participants retain the information they hear.

2) Name Chain. This is a variant of Self–Introductions, except that each Participant must name all preceding Participants first. This gets the Participants to know each other, because repetition promotes retention, and everyone is motivated. There are two main variants of the Name Chain. First, it is possible to explain the procedure, and start with the first Participant, Trainer going last. Second, after regular Self–Introductions, the Trainer can ask for volunteers to name everyone, and then offer to go first, letting others follow (concerning how to accomplish this, see below). This approach is impressive, and shows that the Trainer is really paying attention to the Participants.

3) Introductions by Pairs. This is a very effective technique, although it takes a little extra time. Participants pair up with a neighbor, as in a Working Partnership, and interview each other for a few minutes. (If there is an odd number, the Trainer joins the exercise). The Trainer suggests up to three topics to cover, such as: 1) name, position, and background 2) expectations regarding the seminar, and 3) an unusual interest or hobby. Then, going around the room, Participants introduce and describe their partner to the group. This has many advantages. First, Participants get to know someone well. Second, they get a chance to talk and move early in the seminar. Third, the introductions are more interesting to listen to. Fourth, the seminar is participatory from the start, which makes people more comfortable about interacting. Finally, a great deal of useful information is obtained.

As discussed in Module IV Section "I", it is a best practice to note information concerning Participant objectives and expectations on a flip chart. Doing this at the start of the seminar helps Trainers direct their work and make it more effective. They can discuss what the seminar can and can't do in a productive and frank manner, listen to the Participants, and take a learner–oriented approach. Finally, documenting this information at the start of the seminar sets the stage for a dynamic wrap–up during the closing. The process takes time, but usually proves to be a great investment.

F. Learning the Names of Participants

Everything is in a name!
It may be the word people most want to hear

Learning names is a sure way for Trainers to show interest in Participants and earn their respect. The Learning Environment is almost always more positive when Participants are on a first name basis. And for many people, their name is one of the most beautiful or meaningful words in their language.

However, it is not easy to learn many names at once, and Trainers often work in different cultures where names are unfamiliar.

Nonetheless, no task is too large when broken down into smaller parts. So, the best way to succeed is by learning the names of Participants one at a time.

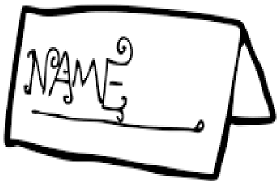
1) Learn as many names as possible in advance of the seminar. It may be possible to get an advance list of Participants, perhaps with some background information or even photographs. Study this carefully. Of course, without pictures it is not possible to associate names and faces. Still, it is possible to learn some names, and this will make it easier to remember them when the faces are seen.

2) Learn as many names as possible before the seminar opens. As you meet and greet Participants upon their arrival, clarify and remember their names. Make eye contact and listen attentively when they introduce themselves. Treat them as the most important person in the world for that moment. If you are unsure of the pronunciation or spelling, ask for clarification or repetition until you get it right. This shows interest, and is preferable to making mistakes later. Maybe ask if the name has a meaning. Then, use names as often as possible, at the start or end of a phrase: "Michael, it is great to meet you today".

3) Take advantage of registration. Registration is a great opportunity for Trainers to learn names, as Participants introduce themselves to organizers. If many Participants arrive at the same time, or it is not possible to meet them individually, Trainers can stand behind the registration desk and listen. Organizers can be asked to repeat names as they do the registration, to help the Trainer.

However, don't use names that you have only overheard. This can appear artificial and or even be disconcerting. Instead, treat this as "private advance knowledge" until there has been a proper introduction.

4) Use name cards. Lapel or desktop name cards are often pre–printed and distributed to Participants when they register. Participants can also be asked to prepare their own name cards, with a blank business card or piece of paper folded into three parts like a pyramid. This allows for creativity, avoids mistakes, and needs to be done anyway for last–minute attendees. But lettering must be large enough to be read from afar. Due to logistical issues, name cards are more often used at large or formal events. But they are helpful under most circumstances.



5) <u>Listen carefully when Participants introduce themselves or each other</u>. If they do not speak loud enough or enunciate clearly enough, ask them to repeat themselves so that everyone can hear. There is a lot to do during the seminar opening, but it is important to focus carefully on names. Besides, by this time proactive Trainers will already know many names.

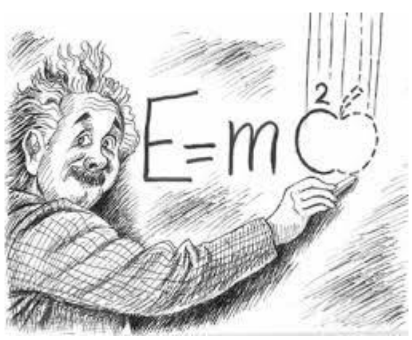
6) <u>Repeat names as often as possible</u>. Do so during the seminar and regular conversations.

For example, it is a good technique to link comments and circumstances to names of specific individuals: “Maria told us about a very interesting hobby during the introductions, and it can give some insight into how to address this challenge”. “Two people, Allison and Peter, have taken a seminar on this subject before”. “Thank you, George, for your suggestion”. “As Helen pointed out, there is another alternative”. If done correctly and politely, this personalizes interactions and shows interest and respect.

7) <u>Practice names regularly</u>. Get in the habit of looking around at the Participants and thinking of their names. Armed with a list of Participants, take a few minutes during the coffee break to reinforce associations between names and faces. Reinforcement works. Studies show that if we repeat a fact once daily for a week, and then again after two weeks, we are more likely to remember it for life.

8) <u>Finally, while using all of these techniques, memorize names faster and more effectively by using **_mnemonic tools_**</u>. The best way to remember anything is through <u>association</u> and <u>visualization</u>.

Common techniques include creating a visual association or image that has meaning for you, using acronyms, or inventing a mental nickname based on some physical or other characteristic. For example, a thin person named James could be “Slim Jim”. A good–humored person named Jane, who reminds us of a friend with the same name, could be “Happy Jane”. David could be DVD. Physical features can also be used to create a link; Larry has a beard shaped like an “L”. Practice creating a picture for each name, and use motion if possible. Create an image based on the name itself. First names and family names often refer to professions, colors, flowers, emotions, or physical attributes. It is also possible to link the name to an important personality in movies, sports, music, etc.



The key is to **<u>use and practice whatever techniques and associations work for you</u>**. Indeed, silly links of a private nature are sometimes best for supporting memory. Especially if they include concrete and active visualizations with graphic meaning.

By combining and regularly employing these eight techniques, Trainers should be able to rapidly and gracefully learn the names of Participants, at least in smaller seminars.

G. Managing Breaks

Breaks are an important part of seminars and events. They are a natural part of the learning process, just as exercise and rest complement and support each other. Participants share ideas and learn from each other during breaks, and benefit from the personal contacts and networking.

Key principles concerning the number and timing of breaks are summarized in Module VI Section "G", in the context of preparing agendas. As indicated, there should be a break at least every ninety minutes, with three per seminar day. This includes two coffee breaks (in the morning and afternoon) and a longer lunch break. It is also possible to have additional short "comfort breaks", as appropriate.

The following principles apply to breaks:

1) Time breaks properly. Breaks should be deliberately and strategically planned. They should fit in the agenda and Lesson Plan, and be logically timed with respect to the workflow (between modules or activities, or prior to starting a new subject). It is particularly convenient to schedule breaks after Working Group activities. This gives Participants something to do if they finish early, and provides extra time for those who require it.

2) Coordinate breaks with organizers. Make sure organizers have the final version of the agenda, discuss breaks with them, and promptly inform them of changes. It is basic courtesy to pass along a message if the activity preceding a break will take more or less time than planned. It is a good idea to verify preparations for a break fifteen minutes before it will actually take place, or ask a colleague to do so. This prevents embarrassing situations where the break starts before the refreshments are ready.

3) Communicate clearly and openly with Participants. Tell them exactly how long the break will be, and then set and announce a specific time for re–starting. It is insufficient and ineffective to merely announce how long the break will be. "Twenty minutes" really means "*about* twenty minutes". Not everyone senses the passage of time in the same way, and the approach to time varies amongst cultures. A specific time by the clock is objective and the same for everyone. Also, let the Participants know if there are time pressures, or if taking a shorter break will make it possible to finish earlier. Empower Participants to provide some input concerning the timing and duration of breaks. And be sure to update Participants about any changes in logistics or the way the breaks will be organized/handled.

4) Set the optimal duration for breaks. Breaks are usually scheduled to last thirty minutes on agendas. But Trainers have some leeway when announcing breaks. Make them long enough to provide required rest, but not so long that they interfere with work, or induce Participants to wander off or go back to their offices. Optimal duration also depends on cultural preferences and characteristics, and practical factors like physical layout and facilities. Extra time will be necessary if smoking is only allowed outside the building, if refreshments are in another part of the building, or if restrooms are small or inconveniently located. If appropriate, use "comfort breaks" or "mini–breaks", without formal refreshments. If time is short, ask Participants to bring refreshments back to their seats.

Perhaps the break is too long?

5) Spend breaks with Participants. **Use breaks for results**. Breaks are an excellent opportunity for Trainers to share ideas with Participants, learn from them, determine what they really think or want, and develop personal relationships. Breaks give Participants a chance to present questions directly to Trainers, without taking seminar time. Breaks give Trainers a chance to expand on what they covered during the seminar. If Trainers need to make arrangements or prepare for the next module, they should finish quickly and join the Participants. Trainers appear aloof if their interactions with Participants are confined to seminar time, from the front of the room. Great Trainers consider breaks to be part of the seminar.

6) Use information from breaks. Formally incorporate information from breaks into the seminar. Show that breaks are important and that comments from Participants get attention by commenting on what transpired: "During the break, one of our colleagues raised an excellent point…" This encourages Participants to approach Trainers during breaks, to obtain information/clarification or share messages. But be sure to maintain confidentiality/anonymity, unless attribution is authorized or warranted.

7) Finish breaks on time. Breaks can pose a major challenge to scheduling discipline. But Trainers cannot remain passive if they last longer than planned because Participants are slow to return. And it is inappropriate to punish those who are on time by rewarding those who are late. What is to be done?

Politely announce a return to work in the refreshment area. If necessary, recruit a few Participants to help round up their colleagues. If a considerable number of Participants have wandered off when it is time to begin, start off with a clarification or side point, or answer a saved question, before gently returning to the agenda when there is a quorum. This engages Participants who return on time and highlights the tardiness of others, without excessively compromising the work.

Some Trainers draw attention to participants who return late, perhaps by asking them a poignant question as they enter the room, or by pausing and staring at them. This has the advantage of effectively discouraging future non–compliance with the schedule. But if done too aggressively, it can backfire.

8) Get involved with hospitality and refreshments. Finally, Trainers can play an active role in the hospitality, and in particular the provision of refreshments. This is not normally considered within the purview of Trainers. And it may not be appropriate under the circumstances, especially if the Trainer has a small role or is one of many. But what if one Trainer is spending an entire day with a small group of Participants? Refreshments are always a key element of the Learning Environment. And when they are deficient, it directly impacts the quality of the work performed during the seminar. In other words, Trainers may very well have a legitimate right to enquire into such matters. What do Participants want and like? Is there an adequate choice of teas and coffees? Are there enough cookies, pastries, or snacks? Do Participants regularly get all of the caffeine and sugar that they want or need, to help maintain their levels of energy and attention? Quantity, quality, variety, and timing of refreshments all affect the Learning Environment, and thus the Trainer's work.

Trainers who soundly manage breaks in accordance with these principles create a more positive Learning Environment, and make seminars more productive and enjoyable. Participants benefit greatly when they have suitable chances and time for conversation amongst themselves, meeting informally with the Trainer, taking refreshments, smoking, walking around, and using the facilities. Learning Outcomes are advanced when Participants return from breaks refreshed and ready to work.

H. Handling Transitions

If the Lesson Plan is well–formulated, the relationship between subjects on the agenda will be clear to Participants. Still, transitions between modules or activities are important. They help Participants understand relationships, connections, and how modules and activities build on each other. This clarifies the overall flow of the seminar, enables Participants to see the big picture, and prevents the seminar from seeming to be a collection of modules and activities. Thus, when introducing a module or activity, Trainers can help Participants by taking a minute to explain/clarify a) how it relates to what has already been done, b) how it relates to what will be done, and/or c) how it fits into the overall plan.

The best way to do this is with linking phrases, such as:

- "Now that we have identified the obstacles to X, our next step is to figure out how to best overcome them."
- "Once we have defined the procedures for carrying out Y, we must figure out what kind of documentation is required."
- "Building upon our discussion of the best ways to speed up Z, we should now consider which parties can assist us in the process."

If a linking phrase is not sufficient, then a few sentences about the connection may be well warranted.

Transitions are more effective when smooth, logical, thought-out, and correctly timed between subjects/activities.

