THE CONCEPT OF STRUCTURE IN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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The importance of the here-and-now, of action and reaction in the living moment, as a potent dynamic in the learning process is widely accepted. There is general agreement that *knowing*, which derives from direct experience, is significantly different from *knowing about*, which the more vicarious, didactic methods yield.

Despite the common acknowledgement of the importance of the living moment, however, interaction is typically analyzed in terms of the individual's internal, subjective perceptions and/or the developmental process itself. Little emphasis has been placed on analysis of the complex system of interrelated elements that is the here-and-now situation.

This discussion deals with structure in two ways: (1) as an approach to understanding human interaction in social situations, and (2) as a deliberately employed vehicle for creating, in microcosm, particular social situations for learning purposes.

Structure, in the first instance, is a noun. It refers to the total system of interrelated elements viewed from the perspective of wholeness. It is concerned with the gestalt, the total configuration, the ordered interplay of the various constituent parts. It is concerned with the totality that exists and can be identified beyond its parts, even in the absence of some of its constituent elements. It is concerned with the conditions under which individuals engage one another. The structure of a social situation is the anatomy of that social situation.

Structure, in its second sense, is a verb. It refers to constructing particular conditions to amplify certain elements for purposes of study. When one structures a learning situation, one imposes a certain frame of reference on it. This frame of reference emphasizes some aspects of the situation and screens out others. Thus, the social situation is delimited and a particular focus emerges. The notion of "structured group experience" in human relations training is based on structure in this latter sense.

STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO ANALYSIS OF THE HERE-AND-NOW

Underlying a structural approach to analysis of the here-and-now is an assumption that the elements that make up every instance of human interaction are systematically interrelated, and that the meaning of any single element resides in the system of

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interrelationships and not in the element itself. For example, the amount and type of communication among individuals, the manifest barometer of interaction, cannot be understood except as it relates to such other elements as member roles, the norms governing role relationships, and the type of task facing the group. And all of these elements vary according to size of group, available resources, locus of power, time of day, physical environment, ad infinitum.

A key concept is that of *pattern*. Pattern implies that there is an order to the elements of a situation and that these elements occur with some regularity. Although variations on basic patterns based on individual and subcultural differences occur, they can be understood beyond their differences only as they are seen as a general class of event. In this way, the concept of pattern unites previously isolated phenomena. When the arrangement of elements is understood in one situation, this understanding can be generalized and applied to other situations.

Patterns of interaction behavior are learned in early childhood, and performed thereafter without conscious awareness. Much of human relations training has been concerned with bringing characteristic styles of interaction into conscious awareness, evaluating them with respect to their utility for different business and professional roles, and modifying those particular aspects of one's style that limit his or her effectiveness.

Regardless of characteristic styles of interaction, certain patterns of elements in social situations evoke common behaviors. For example, limited resources in the face of a task to be accomplished tend to produce frustration. A person's choice of fight behavior or flight behavior to express this frustration is also more a function of the roles and norms of the situation than of his or her personality per se. A structural approach to understanding the here-and-now emphasizes the patterns of elements in given situations that provide opportunity for certain behavioral alternatives while limiting opportunity for other behavioral alternatives. Thus, the structure of social situations needs to be understood, evaluated, and modified where aspects of it limit human effectiveness.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SITUATIONS

Human relations training relies heavily on experiential learning. In fact this is its single most distinguishing characteristic. However, not all of experience-based learning makes use of structure. For example, the very lack of structure provides the central dynamic for the best known form of human relations training, the T-Group. Experiential learning can be conceptualized in the following way (see diagram on p. 3).

As the diagram illustrates, the two dimensions—structure and interaction—provide a four-category frame of reference for classifying various forms of experience-based learning. Box 1 includes structured learning situations of an interactional nature. Box 2 refers to structured situations of a noninteractional nature. Nonstructured situations of an interactional nature such as the T-Group belong in Box 3. Box 4 includes nonstructured situations of a noninteractional nature, such as feeling the contours of one's face or listening to one's own heart beat. Major concern in this discussion is with boxes 1 and 2, with structured learning situations of both an interactional and a noninteractional nature.

	STRUCTURED	NONSTRUCTURED
Interactional	1	3
Noninteractional	2	4

A structured learning situation is a closed system deliberately constructed and set in motion by the trainer or facilitator. It has a boundary that separates it from the talk about the situation as well. For example, within a given period of time several different structured learning situations may be introduced by the trainer and experienced by the participants. Interaction proceeds within and outcomes and consequences are delimited by the boundary of the particular situation.

Within this boundary a set of conditions is established that affects the roles and/or the rules and/or the processes of interaction. Finally, the trainer or facilitator introduces a task to be pursued under the structured conditions. This task constitutes the moving dynamic of the learning situation. Participants must function within those particular conditions and experience both the opportunities and constraints on pursuit of the task and human behavior in general that are generated by these conditions.

The task that the trainer introduces may be one of two types. On the one hand, it may be a *structured task* with a defined goal to be achieved (a payoff). On the other hand, it may be a *nonstructured task* without a defined goal to be achieved.

In the case of the structured task the primary attention of participants within the boundary of the constructed learning situation is focused on issues of productivity, goal achievement, task accomplishment, efficiency, etc. Likewise, the talk attending work on the task is about the task itself. For example, if the goal of the activity is to rank order a number of items with respect to their utility in a certain situation, the talk among participants is about the relative importance of each item. This then is a structured task. Discussion of the decision-making process, interpersonal behavior, and the personal price paid for task achievement is reserved for the processing time, after the task has been completed, i.e., outside the boundary.

