Trainer's Guide

Abid Ullah Jan

Frontier Resource Centre

Contents

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS
        Secrets of Successful Facilitators
        The Six Tensions In Small Group Activities
        Maintaining A Balance
        Tactics to Overcome Tensions

PROCEDURAL MODEL FOR EFFECTIVE FACILITATION DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PARTICIPANTS

      ICE BREAKERS
        What Are Icebreakers
        The Use of Ice Breakers
        Ice Breakers

      SPICING UP DRY TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

The original idea for this handbook came as a result of reluctant on part of some trainers to share their training material with others and the realisation that despite the range of books and periodicals now available on training subjects, there is a need for developing exercises and methodologies according to our specific training requirements and needs. Moreover, not every trainer is in a position to synthesis the available but scattered information and uses it for making his training sessions more effective and productive.

While preparing the content of the guide, it became obvious that it would be impossible to provide a truly comprehensive coverage of all the related subject area that cover our community or staff training. Additionally, it was recognised that the needs of the trainers in SRSC vary considerably as the needs of all trainers in the HRD field. Therefore only those subjects have been included that are in demand in the field to make the trainers but the information, exercises and games included are developed from various training books and journals according to our situation and needs through a prolong and painstaking process. This guide would help the trainers as a reference material.

It was also an opportunity to include portions on dealing with the difficult participants and making different training methodologies effective, which would be of value to trainers who are operating, or seeking to operate, at a fairly advanced level, and who want information on specific techniques not readily found and developed according to the local situation elsewhere.

Initial sections of the guide concentrates on spelling out principles of adult learning and tried and tested techniques for teaching trainees new skills and improving productivity. Its guidelines make it easier to select the best training method for a giver course. Rest of the sections deal with the likely ways for improving the facilitation skills, and making training more alive through ice-breakers, energisers and session starters. Some on these icebreakers can also be used in some sessions, like communication, etc.

Hopefully, this handbook would encourage creativity and adaptability on our trainers. To benefit fully from its content, the trainers have to avoid short cuts and get their colleagues involved in reviewing, commenting and further improving the content before they practically apply an exercise in a training or workshop. The sections are presented in self-contained units and readers may choose to start almost anywhere, depending on their particular needs.

Abid Ullah Jan

Part 1

INTRODUCTION TO ADULT LEARNING

ADULT LEARNING

Since HRD trainers are dealing with the staff and community members, it is useful for them to have some knowledge about the characteristics of adult learners, so that they can utilise these characteristics in making community and staff training programs effective and efficient. This will have greater benefit for the participants, as well as make better use of funding and resources.

It is generally accepted that adults bring a wealth of experience and ideas to any training or education setting, and that they cannot be treated in the same way as children or younger people when participating in courses. Researchers have identified several characteristics of adult learners, which are summarised below.

Characteristics Of Adult Learners
Adult learners:
- have an accumulation of experience that becomes a resource for learning;
- learn most effectively if the new learning is presented in the context of application to real-life situations, that is, task or problem-centred learning, and develop a readiness to learn in order to cope with real-life situations;
- need to know why they need to learn something before they undertake to learn it;
- have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions and being self-directed, although they can regress and ask to be told what to learn, and need to have some input into the planning of their education; and
- have strong internal motivators to learn, such as the relevance of the program to their future aspirations, although they are also responsive to external ones.

While it is not possible to take all of the characteristics of every learner into consideration in planning and implementing training programs, it is possible to work from generalised characteristics in order to organise training sessions to maximise the effectiveness of the program. The following Table lists some training strategies and the ways in which they utilise the characteristics of adult learners. These strategies take account of the principles of adult learning by allowing the participants to take some responsibility for their own learning. They also utilise the experiences of the learner, thus basing the learning experience in the 'real life' of the participant, as well as enabling the learner to feel valued as a resource. Some of the strategies also provide the opportunity for the participants to identify gaps in their own skills or knowledge, thus increasing the relevance of the training to them.

Teaching strategies useful in adult education programs.

