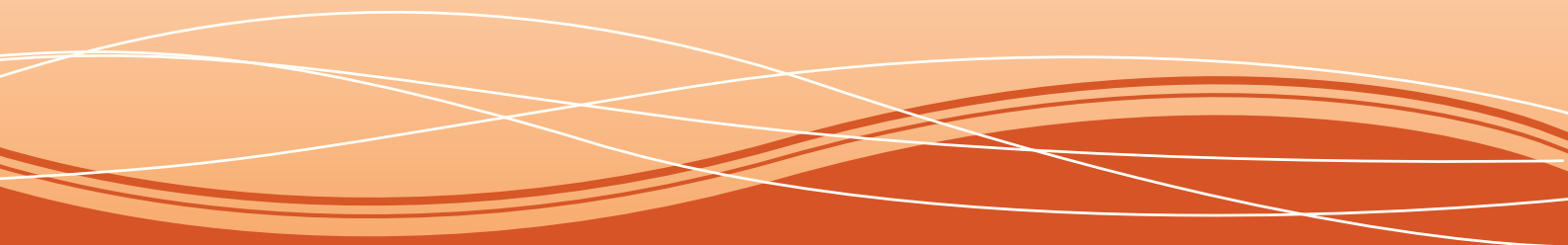




Facilitating Groups of Learners
Adult Learning Principles to Guide Facilitators
Delivering the Chlamydia: Combating
the Epidemic Learning Guide














Success is a journey
...not a destination
Your greatest asset for the journey is your mind.
Learning how to use it is the secret.

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Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it.

Boldness has genius, power and magic in it

Goethe



Adult Learners

Learning can be defined as a relatively permanent change in behaviour or knowledge. It includes observable activity and internal processes such as thinking, attitudes and emotions.

To begin to plan to design and deliver the training it is vital that the facilitator has a thorough understanding of adult learning, and a range teaching strategies to effectively meet each individual participant's learning preferences.

Adults differ from children in their learning in that they bring a vast array of history and experience to the learning environment. They are all at different stages of life; they have already developed their individual strengths, and have a range of learning experiences behind them.

Malcolm Knowles (1990) refers to the theory and practice of adult education as **andragogy** – an adult-centred, problem posing approach to learning. **Pedagogy** is child-centred, teacher-directed education.

There are a range of common features among adult learners. Adult learners...

- have a range of knowledge and experience - so use it
- need to validate the information from their own values and attitudes
- are responsible - so let them set goals and help plan
- need to decide for themselves what is important to learn
- expect what they are learning can be applied immediately
- want to be actively involved in their learning
- need practice and reinforcement
- need to see the relevance
- like to challenge and reflect on ideas
- have increased powers of comprehension
- need to feel confident in the learning environment



The Eight Learning Principles

There are a range of factors that assist people to learn more effectively.

Multi-sense learning

- *when two or more senses are used*

Confucius says -
I hear and I forget.
I see and I remember
I do and I truly understand

By using a variety of techniques we can provide visual, auditory and kinaesthetic input for more effective learning, eg posters, overheads, mini lectures, discussions etc.

Active learning

- *learning by doing*

When participants are actively involved in their learning there is greater learning and application, for example, problem solving, discussion, case studies etc.

Primacy and recency

- *remembering the first and last experiences*

Tell them what you are going to tell them

Tell them

Tell them what you have told them.

Learners tend to remember more of the first and last parts of any session.

An introduction and a summary are vitally important for learning.

“Chunking” - lots of mini sessions aid memory.