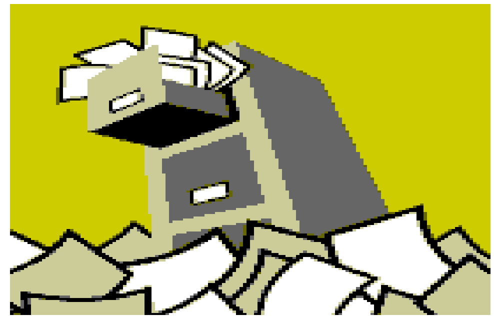
Time spent on good transitions is well invested. It helps Participants understand how the pieces of the seminar puzzle fit together.

I. Using Materials

Module VII discusses the content, format, and handling of seminar materials, and Section "F" covers different ways to use them during the seminar. Nonetheless, further consideration of the value and utilization of materials during seminar delivery is warranted. Far too often, materials are glanced at during the seminar, and never opened again afterwards. Good intentions to study the materials go unfulfilled because once the seminar ends, the urgent demands of regular work reassert themselves.

It is up to Trainers to present the materials at the seminar, and demonstrate their continuing value/usefulness. This is best done by formally introducing the materials, referring to them frequently, citing specific sections, using phrases or quotes, putting worksheets and exercises to good use, and including space for notes in the materials and then using them. With these techniques, Trainers can generate interest in the materials, and increase familiarity with them, thereby enhancing the chances that they will be put to further and continuing use.

J. Information Management



To successfully deliver seminars, Trainers must manage a great deal of information. Information needs to be collected, organized, stored, protected, and then disseminated to the right people at the right time. For these purposes, Information Management skills and techniques are absolutely essential.

Sound Information Management practices include:

- Safeguard information. All possible measures should be taken to back up and prevent the loss of information. For this purpose, place information on USB Flash Drives or in the cloud (if not confidential). Store multiple back–up devices in different locations, and carry one with you, separate from your computer. Only use USB Flash Drives which have built in *password protection*, to prevent access by unauthorized parties. Remember that computers can easily be replaced, and at declining prices. But lost information cannot be regenerated, and time spent repeating work can never be recuperated.

- Set up a "Training E–mail Account". Web–based (internet accessible) E–mail accounts, such as G–Mail, Hotmail, and Yahoo! are excellent for storing and protecting information. Send copies of key training files to your own address, as attachments to E–mails. You can then download the files onto any computer with internet access, or easily forward them to any interested parties from a mobile phone. And even if your own computer crashes and all your USB Flash Drives are lost, the materials are still safe and easily accessed.

- Safeguard copies of key documents. Use the "Training E–mail Account" or the cloud to store scanned copies of important professional documents, such as Curricula Vitae, diplomas, certificates, letters of recommendation, etc. These documents can then be forwarded to anyone who requires them from virtually any location by simply logging on to the internet.

- Update regularly. Update back–up media so that they contain the most recent versions of files. Date your files, and/or name them appropriately, to facilitate this process. Remember, the time to update is when the newest version is ready, not after it has been lost.

- Prevent attacks. Take all necessary measures to protect computers and files from infection by viruses and other kinds of malicious programs. Use professional anti–virus and firewall programs, and install a Virtual Private Network (VPN) application on all devices.

- Keep important items in your possession. Do not leave important equipment or documents unattended or check them in when traveling.

- Carry hard copies of key select documents. For example, it is always a good idea to have a hard copy of the Lesson Plan handy. This ensures that the show will go on.

The above practices are particularly useful for Trainers who deliver seminars away from home.

Given the user friendliness and minimal cost of using the cloud, web–based E–mail accounts, and USB Flash Drives, there is no excuse for unsound Information Management policies and practices.

K. Working with a Co–Trainer (Training Partner)

Trainers often work in teams. Unfortunately, training teams are often ad hoc, formed on a one–time basis for specific occasions, with limited advance notice. Trainers may have little or no influence over this process. This is particularly the case with certain professions, and training delivered under the auspices of projects. Trainers may also be part of larger groups, and frequently change partners. Trainers who work in many locations are likely to associate with different local partners under a variety of conditions. Sometimes Trainers do not even get a chance to meet before the day of the seminar, relying completely on virtual and electronic communication to make advance arrangements.

Therefore, Trainers are obliged to be congenial and flexible by nature, and they should know how to collaborate with all kinds of people. But what if Co–Trainers have different skills, areas of expertise, personalities, working styles, and/or methodologies? Despite this, they need to convince Participants that they are working together as a team, and complementing each other, with the shared goal of delivering the best possible training. How can this be done?

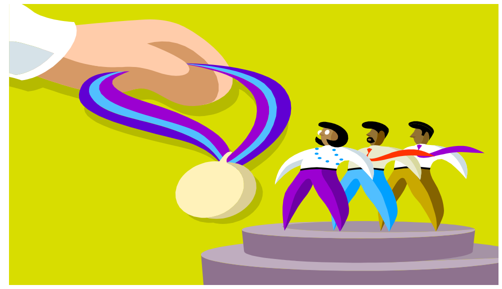
Co–Trainers should apply the following best practices:

- Communicate. Co–Trainers should start communicating with each other as far in advance of the seminar as possible. Communication should be frequent and regular. All appropriate and convenient forms of electronic media should be utilized.
- Share information. Co–Trainers should share all information they have about the Participants, sponsors, logistics, scheduling issues, and other circumstances surrounding the seminar.
- Plan. Co–Trainers should cooperate on their Learning Outcomes, methodologies, activities, working practices, use of materials, etc. They should agree on who will do what and when, and how time will be allocated, and then codify all these points in the Lesson Plan(s).
- Meet. Co–Trainers should meet before the seminar. Even if this can only be arranged the night before the seminar, or early on the first day prior to the opening, it is important for Co–Trainers to have a face–to–face meeting before getting up in front of Participants.
- Backstop and help with delivery. Co–Trainers should agree on how they can help each other, particularly when their partner has the lead. For example, Co–Trainers can write comments on a flip chart, take notes for later discussions, make supportive mini–interventions, and check on logistical arrangements (like preparations for the next break). At the very least, Co–Trainers should stay in the seminar room, pay attention, and maintain a positive presence.

- Show unity. Co–Trainers must always display a united front before the Participants. Keep disagreements secret and handle them in private. Frankness is usually appropriate in private, but criticism is never appropriate in public. And the leader of the module/exercise always has the final call on how to proceed.

  Demonstrate unity through Body Language. The slightest incongruity sends powerful subliminal signals to Participants that Co–Trainers are singing a different tune. Co–Trainers should be attentive and display positive Body Language when their partners perform. Showing unity in public is indispensable, since Co–Trainers are in the same boat together.

- Learn and provide guidance/feedback. Co–Trainers should watch and learn from each other, and share advice and even "war stories". Training is a continual process of seeing what works, with respect to methodologies, activities, and techniques. Co–Trainers are in a unique position to offer each other advice and feedback, based on what they observe. Feedback should be constructive and helpful, and based on facts and concrete examples. Thus, instead of saying that an activity was "not well received", which is an opinion and conclusion, it is preferable to say that when the Trainer said "x", the Participants responded with "y" instead of "z". This is more factual, and can serve as the basis for analysis.



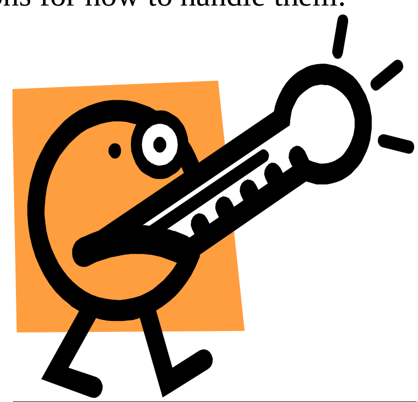
By following these best practices, and basing their relationship on communication, cooperation, collaboration, sharing, encouragement, support, and showing unity, Co–Trainers can work together more effectively, make their training more coordinated and valuable, improve their skills for future work, and efficaciously meet the needs of Participants.

L. Dealing with Common Problems

No matter how well–prepared Trainers are, and how proactively arrangements are handled, something is bound to go wrong at the seminar. It is impossible to account for all possible variables and address every contingency, especially *force majeure*.

The best Trainers are distinguished not only by their ability to prevent problems, but also by their skill in handling the problems that inevitably arise. Furthermore, the best Trainers handle problems with dignity, grace, and perhaps even some subtle humor, thereby making the best of the situation. Remember, Participants scrutinize how Trainers manage situations, as though they were the captain of a ship. While it is most important to find solutions, points are also earned by the style displayed in finding those solutions, and the manner in which they are implemented.

Here are some issues that frequently or inevitably arise, with suggestions for how to handle them:



1) Illness. The first rule of training is that **the show must go on**. Because of advance arrangements, fixed expenses, and the commitment of many parties, rescheduling is not an option. So, even when Trainers are not at their best, they still have to do the best they can. The only course of action is to modify work to accommodate limitations. For example, it may be possible to lighten the agenda by removing certain difficult tasks. Or Participants can be given more responsibility, through additional Working Group exercises. If there are co–Trainers, perhaps the workload can be redistributed slightly.

2) The set–up is not conducive to training. Trainers sometimes find themselves stuck with what is being offered. The room assignment may not come until the last minute. Maybe things looked great at the advance inspection, but were changed around. Not much can be done about the kinds of tables and chairs, the shape and size of the room, or the acoustics. But it is usually possible to reorganize and improve things, *if there is enough time*. Thus, the importance of early arrival on the first day, with contact details for the organizers and a willingness to take charge and do what is necessary. Don't hesitate to mobilize whoever is available on–site, in order to finish before the first Participant arrives.

3) Equipment problems. Discuss equipment requirements with the organizers well in advance. Learn how to handle common problems. On the day of the seminar, check out the equipment as early as possible, and be ready to act if necessary. Always have a backup plan, including printed copies of materials and a flipchart. If equipment stops working and you can't get it started right away, then a) call a mini–break and get help, or b) move on without the equipment. Never complain, show frustration, assign blame, or spend significant time playing around with equipment in front of the Participants.

4) Deviation from the agenda. Sometimes discussions get side–tracked. Points may take longer than anticipated to cover, or be addressed in a different order, particularly if Participants contribute to and influence the direction of the activities. This can create an impression that the work is unsystematic or behind schedule, even though this is not the case. To address such situations, acknowledge the importance of the points being made, graciously mention the need to move on to the next item on the agenda, and re–connect to where you should be. Avoid drawing attention to deviations or appearing to make a major "course correction". It is always courteous to offer to continue a divergent line of inquiry during the next break, if it is worthwhile. Of course, if certain Participants regularly digress, it may be necessary to discourage them by returning to the agenda in a more obvious or forceful manner.

5) Audience disconnection. If the audience is not sufficiently responsive, it is important to ascertain the reason for this and address it. If a change in subject or methodology is required, or there are issues concerning the Learning Environment, act accordingly. To find out, consider opening the floor to comments from Participants, and addressing them personally, using open Body Language. If this is not appropriate, discretely address the most forthcoming Participant(s) at the next break. Sometimes there are "objective" obstacles to what Trainers are trying to do. For example, suggested solutions to a business problem may seem irrelevant to Participants because the management is inflexible. Or there might be conflicting interests among the Participants. Such obstacles cannot be overcome by Trainers. But it is in their interest to identify them, and make whatever adjustments are possible.

6) Difficult Participants. This obstacle and specific techniques for dealing with it have been addressed in considerable detail in Module XI Section "F". In the context of seminar delivery, it is worthwhile repeating that how Trainers deal with difficult personalities can have a major impact on their credibility, and on the overall Learning Environment. The results of much hard work can quickly dissipate. Therefore, caution, respect, tact, sophistication, and humility are all required, along with careful attention to Body Language.

7) Forgetting the next point. Everyone forgets what they were about to say sometimes. And this can easily happen to a Trainer who is in front of a group and trying to mentally juggle ten points that should be made. If you lose your place, feel free to a) graciously pause and look at your notes, b) casually take a sip of water and pretend nothing is wrong, c) ask for questions as if this were your intention, or d) repeat the previous point in a different way, to trigger your memory. Some Trainers use humor to highlight their fallibility, with comments like: "Does anyone remember my next point?" or "I should have written the next point down". But this can backfire if not done graciously, by someone who can manage this kind of humor. Therefore, the most suitable approach is to graciously and calmly continue on, without drawing undue attention to the situation.

8) Emergencies. **Trainers should always be prepared for any emergency.** As leaders and responsible parties at seminars, Trainers must be ready to take charge in any situation where lives or health are threatened. As discussed above in Section "C", this requires advance preparations. Check out the exit routes, and know who to contact in case of emergency. **Carry a small whistle and flashlight on your keychain.** They often come in handy. Whistles are incredibly useful. They attract immediate attention, whenever and wherever it is wanted. And if someone presents a danger, whistles can be more practical than a conventional weapon.

The problems that Trainers might have to deal with are virtually limitless. The above list is just a sample of some of the most common. It is useful for Trainers to ask each other about their most unusual challenges, and how they were handled, in order to learn, bond, and hopefully smile a little.

