

Part - 2

TRAINING AND LEARNING METHODOLOGIES

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When planning a training program, developers and trainers have to decide on the most appropriate training strategy to suit the resources available, the subject to be taught and the participants. More than one strategy may be adopted in a session, depending upon the length of the session and the type of information to be conveyed. This section outlines the factors to be considered in the choice of strategy, and the key points about a range of training strategies.

What Are You Trying To Teach?

If you are wanting to teach **skill**:

- adults learn best by doing, so consider a strategy which allows the participants to perform the skill.

If you are wanting to teach **knowledge**:

- adults learn best when they are able to participate, so consider a strategy which allows interaction between the participants and the trainer;
- adults learn best when they are able to relate the topic to their own experience or practice, so consider a strategy which allows them to participate and discuss their own experiences;
- adults need to see the relevance of what they are learning to their own practice, so consider a strategy which sets real practice problems or allows the participants to "bring their own" problems to the session; and
- adults need to feel in control of their learning environment, so consider a strategy which allows them to have some control over the methods and topics used.

If you are wanting to teach **attitude**:

- you cannot teach attitude! You can only facilitate change in attitude. Consider strategies such as group methods that allow free discussion of ideas and feelings in a non-threatening and non-judgemental environment.

Training Methodologies

The following table presents a range of strategies and some key points about each one, including the advantages and disadvantages, and the areas for which they may be useful. While these are not the only factors to consider in deciding which strategy to use, they provide a starting point from which to narrow down the search.

Key points, advantages and disadvantages and areas of use for each strategy.

Method	Advantages	Limitations	Useful for
Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> easy to work to set time set content and objectives, so evaluation can be easier <p><i>If participant input allowed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> learners have chance to participate and contribute own experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> little opportunity for participant input participants may feel have no control over own learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imparting information to groups of any size.
Demonstration and practical exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner has opportunity to participate and learn by doing can relate to real practice situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may not be able to be used for larger groups expensive in terms of time and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical skills such as hands on procedures, interviewing or counselling
Group methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants have some control over their own learning Participants relate their own experience to the group collegial environment allows pooling of ideas group size can vary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can be personality clashes or dominant members can be time consuming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> problem solving team building, communication and interpersonal skills facilitate attitude change knowledge sharing brainstorming for ideas
Simulations and role plays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> full involvement of participants participants can call on own experiences and relate to own practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some participants may not feel comfortable with role play situations may be time consuming presenter does not have control over learning environment - more chance of unforeseen impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> problem solving management exercises team building exercises case based exercises attitude change
Computer aided instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can be used at time and location suitable to learner self paced learning usually access to information as part of the package able to review sections immediate feedback and assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some learners may not be comfortable with using computers some may not have access to computers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teaching new knowledge revising knowledge revising skills
Audiotapes videos, and reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> self paced learning can be reviewed can be played at time to suit learner learner chooses what to watch, read or listen to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no interaction or immediate feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> new knowledge or revision or updating of knowledge updating or revising skills in conjunction with a practical method
Peer review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relates directly to practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> time consuming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practice change in specific area
Reflective activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relates to practice opportunity to understand own practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> requires time and ability to reflect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> self awareness and enhance sensitivity change in perceptual concepts

BACKGROUND OF TRAINING AND LEARNING METHODOLOGIES

Many different training and learning strategies can be used to deliver training programs. Each strategy has advantages and limitations, and some are more appropriate than others in a given situation. The problem for trainers is to decide which strategy, or set of strategies, is the most suitable. They have to consider whether the strategy takes account of the characteristics of adult learners, and whether it is suited to the particular subject or topic being taught. This section provides detail information about a range of training and learning strategies, and highlights their advantages and limitations, and the areas in which they may be useful.

What Is A Training Methodology?

A training strategy is a method of delivering a particular training. A list of common training strategies is given below. In any one session, there may be more than one strategy used, depending on the length of time of the session, the number of participants in the session, the experience and preference of the teacher and the type of information to be taught.