<p>Feedback <i>- feedback between learners & the trainer</i></p> <p>The message is the feedback.</p>	<p>Participants need feedback on their progress. Facilitators need feedback on whether they are meeting participants needs and how the session is progressing (and whether a break might be needed soon). Often non-verbal cues are evident here.</p>
<p>Reward <i>- experiencing success and reward</i></p>	<p>We all feel better if our efforts are rewarded. Training must include tangible results for participants to feel positive and satisfied. This sets up a virtuous cycle for learning.</p>
<p>Practice and Repetition <i>- practice, revision and reinforcement</i></p>	<p>Memory requires repetition (practice and recall) of material.</p>
<p>Meaningful material <i>- material relates to previous knowledge</i></p>	<p>Participants learn best when the material is relevant and can be utilised in practical ways.</p>
<p>Holistic Learning <i>- the material needs to fit in to part of a whole</i></p>	<p>Providing learners with a big picture context and then specific detail provides a logical framework for thinking.</p>

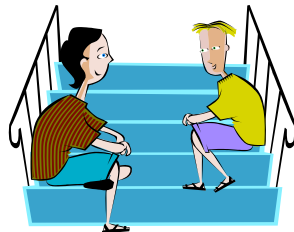


The Learning Environment

There are a number of elements that can influence how people come to learn effectively. The environment in which training occurs is fundamentally important. Poor environments reduce the ability of participants to concentrate and "switch off" the brain, thus reducing learning. As facilitators and facilitators of adult learning, it is fundamental to incorporate the following five elements, known as **SPECH** into the learning environment.

The Social Environment

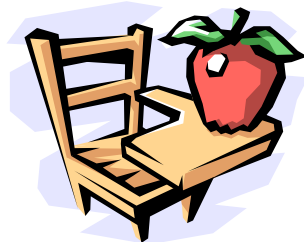
Humans are social creatures and have a need to belong within a social setting.



- Welcome signs
- Introductory activities
- Name tags
- Group activities
- Breaks
- Outside socialising opportunities

The Physical Environment

We need to feel comfortable to learn effectively.



- Room temperature
- Noise
- Light
- Room size, layout and appearance
- Ventilation
- Equipment

The Emotional Environment

It is important to foster and maintain each person's self esteem.

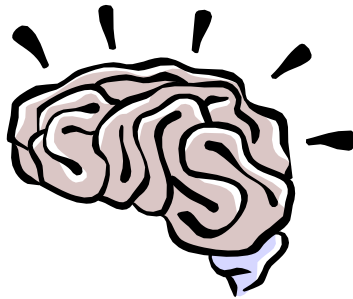
Effective communication and empathy plays an important role in maintaining respect and trust.



- Encourage involvement
- Acknowledge contributions
- Value individual differences
- Foster and expect respect
- Maintain confidentiality
- Be authentic
- Provide constructive feedback

The Cognitive Environment

Adults need to feel that what they are learning is relevant and beneficial



- Encourage involvement and participative decision making
- Describe “what’s in it for them”
- Link to prior knowledge and experience
- Cater for a range of experience and knowledge
- Provide practice opportunities
- Provide supplementary information

The Holistic Environment

Recognises and incorporates the range of differences and needs of each individual in each of the elements of the learning environment.



- Use a range of examples
- Use inclusive language
- Recognise individual and cultural differences
- Provide for individual learning preferences



The 4 – MAT System

The 4-MAT system (1996) is a cyclic model explaining the ways we learn and our thinking styles. The 4-MAT model describes four thinking preferences.