One final point: as Kimberly Johnson says, "Never ruin an apology with an excuse". Sometimes the best thing to do when something goes wrong is to make a simple apology, and just leave it at that. Apologies followed by an excuse that doesn't hold water or impress can totally backfire. A sincere apology accompanied by the right kind of smile usually doesn't require any excuse at all.

M. Seminar Closings

Closings are one of the most important parts of a seminar, and must be put to good use. Like presentations and modules, seminars have three parts (introduction, body, and closing). Closings provide an opportunity to reinforce what has been learned and achieved, demonstrate how objectives and Learning Outcomes have been met, and concretize follow–up plans. Studies consistently show that when presented with information or a list, Participants most accurately recall what they learn first (primacy) and last (recency). *Closings are the Trainer's last chance to reach Participants.*

Far too often, seminars end somewhat abruptly when time starts to run out. Closings may be superficial or mere formalities. They may fail to reach their full potential because they are artificially limited to a) a brief review of what has been done, b) wrapping up any unfinished business or unanswered questions, and c) completing formalities.

It is certainly important to recap what has been covered, and fulfill obligations like diplomatic niceties (thanking the Participants, sponsors, organizers, Co–Trainers, translators, and all other parties who supported or contributed to the work). But depending on the specific circumstances, there is often much more that Trainers can do to end their seminars on a truly strong and positive note!

- Review the results from the seminar and the learning experience. In anticipation of formal Evaluation Questionnaires, it is usually possible to hold a discussion about the results during the closing (see Module XIII Section "M"). If the atmosphere is right and the discussion is concrete, this can generate valuable information for future planning. A flipchart can be used to list what went well and what could have been done better, if this would not be too intimidating.
- Assess and demonstrate fulfillment of Learning Outcomes and expectations. Discussion of how well the Learning Outcomes have been met can be extremely impactful, and create a very positive impression of the Trainer. If a flipchart listing of Participant expectations was prepared during the seminar opening, it can be used to structure and orient the discussion. Trainers can

show that a) they have largely delivered on their promises and goals, b) they are not afraid to recognize some inevitable shortcomings, and c) they truly care about planning for and doing better the next time. This exercise also helps Participants to prepare more accurate (and hopefully more positive) answers to the written Evaluation Questionnaire.

- <u>Plan for the future and make commitments for sustainable results</u>. Participants can be asked to plan their next steps, and even document them. For example, they can draft a memorandum to themselves or make a recording, to be accessed at a designated later date. Or they can identify the most important thing they learned, or a positive idea/technique that should be implemented.
- <u>Clarify the nature of any further contacts between Trainers and Participants</u>. Perhaps future or further training will take place. Supplemental materials might be made available. Or some form of follow–up contacts might be arranged, to review progress and provide further assistance.

<u>One of the most straightforward and valuable closing exercises is to ask the Participants to write down and then state what they will do differently in the future as a result of the training</u>. This is a positive mental task, and when the result is stated aloud it becomes an *affirmation*. It is also extremely impactful for Participants to hear their colleagues state what they have learned and plan to change.

<u>Far too often, Trainers under–emphasize future planning, make only minimal effort to generate commitment to further results, and fail to take the simple step of asking Participants what they will do differently as a result of what they learned at the seminar</u>.

Finally, and in some countries and settings most importantly of all, <u>Trainers should recognize and acknowledge Participants' achievements</u>. The best way to do this is by ending with a presentation of certificates and a small ceremony. Certificates should have details about the seminar and organizers, be personalized with each Participant's name, and be signed by senior parties and Trainers. Sometimes Participants give Trainers a small souvenir in return. Such ceremonies and exchanges are an excellent way to finish up, and provide a true sense of closure.

N. <u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

Trainers must multi–task to successfully deliver seminars. There are many things to remember and take care of, in addition to substantive work. They include making advance preparations, attending to all arrangements on the day of the seminar, opening the seminar, doing introductions, learning the names of Participants, building personal relationships, creating a positive Learning Environment, implementing sound methodologies, sticking to the agenda, managing breaks, properly transitioning between subjects and activities, using materials effectively, setting and enforcing Ground Rules, managing information, working with co–Trainers, capably handling problems, properly dealing with difficult Participants, and successfully closing the seminar. Unfortunately, every one of these tasks is important, and any shortcomings can compromise overall results and will likely be noticed.

Finally, there is one additional obligation, which may be as important as any other. <u>Have fun</u>! People learn more and learn more effectively when they are having fun and sharing with others. This means that Trainers and Participants alike should have a good time, relish meeting challenges, and enjoy the learning process and the activities that contribute to it. Of course, having fun does not mean finding things funny or finding funny things. Training must also be dignified and serious. But the process works best when it is enjoyable and rewarding, and set in an ambience of collegiality. This requires a secure and comfortable Learning Environment, insulated from the "real world", with camaraderie and dedication to the objectives of the seminar, in the hands of a kind, capable, and devoted Trainer.

MODULE XIV
TIME MANAGEMENT FOR TRAINING

Learning Outcome: Trainers understand and can successfully apply the basic principles of time management for professional formation and the delivery of seminars.

A. Introduction

Time is arguably our most valuable resource, and once lost it can never be replaced. This makes time a key and controlling resource at seminars.

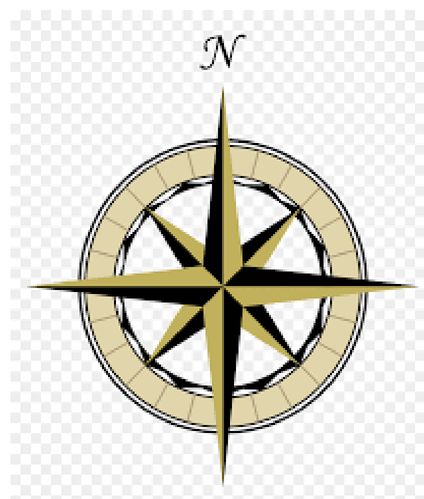
Indeed, Trainers are judged on how effectively they utilize the time which Participants graciously dedicate to them.

A great deal of information regarding time management is available in books and on the internet. Much of it is good and valuable reading, with useful practices and suggestions. Key areas of focus include planning, prioritizing, organizing, multi–tasking, and optimally applying time utilization practices.

Unfortunately, the traditional approach to time management makes it into an effort to get more done in less time. The idea is to work faster, be more efficient, waste less, and thus achieve more.

However, this paradigm underemphasizes the importance of prioritization and achieving results. It focuses on how best to use the *clock*, and neglects the importance of using the *compass*.

But we cannot do an optimal job on the *how* of seminar delivery unless we first determine *what* and *why*, and apply those parameters on seminar day. We must first of all put the first things first.



Therefore, time management at seminars depends first and foremost upon doing the right things (by correctly using a compass), and only thereafter does it depend upon doing things right (by correctly using a clock).

This approach does not deny the importance of the mechanical and procedural aspects of time utilization at seminars. Rather, it emphasizes the fact that we must first get our Learning Outcomes and methodologies right, so that we are doing the right things. Otherwise, our results will be compromised, no matter how meticulously we stick to the seminar agenda.

It is also important to understand that efficient use of time at the seminar does not justify tracking time obsessively. Excessive efforts to control and account for the use of time can be counterproductive. Human beings, by their nature, underutilize a certain percentage of their time. We still benefit from underutilized time, such as coffee breaks. Indeed, without it we could not use the rest of our time efficiently or effectively. The trick is to find the right approach and a proper balance. Trainers must be both efficient and relaxed.

After a brief introduction to the key principles of time utilization, this module focuses on time management in the specific context of seminar delivery. Further reading is suggested.

B. <u>How Do We Spend Our Time</u>?

Estimates vary, and depend upon many factors, but it is possible to synthesize a typical breakdown. During an average 75–year lifetime, an average person in a developed country could spend 23 years sleeping (plus several more years trying to get to sleep), 14 years at work, 4–5 years eating, 4–5 years waiting in line (including six months at traffic lights), 4–5 years learning, 3 years in meetings, 2–3 years travelling, 2–3 years in the bathroom, one year dealing with un–necessary paperwork, and up to six months searching for lost things. How many total years do we currently spend looking at computer screens?

Naturally, these are rough estimates. Exact figures vary significantly between countries, and depend on socio–economic status and lifestyle within countries. People in developing countries and the less affluent devote much more time to basics, from making a living to procuring food and water. Nonetheless, modern life presents many anomalies:

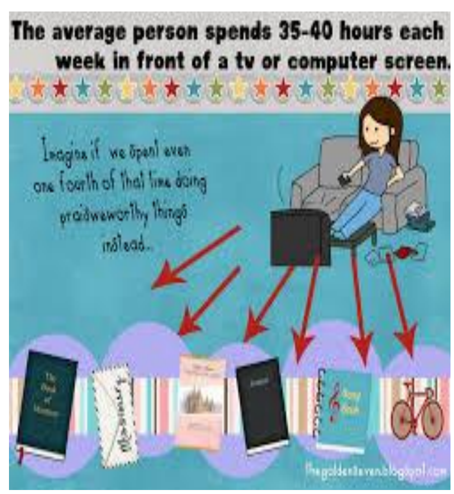
- By putting time spent waiting in line to good use, we can practically *double* the amount we learn over a lifetime, without decreasing our free time and leisure activities
- If we decrease bathroom time by ten percent, we can easily save enough time to learn about new interests and develop new hobbies
- If we always put our things in the right place, we can have several extra days of fun every year

Considering the importance of how we spend our time over a lifetime, it is surprising that we give so little thought to how these numbers play out and add up.

Another valuable way to approach this is by analyzing how we spend our time <u>on a weekly basis</u>.

For starters, more than half of our 168 hours per week is spent sleeping, working, and commuting.

In some countries, 20–25 percent of time is spent watching television and using computers and smart phones.



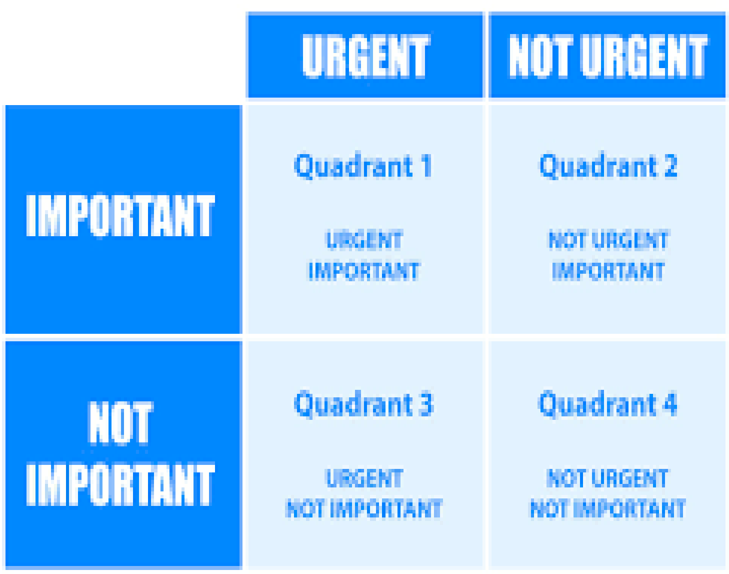
Treating each hour as one unit, fill out the following chart to see where your time goes:

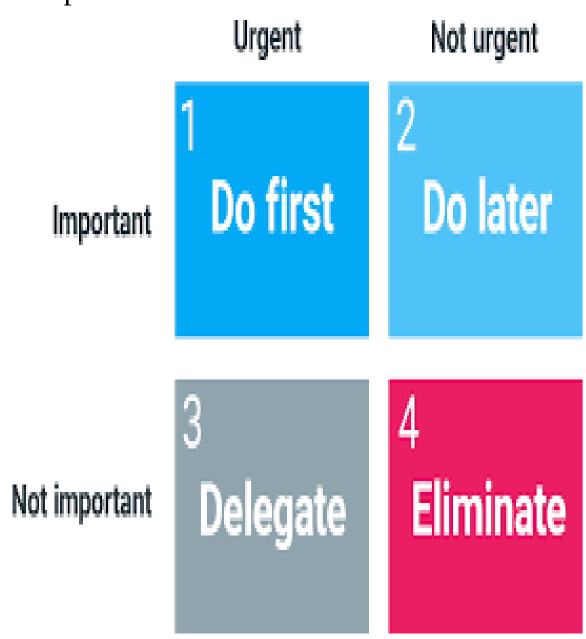
HOW DO YOU SPEND AN AVERAGE WEEK?		
Activity	**Amount of Time**	**Percentage of Total**
Sleeping (and trying to sleep)		
Working		
Commuting		
"Bathrooming"		
Eating		
Exercising		
Cleaning		
Waiting		
Watching television or movies		
Using screens (computers, phones)		
(Add your own categories)		
TOTAL	168 Hours	100 %

Does this exercise make you feel that too much time is spent on certain activities, and not enough time on others? What about the most important things in life? Where do they fit into this chart?

