DESIGNING A TRAINING PROGRAM

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Singapore International Foundation

Afghan Fellowship 2006
Workshop I

Kabul, Afghanistan
24-28 May 2006

Designing a Training Program

A training design is a detailed plan for what you will do, why you will be doing it, and the best ways to reach your objective. The Eight Steps to an effective training program are:

Step 1: Define purpose of training and target audience
Step 2: Determine Participants' needs
Step 3: Define training goals and objectives
Step 4: Outline training content
Step 5: Develop instructional activities
Step 6: Prepare the written training design
Step 7: Prepare participant evaluation form
Step 8: Determine follow-up activities for the event
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Step 1: Define purpose of training and target audience

- Be clear about what your training needs hopes to accomplish; prioritize
- Be clear who your target audience will be.

☐ Write down clear purpose of training and target audience

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Step 2: Determine Participants’ needs

The more accurately you know the needs of your participants the better your training design will be. Find out their needs and expectation by:

- Get participants to complete a brief, written survey
- Survey a random sample of participants by phone to collect more detailed information. Ask them:
  - current roles and responsibilities
  - previous training on this topic
  - reasons for attendance
  - specific needs and expectation of event
- Review past evaluation and feedback forms

☐ Collect information early and use it to design your training

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**Step 3: Define training objectives**

Clearly defined objectives provide criteria for:
- Clarifying expected outcomes
- Outlining training content
- Planning specific training activities
- Selecting/developing material
- Designing evaluation procedures
- Communicating program intent to participants & others
- Ensuring training is realistic and appropriate

✔ Develop overall and segment (lesson) objectives and present them to participants at start of each segment.

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**Step 4: Outline training content**

Trainings gave 3 components: an introduction; a learning component and a wrap-up and evaluation component.

**Introduction:** Establish a positive learning environment; stimulate interest; reduce anxiety and build bonds. Include some content into introductory activities.

**Learning component:** Concepts and ideas taught and explored; skills demonstrated, practiced and discussed. Activities should actively involve participants in acquiring knowledge or practicing skills.

**Wrap-up and evaluation component:** Here 'pull it all together'. Highlight essential learnings; summarize central concepts and themes; describe next steps. Open up for questions, concerns, feedback.

✔ Remember to repeat stated objectives and outcomes to guide program content and remind you of your purpose.
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Step 5: Develop instructional activities

- Organize activities so that outcomes identified are achieved. Activities should have an introduction, a main segment and a wrap-up segment.

- Select training strategies that meet objectives, e.g., skill development is best achieved through modeling, practice and feedback while information is achieved through discussion and collaborative group work.

- Effective training design takes into account principles of adult learning; group size; participant learning style; prior experience/education level of participants, type of skill or information to be presented, and so on.


- Strategies that promote active learning include brainstorming, games, mini-lectures, small work groups, simulations, role-playing, case studies, etc.

- Remember you need to develop resource materials, e.g., handouts, case studies, questionnaires, etc.

Step 6: Prepare the written training design

- Write a detailed plan of the training session, including goals and objectives; the sequence of specific learning activities and time allotted to each; directions and key points to cover for each activity, and the trainer who will be responsible for the activity.

- Consider the skill, expertise, training style, and comfort level of each trainer and who will lead in ‘fleshing out’ different sections.


- Use the detailed plan to stay on track, make mid-course adjustments and document training details
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Step 7: Prepare participant evaluation form
Evaluation determines if the training has achieved its objectives and to identify what needs to be improved. The evaluation form should ask the following:

- Did participants acquire the skills and knowledge they were supposed to?
- Were the trainers competent?
- Were the activities interesting and effective?
- Was the training format appropriate?
- Was the training on this topic adequate?
- Etc.

Step 8: Determine follow-up activities for the event
Follow-up activities provide continued support and feedback. Prepare follow-up activities as you develop your training design and these activities should make participants reflect on what they have learned and the process of implementation. Some activities include:

- Newsletters and website postings
- Peer observation and coaching
- Mentoring
- Study groups
- Ongoing communication between participants and trainees

Follow-up activities require more resources but increase the likelihood of significant learning occurring.
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Guidelines for Training of Trainers

Planning/preparation checklist for facilitators

- List qualities of your best trainer/facilitator; identify your weak points and try and improve
- Work as a team and assign roles: presenter, facilitator, note-taker, logistics person, etc.
- Arrange for a suitable venue and ensure you have all visual materials, e.g., paper, pens, flipchart, etc., needed and check your audio-visual aids
- Ensure fieldwork dates convenient for people
- Prepare well and rehearse

Good techniques/practices for training

- Relax and energize participants and facilitate name-learning; use an ‘ice-breaker’
- Ensure everyone knows aims and objectives of workshop
- Get a sense of participants level of knowledge and expectations
- Agree to ‘rules’ of workshop: mutual respect; one speaker at a time; no mobile phones; punctuality, etc.
- Use a variety of communication methods and visual aids
- Start everyday with a recap of the previous day
- Always build in an evaluation of the training for future improvements
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Guidelines for Training of Trainers

Attitude/behavior as facilitator

- Be open and honest; stay relaxed and calm
- Be a good listener; observe, record, etc.
- Do not judge e.g., this is bad, this is good; or humiliate people
- Be aware of language barriers; sensitivities
- Do not let arguments dominate discussion; re-focus on key topic
- Have eye contact, speak slowly and clearly; move around
- Try and involve all participants
- Use humour, stories, examples, words that capture interest
- Address questions, concerns while sticking to your message