Commonly used teaching strategies include:

- lectures
- workshops
- demonstrations
- simulations and role plays
- exposure visits
- group discussions
- computer aided instruction
- videos/films/etc
- peer review activities

Choosing The Most Appropriate Methodology

The strategy used will depend on the type of information to be provided to the participants. For example, training a skill will require the use of a different training strategy than if knowledge only is to be taught. The strategy may also differ depending upon whether the skill or information is new to the participants, or if they are revising these topics. Strategies appropriate for training skill, knowledge and attitude are presented below.

Skill

Adults learn best by doing, so strategies that allow the participants to practise the skills are best suited to learning new skills. Without the opportunity to practise, participants may well have the background knowledge of the topic but be unable to perform the skill. With practical and demonstration methods of instruction, the participant can be supervised. The trainer can observe the participant's ability to perform the task to a given standard, give any feedback, and correct performance if necessary.

Knowledge

The traditional method of conveying knowledge is the lecture. Using this method, a large amount of information can be given to a large group of participants. Lectures can be passive activities for participants; more

participative methods of introducing knowledge include group discussion, problem solving activities, and simulation exercises. Knowledge can also be shared using written materials, via video and audiotapes, and using interactive CD-ROM packages, if available.

Attitude

While attitude cannot be taught, there are a range of strategies that can assist with the formation of attitude. These include small group discussions, providing information that challenges current beliefs and attitudes, using diaries and other reflective methods, exposure visits and using opinion leaders to discuss issues with their peers.

Outlines Of Common Training And Learning Methodologies

Training strategies for training the community members may be divided into classroom based activities, such as lectures and group discussion, and practice based activities, such as various presentations, role plays, filling up of record keeping books and exposure visits to other successful community organisations. Each method has strengths and weaknesses in terms of the time and resources they require, the knowledge and skills they can be used to train and teach, whether they match the principles of adult learning, and the ways in which any training impact can be evaluated. Additional learning strategies include self-audit/assessment, reading and reflective activities. The learner controls all these. Some of the common training and learning strategies for staff as well as community training programs are outlined below.

CLASSROOM BASED

The **lecture** is the "traditional" method of disseminating information. It is particularly useful for imparting large amounts of information to groups of any size in a relatively short time. As the trainer has full control of content, timing is easy to plan. However, the lecture style has some limitations, which limit its effectiveness as a training strategy for adults. There is usually little opportunity for participants to have input, either in the planning or implementation of the session, which means that the resource provided by the experience of the participants is not used, and their needs may not be met.

This can be overcome by the lecturer meeting with some participants before the session in order to ascertain their needs. Some lecturers allow participants to ask questions, and use these questions as a basis for further discussion with the group. This has the advantage of maintaining the interest of the group, making the topic relevant to them and of allowing the participants to have some part in their own learning.

Group Methods are effective for facilitating the sharing of new information, revising previously known material, and discussing issues. Group size varies but needs to be considered when the purpose of the group is determined. Groups need to be large enough to ensure a range of experience among members, yet small enough to allow all participants the opportunity to share ideas. Between four and ten members seems optimal.

As groups are able to draw on the experience of members, learning can be related to practice and problem solving is possible. Both these characteristics enhance the learning opportunity. Groups require good facilitation to draw on the experience of members, to deal with difficult members, and to keep them on track. Group work is often included in sessions for adult learners following an initial lecture.

Demonstrations And Practical Exercises are effective ways of providing skill instructions. Participants can observe the skill, e.g. use of a Performa, a survey form, a record keeping book, control over body language etc, and then have the opportunity to practise the skill. This method is effective for training the trainers activities, and for demonstrating how to conduct meeting and other social organisation techniques. As active participation is required, and there is the opportunity for the presenter to provide immediate feedback and to correct performance, learning is facilitated by this method.

While only a limited number of participants can take part in any session, this can increase the learning opportunities as each participant has the opportunity to interact with others. However, demonstrations can be costly in terms of time and resources in some cases.