Characteristic of adult learners	Training strategy to utilise this characteristic
1. Wealth of experience that becomes a resource for learning	- group discussion - simulation exercises - problem solving activities - case-based methods
2. Task or problem-centred participants (learners), learn to deal with real life situations	- group discussion - simulation exercises - problem solving exercises - case-based exercises - peer review - self-review - one-to-one methods
3. Need to know why need to know something	- group discussion - audit - self-review - peer review - one-to-one methods - case based exercise
4. Self directed learners, need to have some input into the planning of their education through training	- computer - distance learning - self-review - problem solving - practical methods, eg. simulation and role play - one-to-one methods
5. Responsive to internal motivators to learn, such as relevance to future aspirations	- audit - practical methods, eg. simulation exercises and role play - problem-based learning - case-based methods - one-to-one methods - peer review

Summary
By applying the above mentioned principles of adult learning to the planning and implementation of a training program, the HRD trainers have an increased chance of meeting identified needs, of maintaining interest and support of the participants and of improving the impact of the program in terms of meeting its aims and objectives. Summarising the characteristics of adult learners makes it possible to gain an understanding of the sorts of instructional strategies that will maximise the effectiveness of the training.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Specific, measurable learning objectives are a valuable tool for planning, evaluating and preparing for the implementation of training programs. This information sheet provides an overview of what they are, how to develop them and their use for developers, trainers, participants and evaluators of training programs.

What Are Learning Objectives?
Learning objectives are specific statements of intent. They state in specific and measurable terms what the program is going to teach the participants.

How To Develop Learning Objectives?
The following provides a step-wise description of how to develop learning objectives:
1. Identify a need gap.
2. Identify the behaviour, knowledge, skill or attitude that will help to address that need.
3. Identify how that item can be demonstrated.
4. Identify the conditions under which it will be demonstrated.
5. Identify the standard to which it will have to be achieved.
6. From these, write the learning objectives for the session or training program.

The objectives should leave no doubt as to what is required. They should be achievable with the available resources, measurable and relate to observable behaviours. Learning objectives are usually written in the following format:

> *By the end of the session, the participant will be able to (action they will undertake) under specified conditions and to a specified standard.*

For example:

> *By the end of the session the participant will be able to identify leadership types and would be able to know what kind of leadership is needed to run the community organisations, and have a total of twelve out of fifteen in agreement with the course presenter.*

If part of the aim of the training relates to a change in participants' attitudes, then one or more objectives will have to be written to address this. As we are not able to quantitatively measure attitude, we must still rely on participants' reporting of their own attitude change. While these 'unmeasurable' objectives must be included, they should not comprise a large number of the objectives.

Using Learning Objectives
Learning objectives may be useful for the developers, trainers, participants and evaluators. Their uses for these groups are summarised below.

The **developers** will use learning objectives to:
- indicate the resources that may be required to implement the program;
- decide who to employ as trainer/s; and
- check that the program will meet the aim.

The **trainers** will use the learning objectives as a guide to:
- training strategies;
- training resources, materials; and
- timing and weighting for each topic.

The **participants** will use the learning objectives so that they:
- can become more focussed on the topic and plan ahead;
- feel they have more control over their own learning; and
- can pursue further reading or practise in their own time.

The **evaluators** use learning objectives so that they:
- can relate the evaluation process directly to each objective;
- can set a baseline by obtaining pre-measures; and
- can simplify the evaluation process.

Evaluation Of Learning Objectives

It is useful to undertake an evaluation of the learning objectives once the training has been conducted, particularly if the training is to be implemented again. The following questions may be asked about the learning objectives:

- Were they appropriate for fulfilling the aims of the training?
- Did they provide enough challenge for the participants?
- Were the objectives achievable?
- Were the methods of measurement appropriate?
- Were the nominated standards appropriate?
- Were the objectives specific?
- Were all the objectives sufficiently addressed with the time and resources allocated for the program?

Summary

This section has summarised the main factors to be considered in the development and use of measurable learning objectives. By following these steps and developing well-constructed, measurable learning objectives, there is an increased likelihood that a course based upon these objectives will fulfil identified needs.