C. <u>What are the Four Quadrants (Categories) of Time</u>?

<u>To help us understand what we do with our time, we can identify four main quadrants. They are based on two variables, namely *importance* and *urgency*</u>. This also helps us to decide what to do with tasks.





I. <u>The Business Quadrant</u>. This is where we achieve by taking care of matters that are both important and urgent. It is where we do business, make a living, and fulfil our major responsibilities in life (including personal obligations). Successful people such as business leaders, public figures, athletes, and professionals spend a high percentage of their working time and perhaps also their personal time in this quadrant.

II. The Progress Quadrant. This is where we achieve great objectives in life, and do the things we value and want/wish to devote ourselves to, such as passions and hobbies. Although very important, and in some ways most important, they are not urgent. Thus, they often get overlooked in favor of urgent tasks that demand prompt attention. This is sometimes denominated the Quality Quadrant, because of its high value for moving us forward. Note that failing to attend to items in this quadrant has few short–term consequences, but causes us the most harm (and regret) over the long–term.

III. The Illusion Quadrant. Tasks that are urgent but not important eat up our time but fail to move us forward. The typical example is a boss who orders busy work, such as tasks with artificially inflated priority but little real value. This quadrant creates an *illusion* of progress. At the end of the day, we remember being busy, but we cannot identify any achievements. Ideally, tasks which do not warrant significant attention should be delegated, but this is usually not possible.

IV. The Waste Quadrant. This is where we do things that are neither important nor urgent. But "waste" is a very strong word. If things in this quadrant are truly wasteful, it is best to eliminate them. However, sometimes they are not a total loss. Leisure and play, sometimes placed in this quadrant, are actually important, and have their place. They help us regenerate and rebuild our energy reserves, in order to do the important things. Time spent in nature, for example, improves our health, helps us function better, and refreshes the soul. Children, both young and old, learn when they play. For this reason, leisure and enjoyment are sometimes placed in Quadrant II. In any event, the goal is not to eliminate all waste, but rather to limit it, and employ it judiciously by obtaining any benefit which is possible.

Under this paradigm, professional formation generally falls in Quadrant II. Training moves us forward, and deserves attention. Indeed, the obligation to continue development is inherent to all professions. But it is rarely urgent, unless it deals with a pressing problem or is mandatory before a deadline. As a result, training is often postponed, or replaced by more impending tasks in Quadrant I and Quadrant III. This explains why some Participants who fully intend to attend a seminar decide at the last moment to stay in their offices. It also justifies the practice of organizing seminars as retreats, physically distanced from other influences, with mandatory attendance.

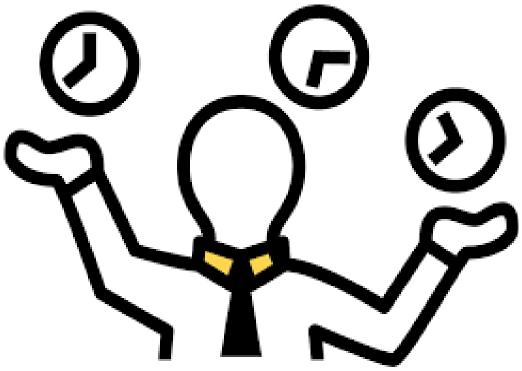
Trainers need to take account of how Participants view seminars and attend to matters within their four quadrants. If a seminar is mandatory, or provides some kind of important licensure, then it may be placed in the Business Quadrant. If Participants face circumstances or supervisors that keep them in the Illusion Quadrant, extra measures will be required to deliver value and keep them focused on the seminar. On the other hand, if Participants are learning valuable skills which they would not otherwise have the time or opportunity to develop, Trainers can generate genuine enthusiasm. The trick is to make seminars more successful by showing/convincing Participants that they are in the Business Quadrant or Progress Quadrant, and are thereby making an excellent investment of their precious time.

D. What are the Basic Principles of Time Management at Seminars?

The following principles are key for time management at seminars:

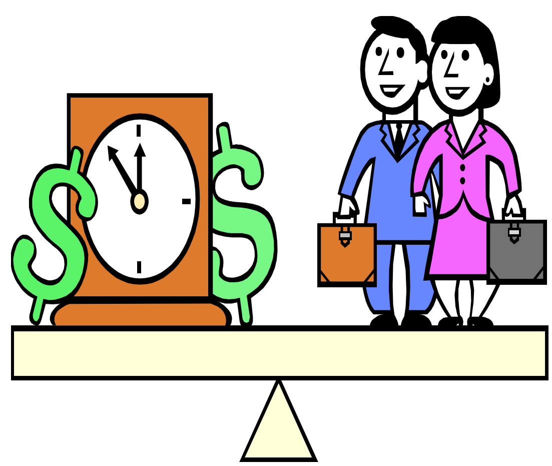
- Time management is the art of getting more results from the same amount of time. It is all about efficiency. Paradoxically, this may require less effort rather than more effort. Efficiency starts with eliminating waste. Many practices at seminars simply waste time. Others are inefficient, because they take up more time than they need to. Efficiency means achieving better results by getting key things done in the minimum amount of time required.

- Tasks tend to expand to fill up their allotted time. According to Murphy's Laws and the Rule of Entropy, if too much time is allotted then too much time will be used. Furthermore, there isn't always a direct relationship between the amount of time allotted and the results which are achieved. Will a Working Group get twice as much done in forty minutes as it would in twenty? Or, is it more likely to do twenty minutes of work in forty minutes? Would Working Partnerships be better? These questions should be addressed in the Lesson Plan and agenda.



- Time management cannot focus excessively on doing more things. The human capacity to work and absorb information is limited. When these limits are exceeded, the amount of additional benefit starts to decline. This is a corollary of what economists call the law of decreasing marginal utility. Eventually, a point is reached where additional time for additional activities yields little or no benefit. Therefore, time management must take a realistic approach to achieving results, by doing the right number of things in the right amount of time.
- Time management is not about doing things faster. Doing things right, at the proper pace, is more important for achieving results, and therefore key to optimal use of time. Learning takes place at its own appropriate pace. Going faster may end up achieving less, and thus waste time.
- Time management is not about spending more time working. Reducing breaks too much will not get Participants to do more work or achieve better results. It is more likely to wear them down, and reduce what is achieved.
- Multi–tasking is the most effective way to achieve more in a given period of time. There are often ways to do two things at the same time. For example, some Working Groups can be given complementary but slightly different assignments, rather than having them all perform the same task. This is a great way to achieve more, provided that all tasks can be done well.
- The best time to start saving time is at the beginning. When time is lost at the start of a seminar, efforts to catch up can undermine much of what is subsequently done. Starting on–time and keeping opening formalities succinct get time management off on the right foot.
- Managing time is like investing. It is always advantageous to identify practices which invest a small amount of time to save a larger amount of time later. These include: a) organizing files and documents (hard and soft copies) logically and systematically, b) keeping everything required for the seminar handy and where it should be, c) making checklists and schedules of things to do, and using them regularly, d) making an electronic master contact list with the names and details of all colleagues, and keeping a printed version handy at all times, etc.

Time is money, and so is seminar time. Neither should be wasted. Professionals are acutely aware of *opportunity costs* (the loss of alternative uses of the time they invest at seminars). They may consider how the time could be put to alternative use practicing their trade, that is to say providing services and earning money.



Professionals are also unlikely to be satisfied with getting *some* benefit from a live seminar. Rather, they want to get *more* benefit or *different kinds* of benefit compared to what they would obtain spending the time engaged in self–study.

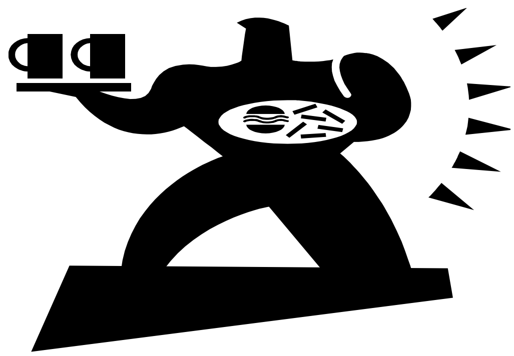
This sets a high standard for Trainers to achieve.

In order to keep track of how much time is really used, Trainers should apply **the Rule of Man Hours**. The *total amount of time* used for a task is based on two factors, namely the actual amount of time it takes (by the clock) and the total number of people involved. So, a three–minute delay in starting a seminar with twenty Participants actually costs one Man Hour (sixty minutes) of quality time. If a Trainer spends two minutes on useless pleasantries before an audience of sixty Participants, a total of two Man Hours (120 minutes) are really lost. When the number of people involved is factored into the mis–use of time, the total amount of Man Hours lost adds up fast!

To apply these basic time management principles at seminars, use the following best practices:

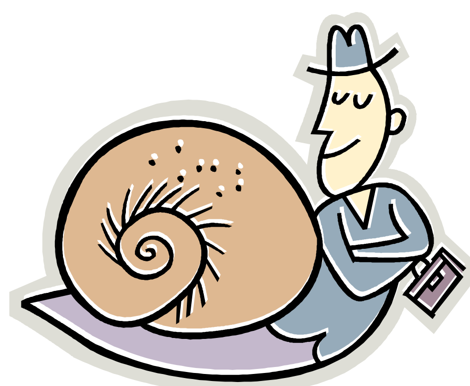
1) Always start and complete sessions on time. Make sure the Lesson Plan and agenda are realistic and stick to them. Combine discipline and charm. Make it clear that the schedule will be followed, and that Participants should always be where they are supposed to be (but in a polite and non–authoritarian manner). Set an example by always being on time. Respond quickly and decisively to any deviations from the schedule. Once discipline is broken without consequences, it cannot be re–established. If tardiness is tolerated, it is validated.

2) Don't lose time on logistics. As mentioned previously, get the facilities completely ready before the first Participant arrives. Carry out registration and the distribution of materials promptly. Have audio–visual aids ready to go. Make sure refreshments and meals are served on time and exactly when the break starts, so Participants are not kept waiting. Serve coffee and snacks during the seminar or a Working Group activity if this makes sense.



3) Keep track of progress. Be aware of how well the actual status of seminar delivery compares with the Lesson Plan. Good Trainers always know whether things are on schedule. If there are any deviations from the schedule, carefully consider the reasons behind them. Are presentations taking longer than planned? Are Participants making rambling interventions? Are organizers slow with logistical support? If it is possible to address the causes of deviations, Trainers should do so. If not, then other remedial measures are required.

4) Be proactive and ready to intervene. If a seminar or module is behind schedule, there are a number of steps which can be taken. They include a) speeding things up (perhaps by spending less time on each of the remaining points), b) prioritizing what remains (perhaps by skipping less important points or activities), or c) simply moving on to the next module or topic. As mentioned previously, accelerating the pace has limited benefits beyond a certain point. It is often better for Trainers to teach a limited number of points very well and obtain good retention than indulge a misplaced compulsion to do too much.



Intervene, don't stay in a shell

5) Economize speech. Application of the Rule of Man Hours means choosing words carefully. Keep introductory remarks, pleasantries, and stories short. Always use concise and precise sentences. Listen

carefully to how others speak, and think of ways to get the same effect with fewer words. For example, avoid comments like: “Yesterday, in the evening, while I was taking a walk outside in the park, I started thinking about a point raised by one of the Participants, and a question arose which in retrospect I believe wasn’t really answered to my satisfaction”. Instead, try: “I would like to know…”

6) Move things faster at the seminar by getting Participants to prepare in advance. Homework can help Participants get ready, and thus achieve more at seminars. If the composition of the group is fairly clear or well–known, Participants can be given an article or case study to read in advance, in preparation for discussion. Or they can be asked to answer a brief questionnaire, to provide input for discussion. Perhaps the most feasible and customary approach is to give an assignment after the first day of a multiple day event. There are two possibilities. First, the entire group can be given a common task, such as reading background material, or reviewing a case study. Second, individual Participants can be designated (preferably on a voluntary basis) to play a special role, such as by Teaching Back. A similar approach can be applied to breaks. Participants can be asked to think about or discuss an important point over their lunch or coffee.

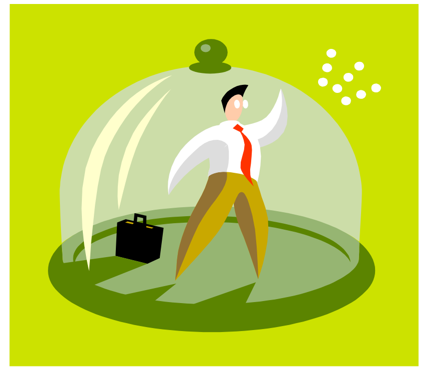
Clearly, any practice which gets Participants ready in advance helps to achieve objectives and saves valuable seminar time. The trick is to promote compliance by making the task straightforward, logical, and not excessively time–consuming.