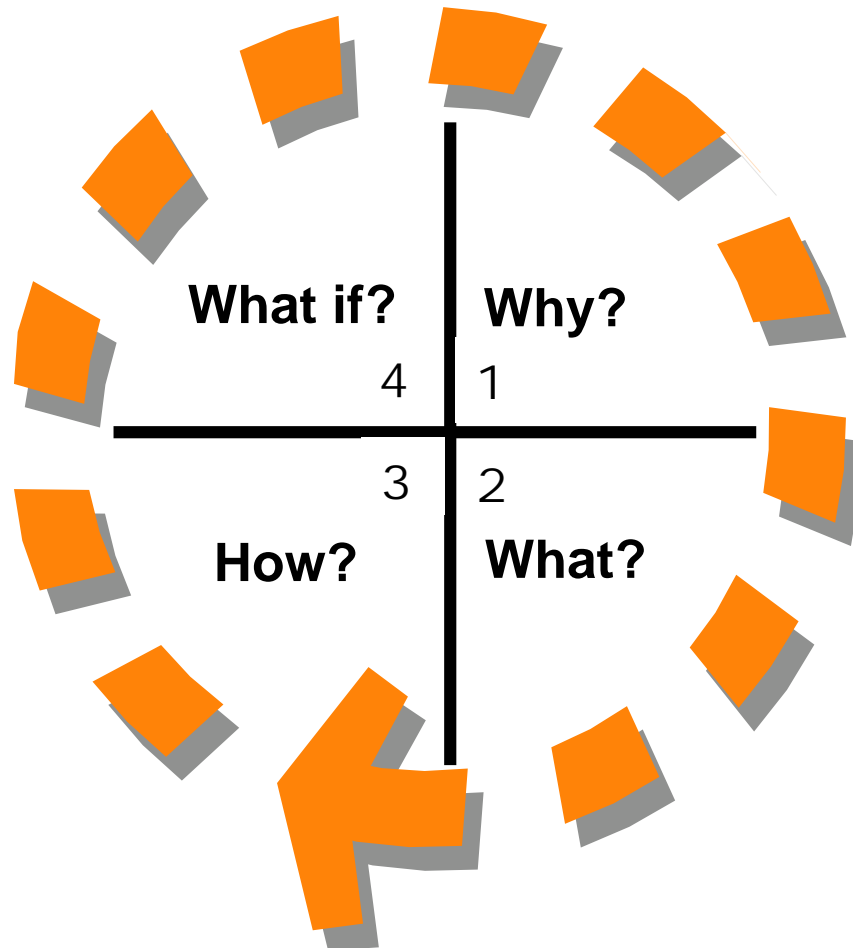
Imaginative Thinkers function by clarifying values. They like to act concretely and reflect on the experience. They tend to ask the question *why*? These learners like discussions and making personal meaning from the content.

Analytic Thinkers prefer to action abstractly and reflect on the process. They like to ask *what*? These learners like didactic teaching, taking expert knowledge and conceptualising the information presented.

Common Sense Thinkers function by gathering factual data from kinaesthetic experience. They process information abstractly through active experimentation. They ask *how*? These learners like a coaching approach where they can explore practical examples and problem solving themselves.

Dynamic Thinkers act and test experience concretely. They ask *what if*? These learners like to find out things themselves – (discovery learning) and need opportunities to transform their knowledge and skills using their individual creativity.

The 4-MAT System integrates all four thinking styles within one cyclical model, thereby providing a framework or “format” for planning, processing and thinking.



The 4-MAT System enables us to utilise the four quadrants for thinking about any topic or concept. We begin by asking "why" are we doing this?, then move on to "what" the issue is about specifically. The details of the topic are then explored in the "how?" quadrant and the broader implications of the topic are addressed in the "what if?" or "what then?" quadrant. By following the cyclic process and asking the questions from each of the four quadrants we will effectively cover the issues relevant to each particular thinking / questioning style.

when planning training programs and sessions you can provide an activity in each quadrant as well as information to stimulate both sides of the brain and provide a whole brain approach to learning.

Why? – Connect and examine the new material

What? – Provide images and define the topic

How? – Practical exercises to explore and extend the learning experience

What if? - Refine and integrate the learning.



Learning Resources

Learning resources add interest and variety to training and enhance learning by:

- arousing interest
- consolidating information
- aiding retention
- catering for a range of learning styles
- highlighting major points / concepts
- simply illustrating complex material

To provide for individual learning preferences there are a range of common learning resources described in the table below:

Learning Resource	Tips for Effective Use
Whiteboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position for easy reading by everyone • Write big and legibly • Use upper and lower cases • Use easily readable colours • Position around the room • Electronic whiteboard – provides record
Overheads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position screen in front corner of room • Ensure over head projector is focused • Use pointer on OHP rather than screen • Use computer generated overhead transparencies • Use at least 24 font • Maximum of 7 points per slide
Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use main points only where possible • Keep it simple • Use white space • Reference articles and resource material • Distribute at appropriate time • Ensure relevance and discuss content

Videos / DVD

- View content prior to session
- Make links with discussion or questioning
- Keep it brief – max 20 minutes
- Ensure expertise in using player
- Test equipment prior to session
- Have a contingency activity