BACKGROUND OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Most training designers are aware that learning objectives are an important part of designing and planning training programmes. Specific, measurable learning objectives are a valuable tool for planning and evaluating training programmes. In addition, learning objectives serve as useful guides for both trainers and participants. The aim of this section is to provide information about objectives - what they are why we need them, and how to develop and evaluate them.

As described earlier, learning objectives are specific statements of intent. They state what it is that the program is going to teach the participants in quite specific and measurable terms. The aim of the training indicates the area of consideration and the intended impact or outcome, without being specific about the components that will lead to this aim being achieved. To use an analogy, if we imagine that the course is a road map, the aim tells us which town we are going to, while the objectives give us a street, a time of arrival and the road conditions when we get there.

Before any teaching materials are written or developed, the learning objectives should be established so that the developers and presenters can ensure that they are on the right track. The objectives are useful for the participants. By knowing what to expect, participants can plan accordingly and be sure that they are also headed in the right direction. The learning objectives also provide a basis for evaluation in order to see how well the participants achieved the objectives. The objectives will guide the evaluation.

How To Develop Learning Objectives

The objectives should be based upon identified needs. These needs may be identified by the potential participants or developers in a needs assessment. Using these data in designing the training program will increase the likelihood that the program will fill an identified need in the community.

In order to develop objectives from data of this type, developers need to decide what knowledge or behaviours are involved in addressing that gap. Objectives should be specific, in that they relate to a single behaviour or item of knowledge. Ideally, these items should in some way be observable and measurable. The objectives need to describe how the participant will show that they have achieved that knowledge or behaviour, that is:

- the action the participant will undertake;
- the conditions under which the action will be undertaken; and
- the standard to which it will be achieved.

The objective should also be stated in such a way that there is no doubt as to what is required. Learning objectives should not just describe what the participants will learn or become familiar with during the course. In order to be of maximum use, learning objectives should be specific, achievable with the available resources, measurable and relate to observable behaviour. If the

objectives are measurable, then they provide the basis for a quantitative evaluation.

It is acknowledged that not all objectives relate to items that can be measured. For example, if part of the aim involves changing participants' attitudes, then one or more objectives will have to address this. As we are not able to quantitatively measure attitude, we must still rely on participants' reporting of their own changes in attitude. While we must include these "unmeasurable" objectives, they should not comprise a large number of the objectives.

Using Learning Objectives
Learning objectives should be useful for the program developers, the trainers, the participants and the evaluators.

The objectives will provide program developers with some idea of the resources that will be needed in order to fulfil them. Developers can modify the training objectives if the required resources do not fall within the allocated facilities, resources and funds. The developers may also use the objectives in order to decide whom to employ as a trainer (resource person), e.g. specialists with recognised expertise in a particular area.

The trainers should use the objectives as a guide to their training strategies, their training materials (e.g. transparencies, charts, etc), and also for their timing on given topics. If several topics are to be addressed in one session, they should be covered according to the number of objectives that relate to them. The objectives also give some idea as to the depth at which to focus on a topic.

The participants will also benefit from knowing the learning objectives, because participants can become more focussed and feel that they have some control over their own learning. It also allows them to pursue the topic in their own time, and to have a better idea of the areas to be covered so that they can recall their own experiences relating to a specific topic.

Evaluators, which in most cases are the trainers themselves, benefit from having observable and measurable learning objectives. The evaluation strategy should in most cases be developed with or immediately after, the objectives and should relate directly to each objective. If the evaluation is planned from the beginning in this way, a pre test can be conducted, hence ensuring a baseline that relates specifically to each objective. This also allows the evaluation method to be checked to ensure that it is useable for that group of participants. Having observable and measurable objectives simplifies the process of evaluation, as it enables results to be quantified and analysed. Basing the evaluation on the objectives ensures that the evaluation is measuring how successfully the education session fulfils its objectives.

Evaluation Of Learning Objectives
There is increased awareness of the importance of evaluating training programs, particularly for the twin purposes of accountability, and for ascertaining the effectiveness of the programme's implementation (i.e. how

well the program achieved its objectives). Whether or not the program achieved its objectives, it is useful to undertake some form of evaluation of the learning objectives themselves. Questions mentioned earlier may be asked to assess effectiveness of the objectives.