7) Manage Participants. While interactive methodologies work best, they are the most difficult to time. So, Trainers cannot be afraid to politely move things along. One of the most valuable techniques is limiting the amount of time each Participant takes for interventions. This is easier said than done, but it can be achieved through respectful application of a Ground Rule and “coaching” on the optimal approach. Discussions can be deferred or postponed, if necessary, by listing questions and promising to address them when time permits. If a subject is of interest to only certain Participants, it can be discussed during the following break or after the seminar, so that the collective can move on.

8) Don’t watch your watch. When Trainers look at clocks or watches, it makes Participants think about time. They may wonder if there is a problem, check the agenda, or feel rushed. It is better to place a small clock or watch on the table, or near notes. Check time surreptitiously, without drawing attention to what you are doing. Think of magicians, who direct audiences towards what they want them to see, and hide what is really happening.

9) Don’t be authoritarian. Nobody appreciates a bossy Trainer who focuses excessively on time (like the man pictured at left). It is possible to be businesslike and efficient without being intolerant and rigid. Secure adherence to the schedule through respect rather than intimidation. After all, the seminar is for the benefit of the Participants, and they lose the most when time is wasted. If necessary, do not hesitate to make this point. It may also be useful to allow Participants some limited choice, perhaps concerning which topic deserves greater emphasis, or how long to allow for Working in Pairs or Working Groups.

10) Respect the Participants' schedule. Failure to respect the scheduling needs of Participants can undermine the entire learning process. Typical taboos include keeping Participants too long without a break, not providing enough time for an adequate break, failing to allow mini comfort breaks, taking an additional long question when a break is supposed to start, not letting Participants leave on time at the end of the day (when they are worried about commuting home), etc. Remember, Participants are not hostages. Do what must be done, but at the same time be gracious about not getting everything done.



E. Summary and Conclusion

Time management is one of the most important skills for Trainers. It enables them to get the most done in a limited amount of time, and do so effectively and efficiently, thereby providing maximum value.

Time management at seminars actually begins with 1) accurate/sound Learning Outcomes, and 2) a realistic and well thought out Lesson Plan that prioritizes subjects, allocates the correct/optimal amount of time for each, correctly delineates optimal methodologies, and provides for a balance between work and breaks. The next step is for Trainers to be fully prepared, and ensure that all logistical arrangements are in order. Then Trainers can stick to the agenda, establish scheduling discipline, stay on track, avoid diversions, manage methodologies and interactivity, etc. Efficiency is ensured through sound application of the Rule of Man Hours, and management of the work flow.

There are two main elements of time–management at seminars:

First of all, there is the "big picture", which relates to how Participants spend their professional lives, and what they hope or need to get out of participation in training events.

Second, there is the utilization of time at the seminars themselves, including how the work is carried out.

From the outset, it helps to understand how the seminar fits into the overall time utilization patterns of Participants. Why are they attending the seminar? What do they hope or need to get out of it? How much time can they afford to invest in different subjects? How else can they utilize time dedicated to their professional development? How much of their professional lives is spent in each of the four quadrants of time utilization? Psychological and practical insight into the perspectives and needs of the Participants helps Trainers orient themselves and make sure that seminar time fits well into the big picture for the Participants.

Finally, much depends upon Trainers having practical time management skills and constructive interpersonal skills which enable them to organize seminar delivery, motivate Participants, and maintain discipline. After all, while training should be conducted like serious business, and make the best possible use of the allotted time, it can still be engaging and enjoyable.

MODULE XV
EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

Learning Outcome: Trainers 1) understand and appreciate the importance of Evaluation and Feedback, 2) know about different Evaluation and Feedback mechanisms, and 3) are able to use these mechanisms to maximize the effectiveness of their work.

A. Introduction

Evaluation is the process of assessing the results of training. It is the final stage of the Training Cycle. The term "Monitoring and Evaluation" is customarily used. But monitoring is slightly different, since it connotes a continuing oversight process, applicable to on–going initiatives, rather than a final review.

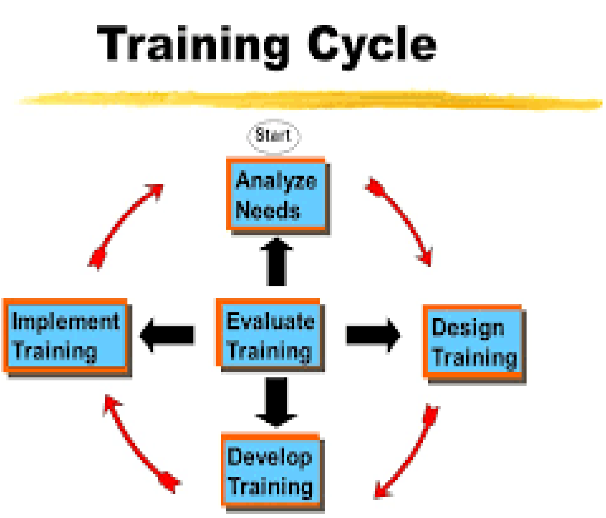
Evaluation answers the fourth and final question, introduced in Module II, Section "E":

Having determined 1) where we are and 2) where we should be, and after taking steps (delivering training) to 3) get from where we are to where we should or want to be, it is time for us to conclude by asking: 4) "How will we know if/when we arrive?"

A serious challenge arises from the fact that professional formation is part of a long–term and never–ending process. Learning is a perpetual task. There is always more to learn, especially in our ever–changing world. Therefore, to be brutally honest, we never fully and completely arrive. The best we can do is make solid progress and persevere. This makes it imperative to meaningfully assess the results from professional formation, and put them to optimal use. It is not sufficient, and indeed it is a disservice to ourselves and others, to simply conclude that progress has been made through training, and then go home.

Evaluation sets the stage for all following work. This makes evaluation an important part of the first stage of the next Training Cycle. By properly evaluating training seminars and obtaining precise feedback, Trainers and organizers can build upon prior work, perpetually improve the services they deliver, and better meet the training objectives and long–term needs of target groups. Furthermore, Trainers can learn a great deal by evaluating the prior relevant work of colleagues.

In the absence of meaningful evaluation, a) subsequent training loses focus or can even become mis–directed, b) less–effective practices perpetuate, and c) the interests of target groups are compromised.



Although evaluation takes place at the end of the seminar, it cannot be an afterthought. In fact, as the diagram at left clearly shows, evaluation deserves attention throughout the Training Cycle.

The design and formulation of evaluation should start when training objectives and Learning Outcomes are first developed. It is also useful to consider evaluation while preparing training, and selecting and designing methodologies and activities.

When Trainers set out to achieve something, it is best practice to a) plan to assess their degree of success, and b) set the stage for any required recalibration during all stages of their work!

Unfortunately, evaluation is often perfunctory, generic, standard, and *pro forma*. It may be treated like a necessary chore or an onerous reporting requirement. But there are many ways to make evaluation more useful and meaningful. Even when a standardized format or questionnaire is required, for comparative or record keeping purposes, Trainers can find innovative ways to customize and measure. Much valuable information can be generated through supplemental sources, like interviews. And there are many ways to utilize the results of evaluation.

B. What are the Objectives of Evaluation and Feedback?

The overall purpose of evaluation and feedback is to determine a) ***if*** the objectives of training have been met, b) to what ***extent*** they have been met, c) the ***reasons*** for any shortcomings (***factors*** compromising results), and d) how to ***improve*** things or ***build on results*** for the next time.

For Trainers, the main objectives of evaluation are a) to assess the *substantive* results of their work, and b) review how well they are *performing* (the training *process*). This is best carried out in the context of the specific Learning Outcomes for each seminar.

Learning Outcomes provide a solid framework for determining *what* should be measured, and determining *how* to measure it. They guide evaluation of the Trainer's *substantive performance*. On a more personal level, Trainers can learn how well they practice their craft, the utility of their methodologies/activities, and what to improve. This is their *procedural performance*. Naturally, substantive and procedural performance are closely related, and both contribute directly to achieving objectives.

To carry out this analysis, it is important to determine and consider from the outset how results from the evaluation and feedback will be utilized. The following questions are most salient:

- Who will use the results of the evaluation? Organizers? Managers? Trainers? A combination?
- Will results be publicized/disseminated? If so, who can have access and under what conditions?
- Will the results be utilized to make decisions on who will be retained as Trainers?
- Will the results be utilized to design further training and prioritize future subjects? This information is particularly important if the seminar is part of an on–going program.
- Will the results be utilized to improve delivery and logistics? This information is particularly important if the facilities and support personnel are included in future planning.

In addition to the above, Trainers may have "private" considerations, relating to a) their relationships with organizers, training institutions, colleagues, and target groups, and b) their future employment and career prospects. Information of this nature is better accessed through consultations and debriefings with relevant parties, and in oral rather than written format.

C. What are the Best Methods for Evaluating Training?

There are five principal mechanisms for evaluating training. They are categorized as either quantitative (numerical) or qualitative (descriptive). Key parameters include a) the *source* of information (often exclusively input from the Participants), and b) the applicable timing (whether carried out only at the seminar or also afterwards).

1) **<u>Questionnaires</u>**. Customarily answered at the end of seminars, and often the exclusive source of feedback, questionnaires enable Participants to provide a written assessment of their training. The information obtained is predominantly subjective. However, as clients/beneficiaries, Participants are in the best position to grade the seminar, and they have a right to comment. Their views are generally considered reliable and authoritative (within the bounds of courtesy). To promote candor, answers should be anonymous (without attribution).

Questionnaires usually employ a combination of numerical ratings and open questions.

Ratings can use a numbered scale (one to five) or descriptive terms (Excellent, Very Good, Good, Average, or Below Average). They are often formatted in grids.

Open questions can address any relevant subject, or generate general feedback. Ranking can be used to place items in order, and rate the relative importance/usefulness of different subjects and methodologies.

Numerical ratings can be compiled and calculated/averaged. Descriptive answers can only be aggregated and listed.

<u>The following subjects are customarily addressed in evaluation questionnaires</u>:

- How well was the training designed, organized, and presented?
- Was the training practical? Which subjects were most/least useful?
- Was the time devoted to the seminar or specific subjects sufficient?
- Were the methodologies and activities appropriate and interactive?
- How well did the Trainer(s) preform (knowledge and skills)?
- Were the Learning Outcomes met?
- How were the facilities, logistics, and Learning Environment?
- Was the level of participation sufficient?

<u>Sometimes simplicity is both adequate and advantageous</u>. Although it is not detailed enough for statistical analysis or reporting requirements, a great deal of highly valuable information can be obtained by asking Participants <u>three basic and straightforward questions</u> that are easy to answer:

1) What did you (Participants) like most about the Seminar (today)?
2) What did you (Participants) like least about the Seminar (today)?
3) What would you (Participants) change or do differently next time?

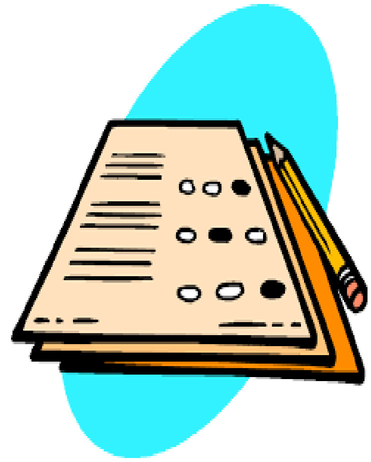
This format is particularly useful and appropriate at the end of the first day(s) of a multi–day seminar.

2) **<u>Tests or Examinations</u>**. Tests are one of the best ways to measure performance and gather objective information concerning the level of learning or skills development achieved by Participants. Provided, of course, that they are:

a) Valid (measure what they are supposed to measure)
b) Reliable (provide accurate and consistent results in different applications)
c) Properly administered
d) Correctly graded or tabulated, and
e) Accepted by the Participants (compliance)

Test questions can be true–false, multiple–choice, or short answer. True–false and multiple–choice tests are more suited to objective analysis, and much easier to grade and analyze. But they take much more time to prepare. Short answer questions can provide in–depth information and are less difficult to prepare. But they are much more difficult and time consuming to evaluate and compare.

The best format depends on who the results are for and how they will be utilized.



To ascertain whether Participants have learned what was covered at a seminar, the standard practice of administering a test at the conclusion can be useful. However, in the absence of control data, the results do not actually indicate when or where information was actually learned. Reliable comparative data must be based on two assessments, one conducted before the seminar (pre–seminar test) and the other conducted afterwards (post–seminar test).

Unfortunately, professionals are usually reluctant to take one test, let alone two. They do not like to be graded, and find the entire process to be demeaning and intrusive. In addition, tests take valuable quality time, thereby reducing what can be covered in the seminar itself. Therefore, they should only be utilized when necessary. If this is the case, it is best to:

a) Make tests straightforward, representative, and short (not time–consuming)
b) Keep the results anonymous, and inform the Participants accordingly before each test, and
c) Explain that the tests are to evaluate the Trainer, not the Participants (by determining which subjects are being taught best, and which subjects require or deserve further attention)

A useful technique is to include some questions that are designed to generate discussion in the pre–test, and then use the results (tabulated anonymously) for an interactive/participatory exercise. Resistance can be overcome when Participants understand that the test is for discussion purposes in addition to grading purposes.