Simulations And Role-Plays are forms of practical exercises. These methods are useful for learning interpersonal, communications and practical skills, providing learners with the opportunity to practise without the cost of wrong decisions or actions. They are useful for team building exercises, problem solving, and management exercises. As with other practical exercises they can be costly in terms of time and resources.

Computer Aided Instruction: Computer aided learning packages are becoming more commonly available abroad but not that common in Pakistan. These packages are good for staff training as they can be used at any time, at home or office, and at the pace of the learner, overcoming problems of timing and location of sessions, and the pacing of instruction. New knowledge can be learned or the learner can review knowledge and skills prior to hands on practice. Some have built-in reference sections, so that the learner can access information immediately if required.

Many packages provide a built-in assessment and evaluation section, providing immediate feedback about knowledge and skills. Apart from being too expensive, computer aided instruction has limitations for those with lack of access to computer facilities or a fear of computing. The cost of some of the packages is another inhibiting factor.

Agree-Disagree: In the agree-disagree training method, controversial statements are made on a given subject. Participants express whether they agree or disagree with the statements and explain why.

The purpose of this method is to get participants involved in a lesson. Participants will be listening to other participants, then deciding in their own minds whether they are right or wrong.

If you are teaching "Foundations of the Christian Life," you may be discussing the development of a Christian lifestyle. Your topic for the class period may be on Christian relationships. You could use the agree-disagree method by writing on the chalkboard,

"Activists should not become close friends with other organisations."

You may lecture as participants listen trying to decide whether to agree or disagree with that statement. Or you may ask the participants to participate in an exercise such as this:

Those who agree with this statement can stand on one side of the room. Those who disagree can stand on the opposite side. Take turns letting the "agree" side and then the "disagree" side gives reasons and scriptures to prove their point. Allow participants to stand in the middle of the classroom if they are not sure of their opinion. Or allow a trainee to go to the other side if he/she changes opinions.

Brainstorming: You describe a situation or problem. Participants give ideas or suggestions about a solution. These ideas are given spontaneously, none are contradicted, commented upon, or evaluated as they are given. Often these ideas are given very quickly. The objective is to avoid even the one who offers the suggestion countering or negating his or her own idea before he or she gives it. So, write down all ideas on the flip chart (or whiteboard) before any ideas are discussed. Then the participants can talk about the ideas one by one and decide together which are the best ideas or solutions.

The purpose of the brainstorming method is to stimulate the thinking of participants regarding a new subject and to get as many ideas as possible to find answers to problems.

Case Studies: A real life situation is given to the participants or to the participants as an assignment to do outside the training hall. The situation is analysed and possible solutions (answers) are suggested. The whole class shares in the process.

The purpose of using the case study method is to help participants gain insight into problems and gain skills in the problem solving process. Through trainee participation, they get to discover suggestions from many viewpoints. They learn to think independently as well as co-operatively. This method also gives participants an opportunity to apply their own situations.

Perhaps you are telling the community members about saving and "Personal Financial Management." The first thing you would do in creating a case study would be to write a description of the case to be studied. You may write a paragraph describing a person who became attached to a financially healthy businessman. As months went by, however, their business began to experience financial difficulties. The person was also having financial

problems in his own family. The person was greatly concerned about the church and his family and did not know what to do.

After you have written the case description, you may suggest the following procedures for discussion in case studies:

- Determine the issues and problems to be discussed.
- Identify practical references that apply to the case.
- Identify the goals to be pursued in evaluating the case.
- Determine what principles should guide decisions and judgements.
- List decisions and suggested solutions.
- Case study review: do an assessment.

This method of training will surely help participants use problem-solving skills to come up with effective solutions.

Debate: A debate is a discussion in which reasons for and against an issue are considered.

Two participants can exchange points of view, or your whole training class can participate in a debate by asking participants who "support" an issue to sit on one side of the room and those "against" it to sit on the other side.