Butchers paper

- Have plenty available
- Use landscape format
- Encourage colour
- Memory map when applicable
- Hang on wall as peripheral poster
- Good for group work

Posters

- Use icons / pictures
- Colour
- Minimise words
- Leave work around room for review
- Uses peripheral vision
- Great for reinforcing value
- Creates positive room environment

PowerPoint

- Position screen for easy viewing
- Use light writing on a dark background
- Use key words only
- Avoid busy animations
- Use minimal number of slides
- Provide audience with handout of slides
- Incorporate other strategies

Learning objects

- Ensure multimedia is accessible
- Avoid busy animations
- Ensure transparent navigation
- Make relevant
- Develop interaction within objects



Instructional Design

Instructional design develops the “blue-print” for the development of your training program and is the key to the successful design of any e-learning or flexible learning strategy.

All learning programs, whether delivered online, face-to-face or by distance must be conceived in terms of the desired learning outcomes and based on the instructional design principles that best support those outcomes.

Gagne (1985) provides a reliable model for instructional design

Orientation	Gain the learners attention Inform the learner of the goals of the session and what to expect Review prior knowledge, pre-requisite knowledge to build on during the session
Presentation	Present the session information Guide the learner through the information
Practice	Provide opportunities for interaction with material Provide feedback
Testing	Provide valid and reliable testing against predetermined learning outcomes
Retention and Transfer	Consider how to assist the learner remember and apply their learning to similar and new situations

The process of design and development involves:

- analysing learning needs and goals
- incorporating adult learning theory
- developing, adapting and customising materials and resources in an innovative and dynamic way to meet the learners needs
- using effective, engaging models of simulated work-based learning
- adapting the learning to the learners needs not the other way round
- keep the content simple – focus on what is relevant
- trialing and evaluating the module for continuous improvement



Session Planning

Session plans provide a documented, organised and sequential plan of the training event. They also provide a record of the session for continuity, for other facilitators to use and for review.

Session plans usually include:

- Topic
- Learning outcomes
- Assessment criteria (if applicable)
- Content overview in sequence
- Activities and methods
- Resources
- Time and equipment

Learning Outcomes

Specifying learning outcomes is an important first step in preparing your session plan. Learning outcomes generally specify what the learner will be able to do by the end of the session. We usually begin with a measurable action verb, followed by the knowledge, skills or behaviour that will be achieved, ie the object of the activity and any conditions to achieve this.

By the end of the session participants will be able to

- *Describe* information literacy (IL)
- *Discuss* IL and information technology
- *Identify* processes to develop higher order thinking

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

Bloom (1956) provides some useful verbs for writing learning outcomes in the cognitive domain of the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives:

Knowledge

defines, describes, identifies, labels, lists, outlines

Comprehension

explains, estimates, infers, summarises, defends

Application

changes, demonstrates, predicts, operates, produces

Analysis

differentiates, discriminates, selects, identifies, outlines, infers

Synthesis

categorises, combines, creates, designs, summarises

Evaluation

compares, concludes, contrast, critiques, justifies, summarises

Structure of session plans

To best present a training session it needs to be divided into three planned sections – an introduction, body and conclusion.

Introduction	<i>tell them what you will cover</i>
Body	<i>tell them</i>
Conclusion	<i>tell them what you have covered</i>

The Introduction

The introduction is vitally important because it sets the scene for the session and outlines the content and process. It also helps to “breaks the ice” in terms of the group dynamics. There is a simple acronym which can be used to remember the important processes in the introduction.

- G** Get the participants attention – arouse their interest
- L** Link topic to their past experience and current knowledge
- O** Outcomes of sessions – and assessment details
- S** Structure of session – ie how it will happen
- S** Stimulate and motivate participants – WIIFM

The Body

This is the essence of the training session where the topic is explored in detail and practice opportunities are provided. It is important to incorporate the seven learning principles and the kaleidoscope components into this part of the session so that participants learning preferences are met and so they can remain focused and motivated to input and process the information.