3) **Direct Feedback**. Exchanges with Participants can be an extremely valuable source of information concerning the results from seminars. While diplomatic tendencies may temper harsh verbal or public criticism, Trainers can still get good feedback under the right circumstances. The optimal time to do this is during the seminar closing, as discussed in Module XIII Section "M". A review of how well Participant expectations have been met and a discussion of future planning can be most informative.

Informational conversations during breaks can also be a source of valuable insight, particularly with Participants who are willing to speak frankly to the Trainer. It is possible for Trainers to formally interview Participants, perhaps in a focus group, but this is rarely done, due to logistical and protocol issues.

Finally, organizers and Co–Trainers can be excellent sources of direct feedback.

4) **<u>Performance Assessment</u>**. The performance of Participants can be observed and assessed either at seminars or afterwards. Depending upon the target group and the nature of their work, Performance Assessment at seminars can be much less informative and valuable.

At seminars, observation is constant but not systematic. It takes place in the context of diverse settings, depending upon the methodologies being employed. And Participants are not observed equally, since some attract more attention. As a result, the assessments are predominantly generalizations. For this reason, sponsors and organizers should also take part.

Trainers can document their observations and impressions of Participant performance in a report for the sponsors and organizers, or express them verbally in a de–briefing. They should then be taken into consideration for the design and preparation of future training.

After seminars, Performance Assessment normally takes place at the job setting. It has two principal forms, namely observation and verification. Observation is performed by supervisors or similarly situated parties, and tends to be descriptive and potentially subjective. Verification is more quantitative/empirical, involving statistical data concerning performance, from sources such as performance reports or computerized data. It can also be based on input from users, clients, or other parties receiving services, obtained through surveys. In this case it is partially observational, but documented, and therefore suitable for analysis. Surveys of users of court systems are a prime example.

In any event, the results from Performance Assessment are only as good as the techniques for selecting, collecting, organizing, and analyzing information. And these techniques vary depending upon what is being measured, starting with the nature of the Learning Outcome. For example, computerized statistics may be useful for determining how quickly specific tasks are performed, but personal observation may be the best or only way to assess change at the level of understanding and values.

5) **<u>Post–Training Feedback from Participants</u>**. Information from Participants after they return to work and are using the knowledge or skills obtained from seminars is extremely valuable. In fact, this may be the optimal way to identify lasting results of training, and determine which knowledge or skills have proven important. After all, it is one thing to ask Participants at the end of a seminar how they *anticipate using* what they learned, and quite another thing to survey them at a later date concerning what they *actually use*.

Despite their value, post–training surveys are rarely performed. Depending upon where Participants work and how they communicate, post–training surveys can be difficult to administer. They may be viewed as intrusive, since they are personal and take time from work. They may not be welcome by certain parties, such as management. And compliance rates can be low, compromising the value of results. But if training is cumulative and part of an on–going program, post–training surveys are fully justified. The key is to make the questions concrete, so Participants can answer them with reference to their daily work, without remembering details of the seminar. For example, Participants can be shown a list of subjects covered at the seminar, and be asked to indicate whether/how they have proven to be salient during their work, either often, sometimes, rarely, or never.

C. How is Evaluation Related to Learning Outcomes?

As indicated above, the content and format of evaluation, as well as the most appropriate mechanisms and means for carrying it out, depend upon the category and nature of the Learning Outcome.

The following chart summarizes the relationship between evaluation and the main categories of Learning Outcomes:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">EVALUATING THE RESULTS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES</th></tr>
<tr><th>Learning Outcome</th><th>Key Questions</th><th>Comments on Measurement</th></tr>
<tr><td>Knowledge</td><td>1) Did the modules, methodologies, and materials impart important information?
2) Was the information optimally organized and structured?
3) What did the Participants learn?
4) How will new knowledge be used?
5) Were materials important, relevant, and useful for increasing knowledge?</td><td>Precise and objective measurement of knowledge is best carried out through tests or examinations. For comparative purposes, information from both before and after the seminar is required. However, for logistical reasons, knowledge is often assessed through questionnaires. Note that self–assessments are indicative, not quantitative, and can be biased.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Skills</td><td>1) What skills were developed?
2) What methodologies and exercises best promoted skills development?
3) How practical are these skills?
4) How will these skills be used?
5) What are the obstacles to their use?
6) Can these skills be shared?</td><td>Skills are best measured by observation and assessment of performance or activities. This can be at the seminar or afterwards on the job. Unfortunately, seminars are not likely to provide the right setting, and possibilities for systematic observation are limited. Precise information is best obtained from on–the–job observation and performance reports.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Experience</td><td>1) What kind of experience was gained?
2) How was it gained?
3) How practical is it?
4) How will it be utilized?
5) Can it be shared?</td><td rowspan="3">There are few objective or quantitative means for measuring whether and to what extent Participants have gained experience, understanding, or new values. Questionnaires and tests have limited value, unless they are carefully designed to facilitate self–expression. Observation of conduct and behavior, post–seminar interviews, and feedback from clients and users are most likely to provide information. However, it may not be systematic or comprehensive. Changes in values are the most difficult to achieve and evaluate.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Under–standing</td><td>1) How has understanding improved?
2) How will new approaches be used?
3) Are there prospects for sustainability?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Values</td><td>1) What new values were developed?
2) How were they developed?
3) How will future behavior be changed by these new values?</td></tr>
</table>

Note that the measurement of results becomes progressively more difficult as the category of Learning Outcome goes from knowledge to values!

D. What Are the Different Levels of Evaluation?

Starting in the 1950's, Don Kirkpatrick created an extremely useful paradigm for assessing evaluation, built upon a distinction between four different levels. It serves as the basis for many of the variations still being applied.

The four levels of Kirkpatrick's evaluation model are as follows:

1) **Level One – Reaction.** This is the most common approach to evaluation, and often the main or even exclusive focus.

Questionnaires assess the level of Participant satisfaction, looking at different aspects of the seminar, including whether they found it valuable, engaging, and well organized. Because of this single–faceted approach, questionnaires measuring Participant reactions are sometimes called "smile sheets". This approach is easy, economical, has a high completion rate, and helps Trainers determine what was best received by Participants and what they want changed or improved. But results tend to be subjective and superficial. They do not provide much guidance regarding actual impact or how to improve future training.

2) **Level Two – Learning.** This looks at the extent to which learning has occurred, focusing on absorption of knowledge and skills, and the level of preparedness for their utilization.

Level Two helps Trainers determine whether Learning Outcomes relating to enhancing knowledge and developing skills have been met. As indicated above, knowledge is best measured through tests and examinations, but sometimes questionnaires (self–assessments) can have indicative value. Skills development is better evaluated through more objective mechanisms that do not rely exclusively upon self–assessment.

3) **Level Three – Behavior.** This level addresses whether or how much the development of knowledge, skills, experience, understanding, or values actually results in changes of behavior afterwards, most notably on the job.

Unlike Level One and Level Two, which focus on the evaluation of subjective personal factors or passive characteristics, Level Three considers how changes have been converted into action. Behavior is the variable factor, measured through enhanced job performance and improved productivity. The key issue is whether tasks are being managed differently/better, and whether problems or challenges are being handled in new or more effective ways.

To answer these questions, changes in behavior need to be assessed and quantified. The key steps are a) identifying the scope of the assessment and the criteria to be measured, b) establishing the most appropriate and accurate means for obtaining information and data, c) setting the applicable timeframe, d) collecting the required information and data, and e) correctly performing analysis.

Sound analysis depends upon a) creating a suitable framework, and b) establishing causality (excluding the influence of extraneous factors). It is also necessary to identify obstacles and determine why desired changes in behavior may not have taken place. A combination of observation, interviews, focus group meetings, performance reports, and computerized data analysis can be used.

4) **<u>Level Four – Results</u>.** This level of evaluation focuses on the bottom line, and looks at the concrete results that have actually been achieved.

Focusing on the ultimate results is logical and highly productive. After all, what is more important than determining if training has increased sales, improved services, sped up production, promoted health, enabled the courts to handle cases faster, etc.?

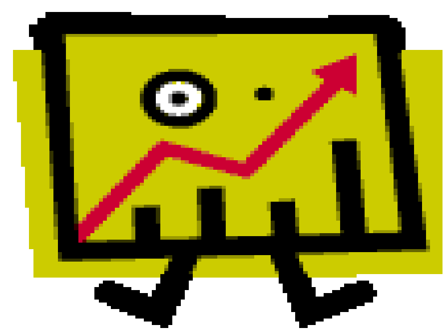
However, results are affected by many factors. As with Level Three, much depends on selection of criteria, the means of measurement, the time frame, and the obstacles to precision. Some results only become apparent over time. Causality, the relationship between training (cause) and results (effect), may be tenuous or difficult to prove. Still, Level Four analysis answers big questions, and deserves attention, with due consideration of the provisos.

<u>Some experts suggest adding a fifth level to this typology</u>. **Return on Investment** introduces a cost element and applies Cost–Benefit Analysis (CBA). **Impact Analysis** focuses on larger scale effects, for example on society, health, the environment, etc. These approaches are worthwhile for any initiatives to promote human resources development. The question is whether they should be treated as an element of Level Four, being carried out in a comprehensive fashion.

5) **<u>Level Five – Return on Investment</u>.** After all is said and done, it is useful to know whether training is a good investment, and if so whether it pays off in the short, medium, or long–term.

The best technique for determining Return on Investment is Cost–Benefit Analysis. Once the costs and the benefits are established, two key big picture questions need to be posed:

1) Does training add value, in an *absolute* sense, once all of the costs and benefits are calculated?
2) Does training provide a good *relative* rate of return, when added value is compared with other means of investing to enhance results?

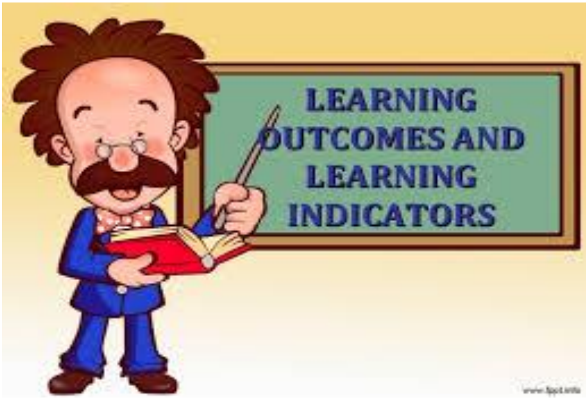


To pass this two–prong test, training must be: 1) worthwhile, and 2) better than other options.

Costs should be calculated in their widest and most inclusive sense. This includes two principal categories: 1) <u>direct costs</u> (Trainers, facilities, equipment, materials, supplies, meals/refreshments, travel, accommodation), and 2) <u>opportunity costs</u> (the value of time Participants and others could have invested differently, perhaps calculated on the basis of total salary packages). Benefits are calculated by isolating the results of the training and setting a monetary value. Impact Analysis can be used to factor in large scale results. <u>Return on Investment is then calculated by dividing the net benefits (benefits minus costs) by the costs and multiplying by one hundred</u>.

Obviously, precise calculation is fraught with difficulty. Many benefits from training (like learning, personal development, changes in attitudes, and networking opportunities) are not easily calculated or monetized. Business–oriented approaches are not universally applicable. For example, training that is mandated by law or the rules of professions is rarely if ever subject to financial justification. Because of its complexity, Cost–Benefit Analysis is perhaps most warranted for major training initiatives undertaken by large enterprises. Nonetheless, it is important to ask the fundamental question for all evaluations: "<u>Was the training worth it</u>?" If we know what the results are, from Level Four evaluation, then it makes sense to compare them to the amount invested, generally speaking.

G. What are Indicators?



Indicators are criteria which are used for measurement. For training purposes, they are often denominated **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**. The categories and precise nature of indicators depends on the context, and what requires measurement. This usually depends upon the nature and specifics of the Learning Outcomes. Indicators can be expressed in terms of time, money, numerical values, percentages, etc. They can be quantitative, qualitative, leading, lagging, input, output, process, practical, directional, actional, etc.

In order for indicators to be successfully used to measure results:

- Indicators need to be calibrated to objectives
- Indicators need to measure what they are supposed to
- Indicators must be subject to accurate measurement
- Indictors from before and after training should be compared
- Access to required information/verification must be secured
- Influence from extraneous factors must be eliminated
- Value and measurement of indicators must be agreed upon
- Eligibility for access to results needs to be settled

Indicators for commercial activities, whether they are financial, operational, or personal in nature, are generally more suited to measurement. Indicators relating to knowledge can be assessed through examinations. Indicators relating to skills can be assessed through performance measurement and client satisfaction. Indicators relating to soft skills, such as communication and leadership, can be exceedingly difficult to quantify.