There are two teams:

- Team 1: Affirmative (for)
- Team 2: Negative (against)

Team one tries to prove why a certain statement is correct. Team two tries to prove why the statement is incorrect.

The purpose of a debate is to stimulate interest and class reaction by presenting opposing viewpoints on a subject. This method can also encourage participants to use their real life stories and facts to support their opinions.

If you were teaching the subject "Participatory Development," one of your objectives for a class session would be to lecture on a particular approach. An assignment for the next class session could be to have a debate with designated participants taking the part of the participatory approaches and the remaining participants taking the view of the managerial approach. Both teams would need to know their material well. Here is an example of how the debate could be conducted.

Resolved: The only way to be developed is to start working on the principles of Participatory Development.

Directions: Prove the above statement true (affirmative team). Prove the above statement false (negative team).

There are four speeches:

1. Affirmative speaker
2. Negative speaker
3. Affirmative speaker
4. Negative speaker

BREAK/INTERVAL (for discussion among teams)

One rebuttal (defense, counter-statement) speech is given by each team to put down arguments from the other team.

When the debate is over, ask the participants questions you have prepared, as well as encouraging their questions and discussion. You and your participants will experience an animated class session!

Demonstration: A demonstration shows or explains how to do something. One or several participants can give a demonstration.

The purpose of a demonstration is to illustrate a certain task or skill, concept or principle, so that others can learn and understand more easily and practice what they have learned.

Who can give a demonstration? You the trainer, a participant, the whole training class, or groups of participants. The demonstration training method is effective -- particularly in Training of Trainers sessions -- because participants not only hear but see how to do something, and can then more easily try it themselves. They can also ask specific questions during or after the demonstration.

As with all training methods, a demonstration should be directly related to a course or class objective. A demonstration should be practised before it is presented to the class.

Panel: A panel consists of planned conversation for the benefit of the class. Panel members do not make speeches but they take part in open discussion, with the class as listening participants.

A small group of participants (three to seven), or guest speakers discuss an assigned topic in front of the class. Panel members research and study their subject matter before the class meets. During the class session ask the participants various questions they can respond to based on their research. Encourage other class members to ask the panel members additional questions.

The purpose of using the panel training method is to help participants gain information from a group of people who have experienced or done research about certain subject matter.

At an appointed class session, ask five participants to be on a panel for 20 minutes. Ask them questions on the assigned material. Encourage participants not on the panel to ask questions, also. After 20 minutes, choose another group of participants to exchange places with the first panel members. This method of learning will give you and your participants a good idea of their understanding and comprehension of these topics.

Review: To review is to go over a lesson or subject matter again.

The purposes of a review are to:

- Help participants remember what they have studied or learned.
- Be sure participants have clear understanding of information.
- Answer student questions.
- Reduce stress about exams.

Review key concepts, definitions, facts, and ideas. Do not go over every little detail. Review material systematically . . . at the beginning of class, during class, at the end of class, before an exam, after an exam, etc. Allow time for student questions. If there are no more questions, conclude the review time.

The trainer usually leads a review, but you could have participants lead the class or groups of participants. You should prepare an outline of what you want participants to review. All groups could come together the last part of the period and have you answer any remaining questions.

Role Play: A real life situation or problem is acted out by a few participants, including acting out what they think may be a solution to the problem. The other participants observe. Or the class could be divided into groups and have all groups done the same role-play. Nevertheless, the actors play someone else's part or character, not themselves. The time limit is only a few minutes. (Participants may feel shy about participating in this training-learning method, so it may be better to use volunteers rather than to choose participants.)

The purposes of role-play are to:

- Solve problems and develop skills.
- Make a decision regarding the problem.
- Help participants apply and use their knowledge of social mobilisation.

In the course of social mobilisation, you would be teaching about various kinds of community problem situations which may be faced by the community members. Ask a participant to volunteer to play the role of a community member suffering from depression or grief to unavailability of a resource or some other relevant problem. Ask another student to volunteer to play the part of the social organiser. Participant actors should use gestures and actions to help express their feelings.