These questions may be answered in the program evaluation. For example, if the program evaluation shows that the objectives were not achieved by any of the participants, it may indicate that the objectives were unachievable given the constraints or conditions of the course. If expected behaviour changes did not occur after the completion of the course, it might be that the course objectives did not relate sufficiently to that behaviour (that is, they were not appropriate).

It is particularly useful to evaluate the objectives if the program is to be conducted again. If the above questions are asked of each of the objectives after the completed course, then areas may be highlighted which can be modified for the next course. This leads to refinement of the objectives, and may increase the effectiveness of the course in fulfilling its ultimate aim.

Summary
This section has been written to provide information about learning objectives, including their development, use and evaluation. It has highlighted their importance to all those involved in the development and implementation of an education program, and has given a step-wise description of how measurable objectives may be developed. By using well-constructed learning objectives, the course is more likely to target the aim of the program, and hence to address identified needs and service gaps.

SAMPLE OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives are statements of intent. That is, they are statements that describe:

- the **change** which the participant will experience, eg. increase in knowledge
- the **conditions** under which they will demonstrate this change, eg. in a community meeting
- the **standard** to which they will be able to achieve, eg. an increase in the membership, or saving, or meeting attendance of a community organisation when compared with a membership, saving or attendance before the training.

The standard may be described as a measured score or percentage increase, or may just be described as an increase or decrease, that is, a change in the desirable direction.

Learning objectives can be written for knowledge, skill, attitude and behaviour change. Sample learning objectives for each of these areas have been provided below.

Knowledge

Change that will be demonstrated by the participant: increase in knowledge about the participatory approaches to rural development and the role of Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) in Pakistan.

The condition under which this change will be demonstrated: the change will be demonstrated in post training activities of the community activists in their respective villages and community organisations.

The standard to which the participant is expected to perform: the participant will show an increase in knowledge in comparison with a result on an equivalent pre-training assessment by the Social Organisers or the HRD Officers.

The learning objective may be written:

By the end of the Leadership and Management Skills Training the participant will show an increase in knowledge, demonstrated in a dialogue or role play at the end of the training compared with a similar pre-training assessment, about the role of activists in social mobilisation and and community organisation.

Skill

Change which the participant will demonstrate: development or increase in skill in the use of record books for community organisation's record keeping.

Condition under which this change will be demonstrated: the participant will maintain different record keeping books and account ledgers for his/her respective organisation.

The standard to which the participant is expected to perform: the participant will show an increase in accuracy and reliability of basic accounting when compared with the indigenous ways of the CO/WO used for the same purpose before the training.

The learning objective may be written:

By the end of the basic course in record keeping the participant will be able to demonstrate an increase in accuracy and reliability in the use of record keeping books for maintaining record of their respective community organisations.

Attitude

Change, which the participant will demonstrate: increase in stated confidence and motivation to lead and guide the community members.

Condition under which the change will be demonstrated: the participants will behave in a different way in their communities and will report this change in a post-training questionnaire.

Standard to which the participant is expected to perform: the participants should report an increase in their own motivation, confidence and leadership abilities.

The learning objective may be written:

By the end of the LMST course and application of the learned skill and changed behaviours the participant will report in a post intervention questionnaire an increase in their confidence and motivation to lead and guide their communities in a better way.

Behaviour

Change, which the participant will demonstrate: the participant will demonstrate a change in their behaviour as trained community activists.

Condition under which the change will be demonstrated: the change will be demonstrated in practice, and measured through different initiatives and activities undertaken by the trained activists.

Standard to which the participant is expected to perform: an increase community membership, attendance at meetings, saving rate, etc in community organisations, when compared with the same as measured by a pre-training assessment.

The learning objective may be written:

By the end of the LMST course the participant will demonstrate an increase in the community membership, or attendance in the meeting, or the rate of credit return, or some other community initiatives due to changed behaviour and improved skills of the activists as measured through assessment made by the social organisers of the community organisation's records and in comparison with the performance measured by a pre-training assessment.

Summary
The development of measurable learning objectives is an important part of program planning, as they can constantly be used as a reference point to see if the planned strategies will allow the participants to achieve the objectives and aim of the intervention.