It is best practice to reach consensus regarding indicators as early in the Training Cycle as possible.

Much information regarding indicators, including examples of indicators from various training contexts, is available on the internet.

H. How can Trainers Provide Feedback to Participants?

Feedback is a two–way street at any live event. Trainers and Participants constantly interact and provide feedback to each other during training. This is as it should be. Trainers need feedback to figure out how well they are meeting the needs of Participants, what works best, and how to perform better. Participants need feedback to support and cement the learning process, and see how well they are moving in the right direction. Reciprocal feedback establishes bonds between Trainers and Participants. Reciprocal feedback is our best means for distinguishing between motion and progress.

Trainers sometimes fail to realize that they regularly send feedback signals to the Participants, and sometimes overlook the constant series of signals which come their way.

Indeed, as indicated in Module XII on Body Language, our signals are constant and inevitable, even when we are silent.

But there is a major distinction between Trainers and Participants with regard to this two–way process.

- Participants in an audience send non–verbal signals in a passive manner while Trainers perform, send verbal and non–verbal signals when they speak, and provide intensive written feedback via a single major opportunity (evaluation forms) at the end of the training.
- Trainers are leaders in a position of authority, and are performing before a group. They are always in the spotlight, and subject to the greatest scrutiny, both when speaking and when listening. The Trainer's Body Language while listening to Participants is incredibly important. In addition, Trainers provide powerful feedback through their conduct/approach. Nuances have impact. Participants can be greatly affected when Trainers paraphrase an answer they like, change the subject after an answer they don't like, ask or refrain from asking a follow–up question, cite or neglect to cite a prior Participant comment, use a Participant's name, etc.

Many Trainers underestimate how much feedback they constantly provide through their Body Language and their approach, and the impact that it has on Participants.

They may focus on overt feedback, like the content of speech and words, while overlooking the effect of their interactive techniques and their non–verbal feedback (such as expressions, gestures, location).

In fact, most people are relatively unaware of their Body Language, particularly their facial expressions, and how it affects others.

Of course, courtesy and protocol demand careful choice of words. But Trainers need to be attentive to all of the many ways that they provide feedback, and the full range of their implications.

The following important principles should guide Trainer feedback for Participants:

- For Participants to develop, they require guidance from respected figures concerning *what* needs to be improved, *how* it can be improved, and the *efficacy* of improvements underway.

- Trainers should be attentive to every aspect of the feedback that they constantly provide to Participants, including its *substantive nature* and the *manner of delivery*.
- Techniques for providing feedback should take account of the character and status of the Participants, cultural factors, and the setting for the training.
- Feedback should be specific and use concrete points/examples that cogently highlight issues.
- While feedback founded on direct personal observation can be accurate and authoritative, it is very useful to cite respected authorities.
- Feedback should be provided in manageable quantities.
- Feedback should relate to performance, not personality. It concerns what people do, not who they are. There is a big difference between saying "you are" and "you did".

Finally, whenever possible, <u>Trainers should phrase feedback in a positive and constructive manner</u>. Direct criticism of others in public should be avoided at all cost. As a matter of fact, "**<u>truisms</u>**" can re–phrase criticism as positive general suggestions that are inoffensive and difficult to disagree with.

For example, instead of saying that a specific person failed to do something, it is preferable to *suggest* that it might be more effective if everyone did it. Another possibility is to provide subtle feedback through questions. For example, the Trainer could *ask* if better results could/might have been obtained through a particular action.

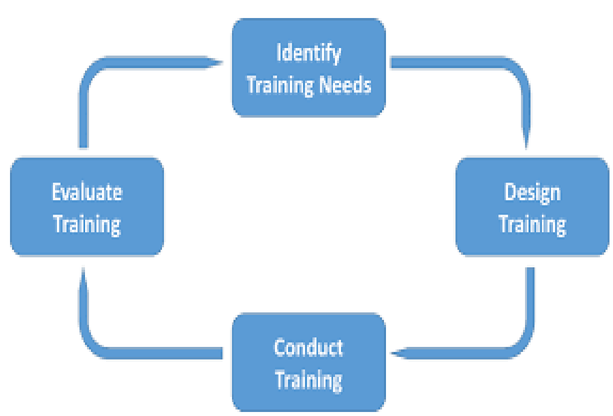
The following phrases avoid criticism and set a constructive approach to feedback:

- "It might be helpful to…"
- "Perhaps it would work better with more use of …"
- "Previous efforts to do this seem to have benefitted from…"
- "Could we expect better results by utilizing…?"
- Can we get results faster by taking advantage of …?"

A major benefit of this approach to feedback is that Participants get to listen to the viewpoints of colleagues, and evaluate their own positions or performance. Indeed, <u>learning from colleagues and self–evaluation are extremely effective, and nicely complement direct feedback from the Trainer</u>. For this approach to work best, the Trainer should speak/opine last, only *after* Participants have provided their input, perhaps guided by poignant questions from the Trainer, using the Socratic method.

I. <u>Summary and Conclusion</u>

Evaluation is a major stage of the Training Cycle, and a crucial element of every training initiative and event. It assesses results and clarifies lessons to be learned at the end of each Training Cycle, thereby setting the stage for effective progress in those that follow. Trainers need to devote significant attention to designing and carrying out evaluation and obtaining feedback. In fact, the process should start during Training Needs Assessment, and be integrated into all subsequent stages of the Training Cycle.



The modalities for evaluation, their content, and analysis of the results need to take account of and be aligned with the Learning Outcomes. Concrete mechanisms include questionnaires, tests/examinations, direct feedback from Participants and organizers, performance assessment of Participants, and follow–up surveys of Participants. These mechanisms assess different levels of evaluation, by addressing reactions, learning, behavior, results, or overall impact, including the relationship between costs and benefits of training.

Evaluation and feedback are dynamic and constant two–way processes at training seminars. Through their word choice, Body Language, and conduct/techniques, Trainers have a major impact on Participants, and can strongly influence the Learning Environment and the results of training. The question is not *whether* or *when* Trainers should provide feedback to Participants, but *how* they should do so, taking into consideration its constant nature.

Despite their importance, evaluation and feedback should be taken with a "grain of salt" and perhaps even some "thick skin". There can be a divergence between what Participants *actually* need and what they *think* they need. Sometimes Trainers must sacrifice popularity to produce results. Sometimes a minority will take a completely contrary approach to the majority, without good foundation. Sometimes one person is unhappy with something that everyone else liked. While it is possible to please all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, it is not possible to please all of the people all of the time. It is clear that all evaluation and feedback deserves consideration on the part of Trainers. But unsubstantiated or isolated comments may not merit excessive attention.

MODULE XVI
CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES

Learning Outcome: Trainers know and can apply twenty key steps for delivering successful training.

The Twenty Steps for Great Training Seminars:

This module provides a summary and overview of the best practices for training which are presented in this resource Manual. "How to Train" is summarized in Twenty Steps on seven pages.

1. Identify Goals and Plan to Achieve Them. Carefully determine the overall goals and specific objectives of the training. Identify and understand the needs and characteristics of the target group. For this purpose, perform a Training Needs Assessment that identifies and clarifies Training Gaps, and carefully consider how to overcome them through the Training Cycle. Establish concrete, concise, and precise Learning Outcomes, and determine how to use them for training design, preparation, delivery, and evaluation. During this planning process, think through the seminar, and consider key requirements, obstacles, and contingencies. Pay special attention to what will be needed from other parties. Take notes and make lists, so everything is set forth and covered. Make a master schedule, using reverse planning to ensure accuracy. Foresight and careful planning are key to successful and effective training. Trainers should plan the work and work the plan.

2. Communicate. Good communication among principals is imperative for successful events. So, share your plans, ideas, suggestions, and concerns with all key parties. Do this as early as possible, and on a regular basis thereafter. Disseminate proposals, concept papers, workplans, agendas, or Event Descriptions, and welcome feedback and input. Make compromises, reach consensus, and confirm agreements. Discuss activities with Co–Trainers and colleagues, so it is clear who is doing what and when. Inform organizers, so all logistics can be settled in a timely fashion. Use any appropriate consultation mechanisms, and copy all interested parties. Finally, confirm and document communication, and keep good records, to ensure attentiveness and accountability.

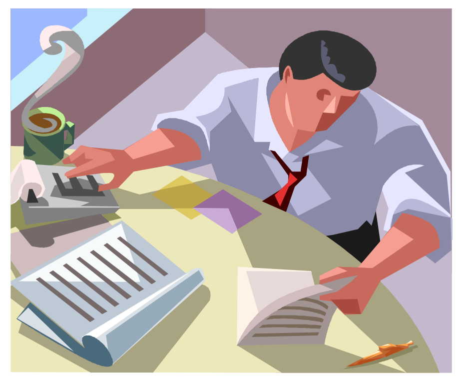
3. Get Ready for Delivery. Use the Learning Outcome(s) to a) prepare a detailed Lesson Plan and a summary Public Agenda, b) identify the most appropriate methodologies and activities, and determine how much time to spend on each, c) prepare the training materials, and d) design the evaluation. Prepare an Event Description for dissemination before the seminar, and any necessary concept papers, proposals, work plans, etc. Make the Lesson Plan as detailed as necessary, in order to optimally structure the training and ensure excellent delivery. Finalize the summary agenda as soon as practical, and put it to good use. Organize files meticulously, and keep backup copies of everything.

The agenda is a key document which informs key parties what will happen and when. If there are multiple Trainers, the agenda indicates their respective responsibilities, and the timing thereof. The agenda should list the main modules in logical order, and have practical/realistic timing for working sessions and breaks. It can also contain a brief biography of the Trainer(s). Use the agenda to inform and advise, so all key parties (sponsors, organizers, support personnel, and Participants) know where to be, when, and why. Include the agenda or a summary thereof on invitation letters. Distribute the agenda at the seminar, make frequent reference to it, and stick to it.

4. <u>Prepare Excellent Training Materials</u>. Training materials deserve significant attention. Organize materials on the basis of Learning Outcomes, in the most suitable order. Provide original materials and reference information that are a welcome addition to personal libraries, and are likely to be consulted.

Spend time on organization, layout, formatting, chaptering, and numbering, to make materials as user–friendly as possible. Ensure that materials are ready on schedule, with ample time for translation and printing/publishing. Only provide in advance those materials that you a) want Participants to read, and b) believe that Participants will actually read. Otherwise, distribute them at the event, either before or afterwards. Consider providing electronic versions of materials on USB flash drives. If this is done at the end of the seminar, it is possible to include results from Working Group activities, resolutions, action plans, a list of Participants, or photographs.

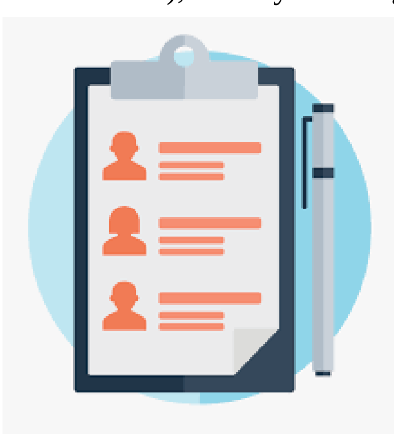
5. <u>Take Care of Necessary Budgeting</u>. Trainers may not be significantly involved in budgeting and financial matters. Much depends on who organizes and finances the training, and how it is delivered. Virtual or on–line events eliminate many of the customary expenses associated with arranging facilities, renting equipment, providing meals and refreshments, covering transportation and accommodation, etc.



But if there are financial matters to attend to, they can become very important, and should receive all due attention. Be sure to a) include every possible expense in the budget, b) document expenditures correctly according to applicable rules and regulations and in the required format, c) obtain and make a copy of all bills/receipts, d) follow all procedures for accounting and processing, e) be prepared to cover unanticipated contingencies.

Remember that it is useful to take both actual and opportunity costs into consideration when evaluating the results of training.

6. <u>Get the Right People to Attend</u>. No event can succeed unless the key counterparts and target audience are invited and actually attend. No event can succeed if people who do not belong are present. Unfortunately, Trainers often have little control over the invitation list. If possible, Trainers should work with organizers to identify the proper attendees, communicate with them, verify their planning, and secure their attendance. Advance contact with Participants can entice them to attend, and make them feel welcome/important before arriving. Event Descriptions can be very helpful in this regard. They provide all of the key information concerning the training in an extremely concise format (one small chart), thereby enabling people to decide if it will meet their needs and if it deserves their time.



Training is always more complicated if some Participants are not happy about attending or don't belong. An interested audience is important for creating a positive Learning Environment. Unfortunately, commercially organized training and mandatory training may emphasize quantity over quality.

Securing attendance is crucial. Every invitee who fails to attend reduces overall results by a significant percentage. Since most seminar costs are fixed, empty chairs greatly increase the actual cost per Participant.

Due to uncertainty about who will actually participate, it is best practice to carry out a mini–Training Needs Assessment at the start of training.