Discussion should follow when the role-play is finished. Brookfield (1990, pp. 127-128) suggests the following debriefing:

1. Allow actors to talk about their feelings during the role-play.
2. Ask observers to ask questions of the players about their reasoning, assumptions, etc.
3. Ask observers to talk about their own interpretations of the scene's events.
4. Ask observers to talk to actors directly about their most important elements of the scene.

Simulation Games: A simulation game is an activity in which participants agree to follow a set of rules in trying to achieve a desired end. The activity involves realistic problems or situations in life.

Simulation games can be competitive where participants follow the rules and work toward a specified goal, or they can try to reproduce some aspect of reality, e.g. poverty situations, adjustments in becoming a new land lord, cross-cultural situations, etc. By doing this, participants will be better able to understand that one life area, which will, perhaps, help them to make better, wiser decisions in that area and situation.

Simulation games may take as much as an hour or more to complete. You need enough time after the game to have a thorough discussion with your participants about what they learned from the game. Be sure to specify the training objectives of the game before the participants play it.

The purposes of simulation games are to:

- Let participants participate in realistic situations.
- Learn facts, concepts, principles, skills, and processes.
- Provide for social values, co-operation, and competition.

Your role as trainer will be as a facilitator rather than an evaluator.

PRACTICE BASED

Peer Review activities are good learning opportunities for staff as well as community members. They provide the participants the opportunity to review their own practice, with a group of training mates, against some agreed standards. The aim of peer review is to improve and assess the practice of what has been learned during the training course. Peer review has been effective in changing the practice of trainees. It uses the experiences of group members, allows individuals to determine gaps in their performance after training, and the process assists these individuals to make some targeted changes to their practice.

While there are a range of different ways of undertaking peer review, it often requires long term commitment on the part of members of peer review groups. This limits its acceptability in some quarters. However, it is an effective

training follow-up strategy, leading to change maintained over long periods of time.

LEARNER CONTROLLED METHODS

Watching Videos and Listening to Audiotapes are good training activities but they are also time honoured ways of attaining knowledge and information. When used in training, they help the trainers convey a lot of knowledge in small and interesting clippings, and when used alone by the participants, these methods overcome timing and distance problems.

Used in Isolation, the learner has control of the pace of learning and can choose the information most appropriate for their own practice. However, these activities are not interactive, and the learner does not have the opportunity to learn from the experiences of others, nor to obtain timely feedback about the material. Yet, for increasing knowledge, and as preparation for education sessions these methods are invaluable.

Reflective Activities refer to any of the myriad of ways that trainees think about their own practice. This can involve keeping diaries about their activities and problems they have encountered, and spending time considering practice and professional issues. These activities can have the effect of increasing self-awareness, enlarging conceptual perspectives, and enabling the trainees to respond to others more sensitively. As such they contribute to learning and can be considered a learning strategy. Reflection requires time and the ability to critically analyse one's own activities and responses. This method does not suit all people, but for those who are prepared to attempt it, the personal rewards can be considerable. In community training, trainers have to teach how the participants can undertake such reflective activities for self-discipline and attitudinal changes.

Field Trips: A field trip is an off-training hall learning activity. Participants take a trip away from the training hall to a particular place relevant to the objectives of the course or class. Participants are told beforehand, or at the time of the visit, about certain things to observe.

The purpose of a field trip is to give participants a learning experience they could not have in the classroom. A field trip is an interesting way to increase learning.

Before a field trip:

- Make a preliminary trip and clarify your objectives.
- Prepare guide sheets with and for your participants.

During the field trip:

- You are responsible for meaningful observation on behalf of your participants.

After the field trip:

Prepare a follow-up discussion and evaluation of the trip for the next Training session. Participants should write a letter of thanks to their host.

Conclusion

The training strategy adopted for a training program depends on a number of factors, including the resources available, the identified needs, what is to be taught, and the number and location of the participants. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of potential training strategies can help those developing training programs decide which strategy to adopt in order to gain the most benefit for the participants in learning the selected knowledge or skills.