In the case of the nonstructured task, there is both manifest and latent content. The manifest content is not relevant to the central focus, but is used as a medium through which the latent content may operate. For example, participants may be asked to discuss the pros and cons of a certain topic; this is the manifest content. However, they might also be charged with focusing on hearing the other side of the argument accurately enough to summarize it and at the same time effectively presenting the side of the argument assigned to them. Tasks such as these are considered nonstructured (although the conditions under which they are operative are structured) because they are

intrinsically endless. Because they have no particular resolution, goal, or payoff beyond increased awareness or improved performance in the moment, they must be arbitrarily ended by the trainer or facilitator. As in the case of the structured task, processing in the case of the nonstructured task takes place outside the boundary of the constructed learning situation, after the constructed learning situation has been ended.

Underlying the deliberate use of structure for learning purposes are certain basic principles that provide clues for constructing learning situations. The use of structure presupposes an holistic approach. Emphasis is on encapsulating the all, the totality, the gestalt, the wholeness that is greater than and independent of the sum of its parts. In dealing with totalities, however, issues of figure and ground arise. Often, the ground can camouflage or completely obscure the figure. Further, because perception is selective, various figures may emerge for various perceivers. In short, individuals simply cannot attend equally and simultaneously to all aspects of a complex social situation.

For purposes of learning, therefore, it is necessary to delimit the arena and spotlight the particular figure or selected aspect of ground that is to be explored and examined. Hence simplicity within structure is prerequisite. The facilitator must abstract from among the complex, multivariate aspects that constitute a "real life" social situation, those essential elements, those elements that capture the essence of the situation, eliminating the morass of potentially distracting variables (the "noise") from the constructed learning situation. For example, in the case of a structured task within a structured learning situation, participants may be asked to choose one of two letters, neither of which has any particular meaning. The emphasis in this situation would be on the way in which decisions are made and how people bargain with one another. If, instead of letters, participants were to choose one or the other of two political candidates, the number of variables in the situation would increase tremendously (gender, age, race, political orientation, etc.), obscuring the intended focus on the dynamics of collective and representative decision making itself.

This example also illustrates another feature of the structured learning situation: the provision of focus. Through simplicity within structure, the energies of the participants are directed to a pinpoint of attention, funneled into convergence on a central emphasis that gives direction and effectiveness to the enterprise.

Once the essential elements of a social situation to be explored have been identified and abstracted for use in the structured learning situation, they must be recast in a paradigm that magnifies and intensifies their operation and possible effects. For example, the dynamics of power can take the form of a parent/child situation, a labor/management situation, a political lobbying situation, etc. The power itself can be represented by numbers of chips, centrality of physical position in relation to other participants when information needs to be collected or disseminated, possession of a resource essential to completion of the task introduced by the facilitator, and the like.

Power is an elusive concept, but chips, for example, are concrete. Using chips to represent power, therefore, solidifies the concept of power and makes it available for study. Other elusive concepts can similarly be made available by solidifying them in a

symbolic form. For example, a puzzle can represent a problem to be solved; alternatively, such functional roles as leader, supporter, and sympathizer can be represented by a baton, a bandage, and a crying towel respectively.

ADVANTAGES OF THE STRUCTURED LEARNING SITUATION

For adult learners, the structured learning situation with either a structured or a nonstructured task, has certain advantages that nonstructured situations, e.g. the T-group, do not possess. First and foremost is the decreased emphasis, in the structured situation, on the personality of the trainer or facilitator. The learning challenge is lodged in the situation itself, with the facilitating person less central within the boundaries of the constructed learning situation. This is not to imply that the facilitator need be less skilled nor less sensitive. Rather, the facilitator constructs the situation (much of which is done prior to the session), sets it in motion, and conducts the important processing period after the constructed situation has ended.

In contrast, the trainer in the nonstructured situation (T-group) is most central within that situation, permitting all kinds of projections and counterprojections to be generated and takes no responsibility for processing with participants outside the boundaries of that situation. Each person is left to grope and sort out his or her own learnings, however long this may take, and to live with whatever order of experience he or she has had. Furthermore, the use of structure sets limits on the power of the trainer, assuring the integrity of each individual's experience, against the potential vagaries of style, mood, current enthusiasm, and recent life experience of a single central person.

Another feature of the structured learning situation is the psychological safety factor provided by the boundary of each structured learning situation. Because each situation is a complete entity, the consequences of one's way of being in one situation can end with that situation. One can learn and be different in the next situation. He or she need not continue to suffer the repercussion of an early, disliked behavior for the duration.

Further, because there is a boundary that punctuates the structured learning situation and separates it from the processing period that follows, as well as from previous and subsequent constructed situations, opportunities for learning are maximized. Participants can engage wholeheartedly in tasks within the boundaries of the constructed situation as well as separate themselves from that situation when they step outside the boundary to view the situation in retrospect. And as they look back on the conditions and ensuing behaviors—their own and the others—they are less encumbered by the emotional impact of events within the boundary. From their position "outside," they can view each situation as one instance of broader, more general principles of human behavior and social conditions. Such a format suggests education rather than therapy.

APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLES OF STRUCTURED TASKS WITHIN STRUCTURED LEARNING SITUATIONS

A. THE IMPACT OF STRUCTURE ON GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

Goal

To explore the consequences of too much and too little structure on the execution of a group task.

Group Size

A minimum of twenty participants, arranged in five subgroups.

Time Required

Two to three hours plus processing time.

Materials

Five envelopes containing instructions for each of the subgroups.

Process

This activity is designed for a conference held in a city and the group tasks presented reflect this. It should take place the first evening of the conference and will be a recreational/social part of the conference in addition to a learning experience. It can also be used for a particular organization, and a different task that does not take participants out of the meeting room can be substituted.