7. <u>Arrange and Confirm All Logistical Arrangements</u>. Trainers may prefer to dedicate themselves to substantive work, but the fact of the matter is that they are the leaders at an event, up in front of Participants, and it is their work which is undermined by shortcomings in logistics. As a result, Trainers can be held accountable for circumstances beyond their control. This makes it best practice for Trainers to take a proactive approach to all logistical aspects of seminar arrangements, including facilities, equipment, materials, transportation, interpretation, meals and refreshments, etc.

It is prudent to prepare checklists, keep detailed records of communication, and make contingency plans in case obligations are not fulfilled or if something does not work. Delegating responsibility and placing trust in others is natural and inevitable, but failing to exercise oversight cannot be justified. And logistical matters should never be ignored or underestimated, since even small details can blossom into major issues. To avoid regrets, double check whenever there is even the slightest doubt. Things that are not checked can easily become things that should have been checked. And be sure to confirm these actions, document what is being done, and keep copies of all communication related to planning and logistics.

8. <u>Practice Delivery</u>. Go through the Lesson Plan carefully, and review/prepare every aspect of seminar delivery, from content to timing. Think through the key activities and methodologies, and practice whatever is possible. <u>When it comes to presentations in particular, practice makes perfect</u>.

Quality and timing are best promoted by going through presentations several times, until they are thoroughly familiar. This can be done standing in a room, in front of a mirror, or in one's head. Memorize opening lines, think of intriguing questions, and prepare potential answers to likely questions. Look for ways to increase utility and interest.

Doing something the first time in front of an audience is a significant and unnecessary risk, especially compared to the minimal chances of over–preparing.

9. <u>Inspect in Advance and Arrive Early at the Seminar</u>. Advance inspection of facilities and arrangements should be carried out whenever possible. But even when this has been done, it is still necessary to arrive early on seminar day, to address any last–minute issues. Make sure the training room is properly set up, and that chairs, equipment, charts, materials, and refreshments are ready and properly placed. Open the windows and ventilate the room, particularly if the air is stuffy. Participants are more alert when the air is fresh and the temperature a bit cool, whereas warmth reduces concentration. Become familiar and comfortable with the layout. Check out the emergency evacuation routes, just in case. Take a look at the bathrooms. Place signs around the building indicating the seminar location, if necessary. Liaise with organizers and go over the agenda, particularly the timing and location of meals and refreshments. Get everything set before the first Participant arrives. Trainers need to be ready to meet and greet Participants, make them feel welcome, learn their names, and find out about their backgrounds and interests. <u>Seminars begin when the first Participant arrives</u>!

10. <u>Create a Positive Learning Environment</u>. A conducive Learning Environment is indispensable for successful training. When Participants are comfortable, they can focus on substance. When substance is delivered in a user–friendly manner, they achieve more. Otherwise, Participants become distracted and progress is diminished. **Logistical aspects of the Learning Environment** include physical layout of the training room, furniture (particularly desks and chairs), temperature, lighting, sound system, facilities, timing of breaks, hospitality, and meals/refreshments. The quality of translation, if necessary, is crucial. **Substantive aspects of the Learning Environment** include organization, methodologies, exercises, interactivity, use of materials, questions and answers, and the Trainer's communication practices (everything from learning names to Body Language). Although it is traditional to focus on the first category, all aspects of the Learning Environment must be addressed, since any shortcoming is likely to prove relevant. To create the most appropriate ambience for learning, Trainers should consider themselves to be hosts who are welcoming guests into their own house. This means being attentive to all of their legitimate requirements (from comfort to safety to entertainment).

11. <u>Start the Seminar Right</u>. A job that is well begun is half done. A well–managed seminar opening gets things started on the right foot and sets the stage for productive work. In addition to the customary welcoming remarks and introductions, seminar openings should present an overview of what will be accomplished, explain why it is important (the rationale for attending), and inform Participants how they will benefit. Make every minute count, since this is when Participants are most attentive.

Welcome speeches should be mercifully short and to the point. Don't waste time on excessive pleasantries, background information (which can be woven into later comments), or logistics (which can be summarized right before the first break). Promote public relations with brief expressions of gratitude, combined with the distribution of brochures and prominent display of banners, flags, logos, and other identifying materials. Grab attention with powerful opening lines. Perform introductions if the audience is not too large and will interact during the seminar. Learn names, and get Participants to do so also.

Finally, do a mini–TNA or Audience Analysis after formalities, to clarify and document expectations, and eliminate misunderstandings. This warms Participants up for work and is useful during the closing.

12. <u>Make Great Presentations</u>. Giving dynamic and inspirational presentations is one of the most important skills for Trainers to develop. They are a bedrock of training, and a key methodology.

Presentations should start with a captivating opening that clarifies the Learning Outcome(s), motivates and inspires Participants, or gets their complete attention. Presentations should have three parts, namely an opening, body, and closing, and each of them should be designed and used to serve specific purposes.

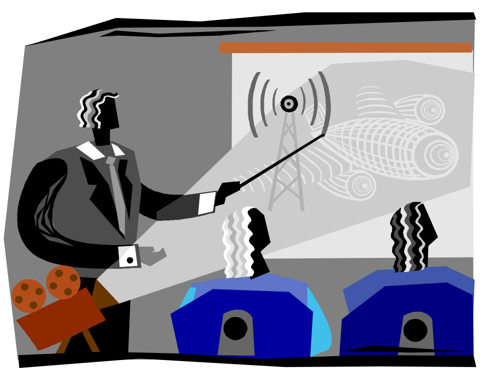
When giving presentations, Trainers should be well prepared, manage time efficiently, demonstrate confidence, stand in the right place, move about strategically, make good use of their Body Language, and employ audio–visual aids and notes effectively. Good Trainers keep presentations short by integrating exercises that induce interactivity, such as Working Partnerships and Taking Notes.

Practice is important for developing presentation skills. One of the best techniques is reviewing videos of performance. Rehearsing in front of a mirror is also quite helpful. Other options include performing in front of a limited audience, and obtaining professional coaching.

In a practical sense we are making a presentation any time we transmit a message to others. Therefore, presentation skills are highly valuable whenever we communicate and in all settings.

13. <u>Use Interactive Methodologies To Promote Learning</u>. Interactive methodologies and activities a) promote learning through consultation and sharing, b) generate valuable input from Participants, c) motivate Participants, d) make seminars more dynamic, interesting, and enjoyable, and e) generate positive sentiments. Trainers should know a variety of techniques, and how and when to use them. The most effective techniques include Working Groups, Working Partnerships, Question & Answer sessions, discussions of Case Studies, Taking Notes, Interviews, Role–Plays, Simulations, and Games.

Any methodology can be made interactive, including presentations. The best approach depends on the Learning Outcome and the characteristics of Participants. Time management is crucial, since interactivity takes longer. It is important to alternate methodologies, and keep things moving. To use interactive methodologies, Trainers must know how to a) work with and encourage audiences, b) ask and answer questions, c) get Participants to ask and answer questions, and d) efficaciously use energizers. Remember, "What people hear they forget, what people see they remember, and what people do they learn". Therefore, interactive methodologies are crucial for sustainable results.



14. <u>Use Audio–Visual Aids Constructively</u>. Audio–visual aids can stimulate learning and increase impact. So, Trainers should know how and when to use a wide range of technologies to support their work, practice often, and be prepared in advance. But far too often audio–visual aids become the focus of training, rather than playing a supporting and intermittent role. This makes them a distraction. And they can malfunction. Always assume that anything mechanical or electronic *might* not work, and have a backup "Plan B", just in case.

15. **<u>Master Body Language</u>.** Body Language is a major component of human communication, which often reveals feelings and attitudes more accurately than spoken words. Since training is all about interacting and communicating, Trainers must know how to *use* Body Language to convey messages, provide feedback, and achieve results. In addition, Trainers must know how to *interpret* Body Language, to gauge reactions of Participants, determine which methodologies and activities are most effective, figure out if results are being achieved, and interact positively. Body Language is both comprehensive and subtle, so Trainers need to be attentive to expressions, gestures, stance, location, vocalization, and utterances. Good Trainers are also students of human behavior.

16. <u>Manage Working Time Effectively</u>. Time is the key resource at training seminars. Trainers are responsible for using time effectively to achieve the most results. But time management is not something which is done exclusively at training seminars. In fact, time management starts with selecting and prioritizing the Learning Outcomes. It then depends upon the Lesson Plan, and in particular the choices and utilization of different learning methodologies. Behind everything Trainers do is an appreciation of how humans use time, and what their limitations are. More efficient use of time at the seminar starts with getting Participants to prepare in advance or do homework, if this is possible. Then it becomes an effort to keep seminar proceedings on track, manage interactivity, control digressions, and keep comments focused and concise. Finally, it is important to respect limits. Recognize absorptive capacity and never try to do too much. Going faster or longer does not necessarily promote learning. In fact, it can even have the opposite effect.

17. <u>Make a Good Public Agenda and Stick to it</u>. Use the Lesson Plan to make a concise, accurate, and realistic Public Agenda that optimally structures the seminar. Use this agenda regularly, stick to it by starting and finishing promptly, and make it clear to everyone from the start that the agenda will be followed. Respect for time and timing is the hallmark of a good seminar.

Pay particular attention to the balance between work and breaks, since this keeps Participants comfortable, and helps establish a positive Learning Environment.

During seminars and breaks, Participants should have all of the refreshments they require and desire, including snacks and beverages with caffeine and sugar. This keeps them attentive. They should also have regular opportunities to make room for more food and fluid, by using the facilities. "<u>Fluids In and Fluids Out</u>." The agenda, timing of working sessions and breaks, facilities, and service of refreshments should all reflect an understanding of how to best keep Participants comfortable and ready to learn.

18. <u>Close Seminars on a Strong Note</u>. Summarize achievements and review how Learning Outcomes were met. Use the list of Participant expectations created at the start of the seminar, if possible. Plan for the future, and give Participants a chance to decide upon and hopefully commit to their next steps. Ask the Participants what they will do differently as a result of the seminar, so that they can consider and verbalize positive results, and hear what others have to say in this regard.

Acknowledge all parties that contributed, including the Participants themselves. Give out certificates to memorialize attendance, with handshakes from Trainers and organizers. This shows respect and generates publicity (certificates are displayed). Have a small but dignified celebratory reception, if circumstances and time permit. Participants remember how seminars made them feel more than anything else, so end strong!

19. Evaluate Results. Evaluation completes each Training Cycle and starts the next one. It is based on indicators, which are the criteria established for determining how well Learning Outcomes have been realized. Without evaluation, subsequent TNA starts from scratch, and is less poignant. The means for and content of evaluation need to be established at the earliest possible time, ideally when the Learning Outcomes are being formulated and the modules are being prepared.

The focus can be on reactions and self–assessments by Participants (through questionnaires), or objective information (through examinations, interviews, or performance assessments). For logistical reasons, most evaluation is simply conducted at the end of the seminar. But comparison of indicators at different times requires a baseline, that is to say information from before the training. And the only way to assess actual results may well be via post–seminar mechanisms, such as follow–up surveys.

If evaluation questionnaires are used, design them carefully. Select the most strategic time to have Participants fill them out, at or near the end of the seminar, and never distribute them in advance. Results from evaluation forms should be collated, analyzed, and used to learn what is working and what is not, in order to make each event better than the last. Ideally, results should be compiled and included in a Final Report, to show what has been achieved.

20. Document the Training and Results. Reports are usually obligatory in the context of development projects, continuing education programs for professionals, and major training initiatives. They are an excellent practice which documents work and achievements, shares important information, and puts Trainers in good standing with sponsors and organizers. Reports are less likely for commercial or privately organized seminars. If a formal report is not necessary, it is still a best practice for Trainers to keep a training log or diary listing all training events, with a) a summary of important achievements, b) information regarding important contacts, and c) a listing of lessons learned.

Reports on training should follow a standard format, and be very concise and precise. It is unhelpful and unnecessary to prepare long and detailed minutes, which are unlikely to be used, or even read. Four key sections are recommended: 1) Introduction (describing the background, rationale, and sponsors/organizers, 2) Seminar Objectives (summarizing training goals and their importance), 3) Seminar Description (covering what took place, what was covered, methodologies, and activities), and 4) Conclusion (summarizing results and discussing future prospects). Attach up to three appendices: 1) the agenda, 2) the List of Participants, and 3) the collated results from evaluation questionnaires.

Reports need not be more than two–three pages total. The Introduction, Objectives, and Conclusion require one–two paragraphs each, and the Description doesn't require more than one–two pages maximum.

It is best to start work on the final Report well *before* the event. This helps set goals and plan for success. Indeed, if it is not possible to write a first draft of most of the Report in advance of the event, then the Trainer either does not know what is being done or is not prepared. Getting a solid head start on the Report also makes it possible to submit it promptly after the event, which creates a good impression.

Following these Twenty Steps will dramatically improve the success of any training!

END