The Conclusion

The conclusion overviews and sums up what has been covered in the training session. Reviewing with questions is an effective way of summarising and this way you can clarify and provide feedback on the learning. Linking to future sessions gets participants thinking about the next session. This sets up a positive expectation.

Session Plan – Day 3

Time	Topic	Resources	Description of Activity
9am	Welcome and Warm up activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tea and coffee • name tags • manuals • music • OH - WELCOME 	ie something from last week that has stuck in your mind and something good from the weekend
9.15	Learning Outcomes – Day 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify range of learning strategies • Discuss teacher / learner centred strategies • Describe a range of learning resources • Identify a range of strategies for dealing with challenging participants • Workshop session planning • Prepare mini training session 	OH - Learning Outcomes	
9.15	Sale of the century		Team play off – each team develops 10 questions to cover the information covered to date.
10.15	M/Tea		
10.30am	MIT delivery strategies	Posters Post it pads	In teams – develop as many strategies in 5 minutes – team play off using post it pads
Cont			
10.30am	Developing Learning Resources Describe a range of learning resources including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whiteboard 	Whiteboard Paper OH's	

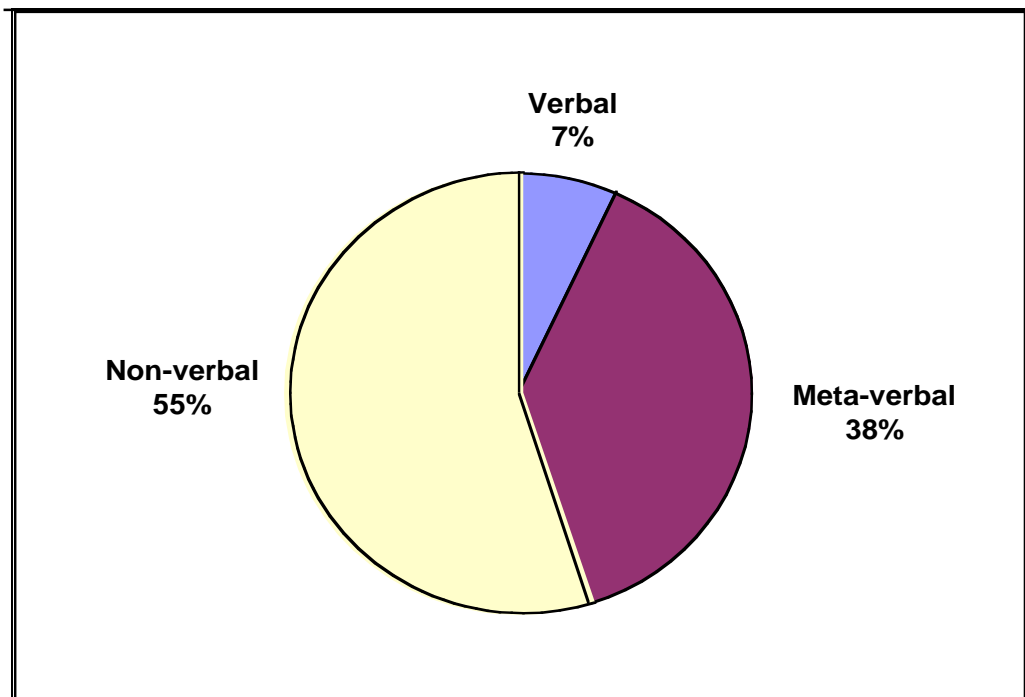
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts • OH's • Videos • Butchers paper • Posters 	Butchers paper	
12.00	Presentation / Facilitation skills -		B/storm in groups what good presenters and facilitators do
12.30	Lunch		
1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation skills • Communication skills • Identify a range of strategies for dealing with challenging participants 	Cards for difficult participants	B/Storm challenging situation and behaviours
3pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • break 		
3.15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop session planning • Prepare mini training session for delivery tomorrow 	Session plan Feedback sheets	
4.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review day • Tomorrow we will... • Preview tomorrow 		



Communication

Effective training is very dependent on the communication skills and techniques of the facilitator. Learning is about “giving and receiving knowledge and skills”. This means that effective communication is a two way process to make meaning which involves a number of components.