1. The facilitator distributes to each of the five subgroups one envelope of instructions and explains that they will now have an opportunity to get to know the city. They have two and one-half hours to follow the directions they receive. He or she explains that they will reconvene at a stipulated time to discuss their reactions.
2. When the subgroups return, the facilitator leads a general discussion of this activity, eliciting comments on what happened in their subgroups, what feelings were generated, how many of the directions were followed, what effect the directions had on the group, and general implications for working with adult committees. There is usually ample opportunity for recognition of the prevalence of overplanning agendas as well as overdirecting group movement.

Directions Given to the Groups

Subgroup 1: Have a good time.

Subgroup 2: Take this printed guidebook, "This Week In _____," and have a good time.

Subgroup 3: Stay together for dinner. Have dinner at either Neptune's Seafood House, 513 Main Street, or The Steak and Chop House, 2217 Market Street. After dinner, you need not stay together as a subgroup if you don't want to but everyone should go to at least one of the following places: Bijou movie theater (corner Main and Market); open air concert, Roosevelt Park; WXYZ, late night radio show (717 E. Broad Street); Flamingo Bar, 559 Flamingo Avenue; Teddy's Topless, 816 Broadway; Sound and Light, Convention Hall; St. Mary's Cathedral, 14 Magnolia Square; the campus of Watsamata University. Have a good time.

Subgroup 4: Stay together all evening. Have dinner at either the Rathskeller, 692 W. Main Street, or Pasquale's, 893 Broad Street. After dinner go to either the Lennox Cinema, Corner Main and Lennox; or the Centre, 991 E. Broad Street. After the movies have a drink at either Danny's Den, 166 27th Avenue, or the Showboat Wharf at 19th Street. Have a good time.

Subgroup 5: Stay together all evening. Have dinner at the Homestead, 1492 Primrose Path. After dinner visit the Commercial Auditorium's porcelain and china display. Then go to the Latin Quarter, 777 West Bank Street. Have a good time.

(Note: In the indoor version [which can be accomplished in one hour] a task such as "Plan an all-day session for x-group's retreat" can be used with five different degrees of structured directions added.)

B. THE IMPACT OF NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR GOALS

Goals

- To demonstrate the effects of nonverbal behavior upon individuals.
- To illustrate how unconscious individuals are of the dynamics of nonverbal cues.

Group Size

Any number. Best arrangement is subgroups of five or six participants with two persons interacting and the rest observing this interaction.

Time Required

Ten minutes for each activity, followed by reporting period for each subgroup plus processing time for total group.

Materials

- Construction paper, scissors, tape.
- Written instructions for each partner in each pair.
- Nonverbal observation guides may be given to observers (optional).

Physical Setting

A room with ample space for subgroups to meet and not overhear one another. Each pair should be positioned at a small work table.

Process

1. The facilitator is careful not to mention that this activity is concerned with nonverbal behaviors. He or she asks the group to break into five subgroups in any way they wish, stating that two in each subgroup will receive instructions to engage in a task with each other while the others observe the interaction. (If observation forms are used, these are now distributed to the observers who position themselves for observation purposes.)
2. Each pair works on its task while the observers watch.
3. When the tasks are completed, the facilitator, moving from subgroup to subgroup, asks for reports on what happened, what feelings were generated, etc., in the following order: (1) from the partner in the pair who received no nonverbal directions, and (2) from the partner who received the nonverbal directions. After the pairs in each subgroup report, the facilitator calls on the observers in each subgroup to present their individual observations.
4. The total group then discusses the variables noted, the impact of the nonverbal behaviors, the implications of this in this situation and in general, etc.

Task Instructions for the Pair: Decide on and construct a three-dimensional symbol of your pair. You have ten minutes to accomplish this.

Instructions for Partner A: (same for each pair)

With your partner decide on and construct a three-dimensional symbol of your pair. You have ten minutes.

Instructions for Partner B:

Pair 1: With your partner decide on and construct a three-dimensional symbol of your pair. You have ten minutes. While you're talking and working, gradually move to stand or sit too close to your partner. Continue to stay too close.

Pair 2: With your partner decide on and construct a three-dimensional symbol of your pair. You have ten minutes. While you are talking and working, gradually spread out the materials so that you take over both the materials and the work space.

Pair 3: With your partner decide on and construct a three-dimensional symbol of your pair. You have ten minutes. While you are talking and working, stare directly into your partner's eyes and keep staring.

Pair 4: With your partner decide on and construct a three-dimensional symbol of your pair. You have ten minutes. While you are talking and working, gradually move closer to your partner and begin to touch him or her as you are talking. Gradually touch more and more as you work.

Pair 5: With your partner decide on and construct a three-dimensional symbol of your pair. You have ten minutes. While you are talking and working, gradually increase the volume of your voice and move around so as to face your partner directly as often as possible.

APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLES OF NONSTRUCTURED TASKS WITHIN STRUCTURED LEARNING SITUATIONS

A. TAKING IN THE WHOLE GROUP

Goals

- To understand the importance of eye contact with every member of the group during discussions.
- To acquire skill in using eye contact to draw silent members into the discussion or modify the overparticipation of a dominant member.

Group Size

Unlimited numbers of subgroups of five to ten participants each.

Time Required

Forty-five minutes.

Process

1. The facilitator may make some introductory remarks about the importance of developing skills in working with small groups and that this will be a chance to practice such skills.
2. The subgroups are set up through voluntary choice. One or two in each subgroup are asked to observe the process of the discussion.

