

TEACH OTHERS

Guidelines for Workshop Design

If you are not used to putting together formalized trainings or workshops, here are some things to think about.

DESIGNING THE AGENDA

Put some time and thought into preparing an agenda that will accomplish what you are trying to do.

- **Set priorities.** Build the agenda around your objectives. Be realistic about what can be accomplished.
- **Order matters.** Groups need time to build relationships and trust. Start with things that bring people together, and build up to activities that challenge people's attitudes or experience.
- **Assign times** to every section of the agenda and cut back activities if you need to.
- **Who will facilitate?** Include on the agenda.
- **Breaks.** Don't forget time for breaks!

GROUND RULES

Set ground rules to establish expectations about time, objectives and interaction. Have the group agree upon and/or propose ground rules for the workshop and write them on a flipchart. Some examples:

- Turn off cell phones; be present.
- Listen without interrupting.
- Avoid judgments and assumptions.
- Step up (if you normally don't talk a lot).
- Step back (if you're normally a talker).
- Start on time, and end on time



What's the Point?

- Define your objectives early.
- What are you trying to accomplish in this training?
- What do you want participants to walk away with?
- In addition to skills and knowledge, think about motivation, behaviors and attitude.

TIMEKEEPING

It is a good idea to have a timekeeper. This person is responsible for giving people notice that an activity should be wrapping up.

- Good timekeeping should not be disruptive. Agree on a plan in advance.
- If you are deep in something good when time runs out, you can always check in with the group to agree to continue, or set it aside for later.

OPENING AND CLOSING

Build in time for an opening and closing activity or discussion.

- An icebreaker or guided discussion is a good first activity. It allows people to get to know each other, share where they are coming from and to begin focusing on the content and activities of the workshop.
- Before adjourning, create time for people to talk about the workshop, what was accomplished for the group, and/or their personal takeaway. Connect the discussion back to the work in the field.

OUTSIDE RESOURCES

Including people from the outside can be an asset if the group would benefit from their specific skills, experiences, or different perspectives.

Some tips:

- Be clear about the objectives of the workshop and how an outside resource person fits into the plan.
- Meet with this person in advance. Discuss audience, objectives and what role you want them to play.
- Are you comfortable giving this person the broad strokes of what you want, or do you want more involvement or control over their piece in the agenda?
- Follow up after the workshop with a debrief, thank you, or both!

Audience

- Who's coming?
- How many?
- What does the group share?
- How are they different?
- What else will shape group dynamics and participation?

Approaches That Help People Learn

- Be clear about the goals of the training.
- Respect the experience and opinions of participants.
- Be direct about feedback.
- Let people learn from each other.
- Keep the big vision in sight—why organize?