The Impact of Message During Communication

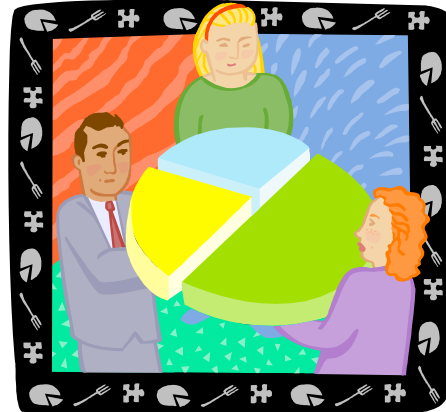


Verbal communication involves the actual words spoken. The language that we use is vitally important in covering the content, maintaining an effective learning environment, creating a positive learning experience and fostering self esteem of participants.

Meta-verbal communication is the way we say the words. It is used to express the mood, temperament and feeling of the person sending the message. It is vital that we modulate the tone and pitch of our voice to keep participants interested.

Non-verbal communication reinforces the message by using body language. This includes:

- **gestures**
- **facial expressions**
- **eye contact**
- **posture**
- **space**
- **dress**
- **appearance**
- **timing**
- **distance**
- **position**



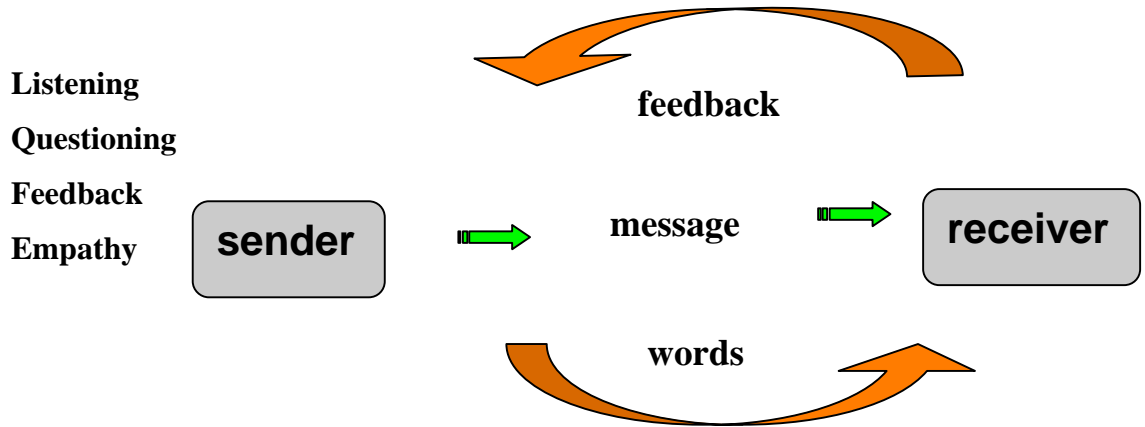
Our non-verbal communication needs to be congruent with our verbal and meta-verbal components. Incongruency reduces the trust of the facilitator and confuses participants as they don't get the "correct message".

10 Communication Barriers

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| x language | x individual factors |
| x perceptions, prejudices, stereotyping | x environmental factors |
| x self image | x time / timing |
| x status | x message complexity |
| x incongruity | x listening skills |

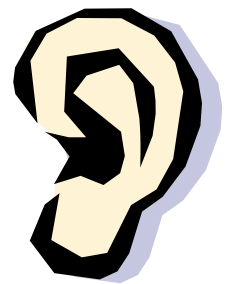
Effective Communication

Effective communication is the transmission of an idea from a sender to a receiver without a change in meaning. The components in good communication are:



Listening

Good listening is vital to quality communication. Listening is a learned skill. It is an active and complex process that aims at understanding. It involves picking up on cues, giving feedback and empathy.