3. The facilitator asks each subgroup to select one person to act as discussion leader. The activity will be repeated twice: The first is the naive phase in which each discussion leader tries to do his or her best. The second phase is introduced after the facilitator calls time on the first discussion and calls for reports from the observers as to how well they thought the leader took in the whole group and what things they noticed he or she did to accomplish this.
4. After the first round of discussions and reports (about fifteen minutes) the facilitator calls to one side a volunteer from each subgroup who will lead the second discussion. The same observers perform their roles.
5. The facilitator verbally gives the following instructions to the new discussion leaders. “Pay careful attention to how you use your eyes. Make sure that you scan the whole group during the whole discussion and make eye contact with every person. If you notice someone has not contributed anything verbally, try staring at that person and see if he or she will come in. If someone is too long winded, look away toward the others. Do not simply look at the person who is talking.”
6. Second discussion is held. Following this, the observers report what they noticed and what differences, if any, they observed in this discussion.
7. The facilitator engages the total group in discussion of the possibilities in using eye contact more deliberately. Note: Any discussion topic will do for this activity. The facilitator should select one that he or she knows is of interest to the group.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS IN LABORATORY EDUCATION

J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones

One of the most complex activities in which the group facilitator/human relations consultant is engaged is designing learning experiences for client systems. The purpose of this paper is to discuss some of the determinants of effectiveness in laboratory education design in general and to explore the major considerations that the facilitator needs to relate to as he or she designs laboratories focusing on personal growth and leadership development. Whether one is planning a course in human relations, a weekend personal-growth laboratory, or a management development seminar, there are common concerns and questions that need to be considered in order for an optimum design to emerge. We will begin by cataloging the major parameters that need to be specified before designs can be built, the skills involved in designing laboratory education events, components of the laboratory itself, and considerations that must be taken into account in meeting the unique needs of the client system. The primary emphasis will be on integrating these general design considerations into an organic sequencing of learning activities that we have found to be central to personal growth and leadership development laboratories. In addition, we have included suggestions concerning professional development in the area of design.

MAJOR DESIGN PARAMETERS

Before the design itself can be considered, there are several questions that must be answered concerning the specific learning experience being planned. The purpose of this section is to provide an explicit checklist of these concerns that the facilitator may use in testing his or her own readiness to begin the design process.

The design process is ready to begin when the facilitator has data about the following:

1. The contract.
2. The length and timing of the event.

Originally published in *The 1973 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators* by John E. Jones & J. William Pfeiffer (Eds.), San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company. Laboratory education has been operationally defined by the International Association of Applied Social Scientists as events that include T-groups (semi-structured) and D-groups (structured). This definition *excludes* personal growth groups (“structureless”), which the organization defines in terms of psychotherapy groups that have an emergent design rather than a previously planned design. However, the authors have some concern that the term “T-group” has come to incorporate a variety of meanings to professionals and to lay people, including some negative connotations; therefore, we prefer to use the term “personal growth” as having the semi-structured dimensions that IAASS defines as T-group experiences.

3. The location and physical facilities.
4. The familiarity of participants with one another.
5. The training experience of the participants.
6. The availability of qualified staff.
7. The number of participants.
8. Access to materials and other aids.
9. The opportunity for follow-through.

Although this list is not rank-ordered in terms of urgency, the first item, the contract, is, perhaps, the most important. It is critical that the facilitator have a clear sense of what the contract is. This consideration relates to his or her skill in specifying goals. It is important that the facilitator be able to narrow the expectation gap between himself or herself and the participants in the laboratory. It is also important to recognize that the psychological contract and the legal contract may not be one and the same. The design is far more likely to have a chance to be effective if the participants come into the learning experience knowing what to expect, why they are there, and what they have contracted to experience. The facilitator may choose to negotiate such a contract explicitly with the client system, or the facilitator may choose simply to rely on a word-of-mouth or a brochure procedure to specify the learning goals of the event. In any case, it is important that the goals and the learning method of the event can be specified beforehand in language that both staff and participants can understand.

The length and timing of the laboratory are important in that the sequencing and timing of particular events are dependent in part on whether the laboratory takes place en masse or is spaced over several meetings. The laboratory that runs weekly for an hour or two presents a significantly different design problem than a weekend event. In a brief contact design, such as one evening or one or two days, some learning modules would not be attempted because either there would not be enough trust developed in the time available or more data might be generated than could be adequately processed in the time allowed.

The third parameter—location and physical facilities—is important in that it is easier to develop what is called a “cultural island” effect in a retreat setting than it is in the ordinary, everyday environment of the participants. It is more possible in a retreat situation to capitalize on the development of norms of meaningful openness, experimentation, and sensitivity in creating an environment in which people are genuinely resourceful to each other during the free time of the laboratory event. It is often noted that some of the most significant learning in human relations training takes place outside these formally planned sessions. The physical facilities are critical; ordinarily the facilitator wants to have movable furniture and privacy for the training event. Auditoriums are usually too inflexible for training sites, and sometimes very large open spaces can work to the detriment of the laboratory design. It is important to

anticipate whether the training event is likely to be interrupted by nonparticipants, telephone calls, and other annoyances.

The fourth parameter, familiarity of participants with one another, is important in laboratory design in terms of selecting learning experiences. It may not be necessary to include "icebreaker" training exercises with a group of people who are familiar with one another. What often happens is that some participants know one another, but there is an unequal acquaintanceship within the group. The design of the laboratory should take into account that there might be some natural subdivision owing to previous social acquaintance outside the laboratory itself. It may be desirable to use this information in forming groups, assigning staff to the particular groups, and selecting activities for the beginning and the end of the experience. One may capitalize on the relationships that participants bring to a laboratory experience by using acquaintanceship as a means of support for planning back-home application and for follow-through.

