

RUNNING A WORKSHOP

BE ORGANISED

It is important to be well-prepared for each session of a workshop, you should aim to arrive in time and have with you all the necessary equipment, participant's handouts and training materials you will need. This will stop you from fumbling and digging around while participants are waiting.

INTRODUCTIONS

In order to make people feel welcome, introduce yourself and briefly explain where you are from and why you are doing this workshop; thank people for giving up their time and making the effort to attend.

ICEBREAKERS

Create a more relaxed atmosphere

Encourage participants to begin interacting with each other in a non-threatening way, especially if they don't know each other.

Icebreakers are short, active and usually fun.

KEEPING TIME

Having designed a programme and worked out the times beforehand, it is important to attempt to keep to these times so that you are able to get through everything that has been planned.

It is useful to have the person you are co-training with to indicate time available at various intervals in a session, or have a big watch on the table.

If you do go over time you will have to readjust your programme accordingly.

Be aware that taking longer over one activity means that you will have to shorten or drop other activities.

GIVING INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP WORK

It is very important to always be clear when you are giving the group an instruction or a series of instructions. Give instructions one at a time. For example when breaking participants into groups and asking them to complete a task:

First break the participants into groups as stated in your training package.

Give the instruction for the task (answer a question, discuss a topic etc.).

Tell people how much time they have to complete the task.

Inform participants whether or not they have to give a report back and how this will be done (verbally or on flipchart).

Also indicate how much time each group will have to report back.

Ask participants if they are clear and assist those groups that require clarity.

Let participants know when their time is almost up.

BREAKING INTO GROUPS

Different activities require different types of groups.

big

small

pairs

random (mix up participants)

self-chosen (enable participants to pursue particular interests)

affinity (enable participants to build a common experience examples of these groups: own choice, same sex, same age group, same town)

When counting "off" to form random groups, get participants to count up to the number of the groups that you need. Example: If you want three groups, get the participants to count off to 3.

Remember that if you want 3 people in each group you will have to divide the group differently, i.e. if it is a group of 24, to get 3 in each group you would count up to 8.

Try to vary the way in which groups count off.

REPORTS

There are a number of options that may be used to report back:

Pair groups together and let them report to each other.

Do a “gallery walk” where each group puts their flip chart around the room and other groups then have an opportunity to read what they have done.

Give different tasks to different groups so that when these groups report back each deals with a different topic or aspect of a topic.

All groups tackle the same issue and report on the same issue.

Make the time available to each group clear, this will allow you to caution lengthy reports.

HANDING OUT NOTES

Ask yourself whether the notes are really needed.

Do not give out notes before you refer to them

Do not give out notes while a participant is talking

Explain briefly what they entail

You may want to give participants a folder in which to store the notes.

HANDOVER FROM ONE SESSION TO THE NEXT

At the end of each session you should

briefly summarise the session you have just run highlighting how the last session has met specific objectives;

put this into the context of the workshop as a whole;

mention the next focus or session within this context; and

introduce the next trainer.

This gives participants an overall picture of the programme and a sense that you know where the programme is heading.

STRETCH BREAKS

If people are drowsy or restless, a way of focusing them would be a quick stretch break or an energising exercise.