Poor Listeners

- x Interrupt
- x Jump to conclusions
- x Finish other people's sentences
- x Change the subject
- x Have inattentive non-verbals
- x Don't respond
- x Don't ask questions
- x Don't give feedback
- x Don't check out understanding
- x Are easily distracted
- x Fidget
- x Allow communication barriers

Good Listeners

-] Make eye contact
-] Ask questions
-] Summarise frequently
-] Check understanding
-] Give feedback
-] Give the speaker time to articulate their thoughts
-] Remain poised, calm & in control
-] Give "uh-hums"
-] Appear interested
-] Let the speaker finish, then speak
-] Paraphrase before disagreeing

Questioning

Questioning is vital to facilitating quality learning experiences and reinforces the content and meaning from the behaviourist, cognitivist and humanist perspectives of learning.

There are a number of types of questions that can be used including closed ended, open-ended, clarifying, probing and rhetorical questions.

Benefits of questioning

- Gains information on existing knowledge
- Determines needs of learners
- Checks understanding
- Encourages participation
- Aids processing and application
- Frames topic and content
- Keeps interest
- Focuses and summarises key aspects



Questioning skills for facilitators

- ? Acknowledge the question
- ? Rephrase or repeat the question
- ? Pause to allow time to respond
- ? Encourage someone in the group to answer
- ? Summarise and add to the response or answer the question if required
- ? Check for learner understanding
- ? Develop critical thinking capabilities of learners with further questioning
- ? Play “devil’s advocate” where appropriate
- ? If you cannot answer the question encourage the person asking the question to find the answer, or else you research the answer and bring it back to the group.
- ? Remember your active listening skills

Feedback

Providing quality, focused and timely feedback is a fundamental part of the learning process. If we don't give or receive feedback how can we expect any improvement in performance? The following points will assist in providing feedback.

Focused feedback

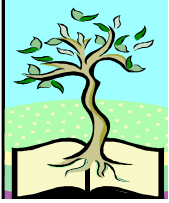
- involves focusing on the behaviours not the personality
- requires descriptions not judgments
- focuses on specifics not abstracts
- is about the here and now not the there and then
- involves sharing perceptions not giving advice
- is timely not late
- needs to be relevant not overdone
- is positive and constructive not negative and critical
- requires courage
- incorporates empathy

Empathy

**To truly understand another,
we must walk a mile in their
moccasins. And before we can
walk a mile in their moccasins
we must first take off our own.**

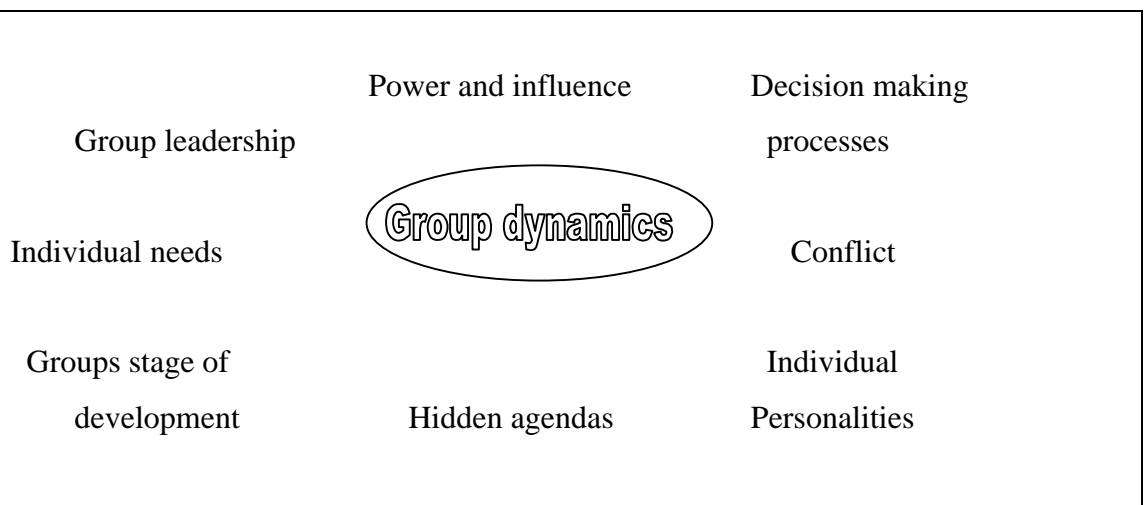
Native American saying





Group Dynamics

Every person brings with them to any group their own values, attitudes and experiences. These factors will have an impact on how the group works and the group dynamics.