Whether participants have been in laboratory education programs before is important because they may already have experienced some kinds of training activities in which learning depends on the novelty of the experience to the participants. It may be that the clients will have been engaged in activities highly similar to those that are being planned, and it makes most sense to know something of the background of participants in regard to experiential approaches to education before the design is attempted. People who have been in laboratory experiences before may be formed into an advanced group, they may be spread out deliberately across several learning groups, or they may be asked to volunteer for demonstrations of here-and-now interaction.

The sixth parameter is the availability of qualified staff to work as facilitators in the training program. The design of the experience should take into account the capabilities of the staff as well as their preparedness in attempting various learning goals. If the staff members are minimally qualified, it may be necessary to use a great deal of instrumentation and structure to make up for their lack of supervised experience. The intensity level of a laboratory may be modified and controlled somewhat depending on the expertise of the staff that is being assembled. Where the credentials of the staff are somewhat suspect, it may be necessary to develop fairly strict controls on the amount of affect that is generated in the laboratory experience itself. Activities that might be anticipated to generate a great deal of feeling data might be kept out of the design because in general they require a great deal more preparedness on the part of the staff.

The seventh parameter is related to the number of participants who are going to be in the laboratory. It is important to be able to anticipate how many people are likely to be involved in the laboratory setting because some laboratory design components require a large number of people while others are designed to be used in very small groups. In general, we recommend that there be co-facilitators in every intensive small group and that there be a pair of facilitators for about every ten to twelve participants.

Access to training materials and other aids in terms of availability, budget, and convenience is an important consideration prior to planning a laboratory. Some materials, such as standardized measurement instruments, are expensive, and others

require a great deal of preparation time for their assembly. Some teaching aids are difficult to carry from place to place. The facilitator needs to develop an inventory of materials that are available both on-site and within his or her own resources: flip charts, chalkboards, overhead projectors and other audiovisual aids, as well as work sheets, instruments, and handouts. It is often very useful to have photocopying equipment at the laboratory setting.

A final consideration deals with the opportunity to follow through with the laboratory participants after the experience is formally ended. Although this parameter is listed last, it is by no means of least importance. When developing a design for a learning event it is important to know beforehand what is going to happen afterwards. Is it going to be feasible for participants to meet again to work through the problems of transfer of training? Are they going to have access to each other on a day-to-day basis? Is the staff of the laboratory going to be accessible to them afterwards? Is it possible to have follow-up sessions some weeks or months later to ensure transfer of training? Part of the application of laboratory learning to one's own work and social setting can be designed differently if there is an opportunity for some support and follow-through work after the laboratory is completed.

Prior to developing the design for a particular training event, the facilitator needs to explore what is available in terms of time, space, staff, money, human resources, and materials. After completing such an inventory, the facilitator may even conclude that the contracted goals of the learning experience are unattainable given the resources that are available and may want to renegotiate the contract or attempt to develop new resources for the event.

DESIGN SKILLS

The ability to develop a learning design that is relevant and effective is dependent on a number of skills on the part of the small-group facilitator. The major set of skills relates to the ability to identify the learning goals of the training event very specifically. It cannot be stressed enough that laboratory education is goal oriented, and it is important for the facilitator to learn ways to be able to clarify the goals for a particular training event or a particular part of a training event, so that these are motivators for the particular learning experience itself. A closely related set of skills involves helping participants to clarify their own goals. It is important that human relations training activities be carried out in the light of highly specific goals that are related to the behavior of participants. In designing a laboratory, then, one begins with establishing, in a highly specific way, the goals of the experience.

A second set of skills in designing laboratory education events is sensitivity to participant response. The facilitator learns to anticipate how participants are likely to react to particular components of the laboratory design. In addition, he or she becomes adept at anticipating the cumulative effects of the design. The facilitator should be able to make some kinds of probability statements about the receptivity of participants to

particular learning experiences at a particular point of the laboratory. Part of this sensitivity involves acquaintanceship with the client system. It is important that the facilitator be able to know how participants are likely to react to particular activities and to particular foci within the laboratory. For example, if the laboratory is to begin with some kind of nonverbal activity, how much tension is this likely to create in this particular client system at this particular point in its development? How are the same participants likely to react to a similar kind of activity after they have been together in a retreat setting for two days? Developing sensitivity to the probable participant response comes from experience with a variety of learning activities, with a variety of clients, and with a great deal of staff discussion of experiences in similar learning situations.

Sequencing constitutes a third set of skills in designing laboratories. Learning events are not put together in a random way; it is important that the facilitator be able to see the impact of one particular training component on the one that immediately follows it. Sometimes the objective is to close things down, but at other times the objective may be to open things up in order for the next training module to be more effective. One of the major purposes of this paper is to expand the group facilitator's awareness of sequencing considerations in personal growth and leadership development designs.

A fourth array of skills involves collaborating with other facilitators. In our experience it is more effective and efficient for one facilitator to accept responsibility for the initial design of the laboratory education event and to work with other facilitators to edit the design to make it more relevant to the learning needs of the participants in light of the goals of the training event. It is expensive to bring together a group of facilitators to build a design from ground zero. It is true that when the staff creates a design themselves, they are more likely to have a sense of investment, involvement, and psychological ownership in what is planned. They are likely to approach the implementation of the design with more vigor. It is also true, however, that human relations training staffs ordinarily do not have a great deal of time to prepare for a particular event. We find it to be useful to have an initial, tentative design that the staff will edit rather than build from the beginning. One of the major problems in designing laboratories centers around this set of skills. Many group facilitators have their own favorite ways of doing things and are sometimes reluctant to collaborate in experimenting with other teaching procedures. It is sadly ironic that often we get locked into particular ways of working in human relations training, and we violate our own norms of experimentation and innovation.

