

Tips for Workshop Leaders

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Have you been asked to lead an educational workshop recently? Does the task loom large ahead of you? Is there much more to the task than you first anticipated? These tips for success might just give you the edge that you need!

What is Your Role?

Three essential roles are associated with the development and delivery of any workshop:

1. Administrator;
2. Designer;
3. Trainer/Facilitator.

1. Administrator

Anyone involved in making the arrangements for the workshop is doing the administration role. Here is a checklist of responsibilities of administrators:

- schedule the program;
- promote the program via brochures, newspapers and other appropriate media;
- process application forms and fees, and answer general enquiries about the program;
- select participants according to any predetermined guidelines;
- mail a letter of confirmation and pre-course work;
- notify those not accepted for the program;
- notify applicants of cancellation in case of insufficient registration (or other reason);
- reserve appropriate accommodations for the program;
- reserve equipment as requested by the trainer;
- make arrangements for catering meals and refreshment breaks;
- provide an on-site co-ordinator to handle welcome signs, name tags, registration kits, and other administrative duties while the workshop is taking place;
- provide workshop materials to participants as identified by the trainer;



- pay the trainer(s) within three weeks of the program;
- pay for other expenses such as catering, accommodation, facilities and supplies;
- mail any post workshop material to participants, such as certificates, thank you notes and evaluation summaries;
- handle the evaluation process and work with the trainer to act on results of the evaluations.

2. Designer

The person(s) who develops the training program, whether it is a one-hour program or three-day conference, must consider its **structure**:

- a) What are the **needs and interests** of the participants?
- b) What **creative ways** can be used to help them learn?
- c) Is the **information up-to-date** and **accurate**?
- d) Are the **objectives** of the workshop **realistic, specific** and **measurable**?

What do you want participants to **know, understand, do** or **value** at the end of the workshop?
- e) Does the workshop **framework fit** into the **time** allowed and the **space** (facility) provided?

Steps in Designing an Effective Workshop

Step 1: Gather Information

- facts, figures and interests

Step 2: Develop Objectives

- what is to be accomplished?

Step 3: List the Variables You Have to Work With

- concerns, problems and limitations

Step 4: Review the Data and State the Problem

- what is the primary aim(s)
- list three or four major areas

Step 5: Slot the Schedule

- fit the major areas, introduction, closure, meals, etc., into the outline

Step 6: Select Appropriate Methods

- consider your participants' situation, your training style and the objectives to help you create a learning experience

Step 7: Complete the Design

- develop your 'lesson plan,' utilizing various techniques which make the program **focus on the learner** and not on the trainer

Step 8: Evaluate the Design

- have you allowed for the following:
 - reflection
 - reaction/confrontation
 - redesign or move on
 - recognition and discussion
 - recreation/rest/relaxation

3. Facilitator/Trainer

The traditional role of 'teacher' in our education system should be de-emphasized in providing a workshop for adults. Rather, as the word **facilitate** implies, you should 'help to make it easier' for the participants to learn. During the program, the focus is on them and their needs as they relate to the workshop purpose, and not on the trainer's expertise or 'wisdom.'

Here are some guidelines to facilitate learning:

- have a humanistic approach - see the learner as a thinking-feeling

continued on page 10