It is fundamental that facilitators consider and facilitate effective group dynamics to:

- meet the learning needs of each person
- role model expected behaviours
- facilitate respect in the learning environment
- encourage learner responsibility for learning
- problem solve
- enhance learner self esteem and self confidence
- resolve conflict effectively and positively



Managing Difficult Participants

Unfortunately, there are times when, as a facilitator, you will have to manage the behaviours of challenging or difficult participants. Managing difficult situations is something that facilitators generally try to avoid as nobody likes conflict.

However, experience dictates that unresolved situations in a training environment often deleteriously effect the learning of other people in the group.

Therefore, inappropriate or difficult behaviour needs to be managed efficiently and effectively. When considering strategies to manage any situation it is important to set two basic goals.

- **Getting the challenging person “back on track”**
- **Minimising any negative impact on the other participants**



Guidelines for dealing with difficult participants

- Forecast ahead and be well prepared
- Be confident and use appropriate humour to diffuse situation
- Remain relaxed and in control
- Move from little intervention first to more obvious strategies as the situation dictates
- Maintain respect for and dignity of all participants
- Use group guidelines to set scene

Reviewing Training

Reviewing training is an important stage in the training cycle because it provides information for quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Hawe (1990) defines evaluation as “the process by which we judge the worth of something”. In the training environment we need to evaluate a number of areas to ensure that we are achieving our training objectives and meeting our learners needs.

Evaluation determines whether...

- **the *right training* has occurred**
- **for the *right people***
- **at the *right time***
- **in the *right way***

to meet the *right objectives*

Kirkpatrick’s Hierarchy of Evaluation

Most commonly, evaluation focuses on the reaction of participants following the training. There are a number of models used to evaluate training. A popular model is Kirkpatrick’s Hierarchy of Evaluation (1996) which provides a range of levels including the reaction of participants, the effectiveness of the learning, whether there have been noticeable behaviour changes following the training, and finally whether ultimately the training has made a noticeable difference within the organisation.

Kirkpatrick's Levels

<p>Level 1 <i>Reaction</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • response of participants • response of trainer • relevancy of topic and material • organisation of program • outcomes achieved • presentation skills of facilitator • instructional methods • instructional materials • schedule and timing • stimulation of program
<p>Level 2 <i>Learning</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses on whether there is a change in skill, knowledge or attitudes of topic • assessment results • workplace projects
<p>Level 3 <i>Behaviour</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes in job performance • transfer of knowledge and skills to the workplace • before and after group ideal for comparison
<p>Level 4 <i>Results</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies the organisational benefits / changes such as increased sales, more productivity, increased profits, reduced absenteeism, less accidents, improved morale etc

Program Evaluation

Your feedback is important to us. Please take a few moments to complete this evaluation form.
Thank you for your valued contribution.

Content	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
1. The content of the program met my needs			
2. I found the content relevant			
3. The material was stimulating and interesting			
4. I feel more confident in applying this to my workplace			
5. The materials were useful for my learning			
6. The assessment reflected the objectives of the program			

Structure			
1. The program was well organised			
2. The sessions were well structured			
3. The balance between theory and practice worked well			
4. The activities were effective in helping me learn			
5. We achieved the outcomes of the program			

Overall, how did you find the program?

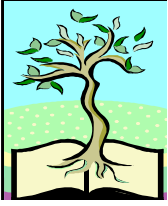
What were the three most valuable things you got from the program?

What is your impression of the facilitation of the program?

What had you hoped to get from the program but didn't?

What changes could you recommend for future programs?

Any other comments?



References

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"...When people learn how to think and learn their self esteem and confidence grow. When people learn how to learn they not only cope with change and new technology - they welcome it. When people learn how to think and learn they have acquired the basic skills to master information literacy, be professionally self directed and to attain personal growth. When people learn how to think and learn they are empowered to change from passive consumers to active controllers of their own lives"

Caron Egle, 2000

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