A fifth set of skills involves modifying designs while the laboratory is in progress. There is no way that any group facilitator can anticipate all of the responses of participants and all of the real-time concerns that become relevant in producing a plan of activities for fostering client learning. He or she needs to develop the ability to change the learning design while the laboratory is running. This involves taking data from participants about their own needs at a particular stage of the laboratory's development and finding appropriate alternatives to what was planned prior to the laboratory. When the facilitator discovers that what was planned back in the staff meeting before the

laboratory began no longer makes sense in terms of what is happening now, he or she needs to be able to redirect the learning experience without becoming threatened by failing to anticipate that participant response.

Skill in designing laboratory events involves learning how to make one's goals highly explicit and specific, learning to anticipate how particular participants are likely to respond to the various learning activities, learning to put laboratory components together in meaningful ways, developing the ability to collaborate with other facilitators in producing designs noncompetitively, and developing the ability to redirect the learning experience while it is going on.

LABORATORY COMPONENTS

Designing human relations laboratories and leadership development laboratories involves putting together sequences of learning experiences in relation to the goals of the event. Four major components are ordinarily utilized. Some combination of intensive small groups, activities, lecturettes, and instruments is employed to develop a community of learners who can collaborate in achieving the goals of the laboratory. The purpose of this section is to discuss each of these four components as integral parts of laboratory design.

Intensive Small Groups. There is an almost endless variety of small groups that have been developed within human interaction laboratories. The most common is the T-group, or training group. Another small group design incorporated into personal growth and leadership development laboratories is the D-group, or developmental group (Blake and Mouton, 1962). This is a group that uses a variety of questionnaires, rating scales, and other instruments and learning devices in the place of a trained facilitator. Sometimes laboratories include a variety of temporary groups that are put together on a short-term basis for processing the data of a particular learning exercise. Sometimes these groups are called N-groups, or new groups, assembled for the purpose of providing the opportunity for risk-taking, trying of new behavior, or testing of back-home application ideas. In addition, it sometimes is desirable to build leaderless activities into laboratory events.

The dominant feature of laboratory education is the use of intensive small groups; this becomes the basic building block in laboratory design. Ordinarily one wants to build as much heterogeneity as possible into small-group composition, with the stipulation that there be enough commonality among participants so that any given participant can identify with at least one other person in the group. It is important to establish some home base within the learning experience, a place in which participants can experience support and safety and where they can attempt to integrate what they are learning about themselves. The intensive small group experience becomes such a base in a laboratory.

Activities. A wide array of activities is available to the group facilitator who is planning a design. Eight major types of activities are available: icebreakers, communication activities, experiences dealing with leadership and management, task

group and organization development activities, pair designs, experiences to generate individual feedback, strategies for helping a group to look at its own functioning internally, and a collection of experiences labeled awareness expansion. This last category includes dance and other body-expressive activities, nonverbal activities, graphic art activities, sensory awareness and awakening experiences, guided imagery and drama ideas. Any given activity may be equally appropriate in a personal growth design or in a laboratory focusing on leadership development, but because the goals of the two events may be significantly different, the processing of the data generated by the structured experience is decidedly different. For example, an activity that we have used from time to time in laboratories has been a checkerboard activity. The facilitator distributes materials and gives the group the task of organizing themselves to construct a checkerboard. In a basic human relations laboratory, the behavioral and feeling data that are generated by such an event would probably be processed in a T-group meeting, in which people would focus on their own emerging awareness and on their feelings and reactions to other people's behavior. They would be given feedback of a very personal nature about the effects of the process and the effects of one another's behavior. In a leadership development laboratory, the same event might be processed in terms of leadership styles that emerged during the event, styles of influence, roles people played, and decision-making procedures. There might also be an attempt to process the data in terms of theory of leadership. Activities generate and focus data toward particular learning, but the major skill in their use is in adapting them to the particular learning needs of the participants in a given laboratory and in assisting participants in processing and integrating data that are generated by their use.

Lecturettes. The infusion of cognitive material into the laboratory experience is done in several ways. One may deliver brief lecturettes in large group sessions, commonly called "community" sessions. One may comment very quickly within an intensive small group session about the theoretical implications of a particular set of behavioral data, one may provide a reading book prior to the laboratory experiences, or one may give handouts during the experience itself. The facilitator needs to develop a repertoire of brief lecturettes that can be used to highlight particular processes at any given time in the laboratory's development. In the laboratory itself, lecturettes may be used prior to particular learning experiences to provide a kind of cognitive map for the experience that is about to ensue, or they may be used to help to focus the data from a particular activity or intensive group meeting. They provide a way of helping participants make sense of the learning that they are experiencing and heighten the probability that the participant will relearn how to learn from everyday experiences by providing cognitive models for guiding his or her behavior. These brief lectures are aided considerably by visual presentations. Sometimes the use of a flip chart can make a particular lecturette easier to follow, and the outline of the lecturette can be posted for participants to read throughout the experience. A lecturette on the criteria of effective feedback, for example, can result in a poster listing such criteria, and, during the laboratory, participants can be guided in their giving and receiving feedback by a set of

considerations that come to be internalized through the experience. Sometimes the posting of such theory material serves as a means of guiding participants' behavior without staff members having to remind them of particular learnings.

Instruments. Nonclinical measurement devices can be highly useful in a laboratory education designs. They can serve to focus on particular behavioral science concepts and can provide a set of data, whereby participants may explore themselves intra- and interpersonally, study group composition, and discover new behaviors in which they might consider engaging within the relative safety of the laboratory milieu. Our usual style is to introduce an instrument by encouraging participants to be very open in responding to the items, ask participants to complete the scale, lecture on the rationale underlying the instrument, illustrate the interpretation of the scoring by using our own scores for examples, and have participants practice interpreting one another's scores (usually in helping pairs). We often follow this by posting the data to build norms for the particular laboratory and then processing the data in intensive small group meetings that tend to focus on the personal relevance of the data at a relatively higher support level than characterizes individual interpretation. Instruments are not substitutes for experiential approaches, but they can often serve as highly effective means of focusing learning around a theoretical model.

These four basic components—intensive small groups, activities, lecturettes, and instruments—can be varied almost infinitely to provide highly innovative, flexible designs to meet the learning needs of participants. In the next section we will deal with some major considerations within the laboratory itself to ensure that these components are utilized effectively.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ten major considerations will be discussed in this section to guide the facilitator beginning to converge on the process of designing a laboratory. This list of major dimensions constitutes a compilation of "do's and don'ts" for the process of designing.

Investment and Involvement. It is important in designing a human interaction laboratory for the facilitator to plan to avoid having passive audiences at any given time during the training event. Every participant needs to have something to do all of the time during the formally planned sessions. If lecturing, the facilitator will stress active listening. If using an activity, the facilitator will assign roles so that every person has something to do that contributes to his or her own learning within the context of that experience. The important thing is that from the very beginning each participant is led to accept the responsibility for his or her own learning within the laboratory context and that ample opportunity is given for acting act out this responsibility through participation.

Sequencing. Each activity within the laboratory should build from the previous sequence of activities and toward the next one. That is, every component of a laboratory

design should fit into an ordered scheme that results in the attainment of goals of the laboratory. The next section of this paper will contain a discussion of the unique sequencing concerns in personal growth and leadership development designs. Balancing should also be considered in the sequencing so that the participant does not get an overload of cognitive material. Even the meals should be strategically placed, and the effect of the interaction within the meals needs to be anticipated as one plans for the events that follow. Sometimes it is important in the sequence to have thematic material that runs throughout all of the components of the laboratory design, processing a variety of events against the same theoretical model.

Content. It is highly desirable to use locally relevant content whenever possible. This is particularly true in leadership development laboratories, in which the content of the activities needs to closely parallel the kinds of leadership concerns and problems that participants ordinarily face in their work. A number of data-generating techniques can be employed within the laboratory to ensure that the content of the learning designs is relevant to the participants as they are experiencing it. There are several useful strategies.

Participants can be asked to make notes to themselves about particular feelings that they are experiencing, thoughts that they are thinking, persons to whom they are reacting, and so on. One useful technique is the "think-feel" card, on which participants are to record their reactions at any particular point. On one side they are to write a sentence beginning with "I think," and on the other side they are to write a sentence beginning with "I feel." This process very often heightens the willingness to share these reactions with other participants.

A highly useful intervention in a group meeting or in other laboratory events is to form pairs and ask participants to interview each other with regard to their reactions to a particular issue, event, or piece of behavioral data at any given time. Often we ask people to use this as an exercise in active listening. Ordinarily the interviewer should not make notes but should paraphrase very often what he or she hears to avoid translating in terms of his or her own reality rather than being sensitive to the phenomenological system of the person being interviewed.

A list of concerns can be generated rapidly on a flip chart or chalkboard. Such a list may include issues facing the group at any given moment, problems facing the group, controversial topics, persons, etc. Participants can be asked to rank the list according to some criterion such as urgency or influence. Often it is useful to ask participants to perform a ranking independently to establish their own points of view and then put them into small groups to develop a consensus ranking of the material.

Questionnaires can be developed that include multiple choice items, rating scales, open-end questions, and so on. These can be used prior to or within the laboratory to generate data for participant learning. It is important that participants take the responsibility to process the data, and it may be desirable to post the statistical results so that the group can analyze itself.

It is helpful sometimes for a group to look back on its own history to analyze how it has used its time quantitatively. A list of topics can be generated that have constituted the group's agenda in past meetings, and the amount of energy that has been expended on any given item can be discussed. Sometimes a group discovers that an inordinate amount of energy has been expended on particular concerns, and it may be able to use its time more efficiently.

Videotaping is an excellent technique. Often it is extremely difficult to recapture a lot of the data generated in a learning event by depending on memory alone; the advantages of videotape with instant and repeated replay are obvious. Nonverbal data can be highly focused by the use of this medium, and it is often very useful in teaching process awareness.

A group also can look at its own development at any given moment by using force-field analysis.

Occasionally teaching the distinction between content and process is made easier by using activities that have content that is obviously a simulation of "real-world" concerns. When working with a group of people in a laboratory setting, the task sometimes becomes so seductive that the group fails to look effectively at its own internal functioning. Such a process orientation can be generated rapidly by using an activity such as the checkerboard to focus on interpersonal dynamics.

Processing. Perhaps our firmest commitment in laboratory design is to make absolutely certain that there is adequate time for processing the data that are generated by particular laboratory design components. It is in the processing activity itself, which immediately follows every learning experience, that the transfer of training is bolstered. If human relations training is, in fact, training for everyday work, then it is important that we heighten the probability that such transfer will take place. Processing refers to the talking through of behavioral and feeling data that emerge in a particular activity. We feel that it is both dangerous and unethical to leave large portions of data hanging that might be integrated in dysfunctional ways within the consciousness of a given individual participant. The importance of providing sufficient air time within the laboratory design to sort out and share reactions to particular events cannot be overemphasized. A number of structures have been developed to help participants in processing data. The following is a partial compendium of these designs.

Participants and facilitators can be used as observers in particular activities. It is sometimes useful to provide process observation recording forms on which the observer may make notes during the event. Sometimes we may interrupt an event to hear reports from the process observers. Occasionally we have several process observers who form a panel of discussants after the event to pool their observations. Often in laboratories we incorporate into the design the option for any number of participants to take turns in functioning as external process observers. Occasionally we set up a particular activity in such a way that participants will stop at a predetermined point to process their reactions up to that point.

Facilitators may be used as consultants to a particular group accomplishing a task or working a given problem within a laboratory. This may be done on a continuous basis—that is, a consultant may be brought in while a group is working on a particular problem, or it may be that the timing of the interventions of the process consultant is preplanned. Laboratory participants can also be trained to perform this function.

After an activity on listening and process observation within a laboratory participants can be encouraged to use each other as consultants in pair relationships that emerge during the laboratory. If two participants are having difficulty communicating with each other, they might seek out a third party to help them listen more effectively. This can be very useful training that can be transferred to the back-home situation. It is important for participants to develop the ability to play the role of process consultant rather than to be a person who mediates conflict or takes sides on the content of a particular issue.

The group-on-group design is one of the most powerful processing designs with which we are familiar. What lends it potency is that the inner group is under considerable pressure to work very hard at focusing on process. In addition, that group can use the outside participants as consultants for its own internal functioning.

To increase the time for any given participant it is often useful to break up a large group into a number of small units of three to six for rapid processing of data. Sometimes we structure this so that there will be reporters who will give brief synopses of the major themes of the subgroups to the total group at a predetermined time. Subgrouping performs the function of giving people a chance to be heard and understood very rapidly, and it can heighten the getting acquainted process.

A circle of chairs can be placed in the center of the room with the ground rule that the individual who wishes to speak about what is going on must occupy one of the chairs in the center. This has the effect of including, during any given period, any number of participants in open interchange, and it is particularly useful when working with very large groups of people.

In looking back at the process of learning in the laboratory experience, sometimes participants can focus on particular things that they have been doing by developing contracts, or promises, with one another that they attempt to fulfill in the time remaining. Sometimes this process of contracting can lead to highly useful applications in the back-home setting. We sometimes incorporate within the helping-pair design the writing of contracts for back-home application of the learning process that a particular person has been experiencing, with planned follow-through built into the contract.

Pacing. It is important for the facilitator to keep things moving and to avoid passivity and boredom, but he or she must be sensitive to the effects of fatigue on the participants. One can design a laboratory that has such a breakneck pace that participants can come out of the event having been overloaded with stimuli. Some time is needed for people to think things out, and free time needs to be built in simply to give people an escape from the heavy work demands of a laboratory.

As a general rule, when things begin to drag, it is probably time to make a change. Sometimes the most effective change is simply to point up the process that is emerging and to help participants in understanding its nature. In a group meeting, for example, if there is a long silence, it may be important for the group to deal with the responsibility of the individual participants to avoid dysfunctional quiet. If the pace is characterized by frequent interventions on the part of the facilitator, it may lead to dependency on the part of the participants and they may come to expect the facilitator to make things happen. The pace of the events within a laboratory, then, should be dictated by the probable fatigue effect, the necessity to provide plenty of time for adequate processing of data, and the need not to reinforce dependency on the staff.

Goals. As has been previously indicated, it is critical for the facilitator to know the priorities and learning goals of a particular laboratory, to be able to specify them clearly, and to be able to keep the learning event goal directed. It is important that he or she be able also to help participants to clarify their own goals if they are somewhat unclear. Every person in the laboratory should have some understanding of why he or she is there.

Voluntariness. A major goal of laboratory education is to increase freedom rather than to co-opt people into activities in which they otherwise might not voluntarily participate. This is especially true if persons attend the laboratory involuntarily. These individuals' participation in particular activities must be made voluntary. Some persons react with a great deal of tension to activities involving physical touch, and they should not be required or unduly coerced to participate in such activities. The silent member of the intensive small group may be tyrannized by other group members into saying things that he or she does not want to reveal, thereby violating voluntariness. In designing a laboratory, one must be sensitive to the needs of some participants not to involve themselves in every single activity.

Norms. The most meaningful expectations in the laboratory situation for the facilitator to establish and maintain are strategic openness, experimentation, and sensitivity to self and others. Strategic openness means avoiding the extremes of being dysfunctionally open or colluding with other people not to talk about taboo topics. Experimentation means trying new behaviors within the laboratory situation. Sensitivity to self and others means that participants should be aware of the feelings that they are experiencing and that they should also attempt to be aware of the readiness of other people to get involved with them in open interchange of here-and-now data.

Data. Thoughts, feelings, and behavior are always present at any given point in the laboratory. Sometimes during a particular event participants may comment that nothing appears to be happening, but often this is simply evidence that they are not monitoring the complexity of the emerging process. The data-generating techniques that have been discussed previously can be highly effective in focusing particular here-and-now phenonema toward the learning goals of the laboratory.

Flexibility. The designer of the laboratory needs to plan to use maximum data from the event itself to modify the design to meet the learning needs of the participants. This means avoiding "packaged" designs that are preplanned without the responsiveness of particular participants adequately accounted for. We find it useful to overdesign laboratories in the sense that at any given point several options are being considered. This implies a lot of staffing time, especially if the staff are new to one another. In effect, this consideration of several options at any given point becomes a kind of on-the-job training for designing learning events.

SEQUENCING IN PERSONAL GROWTH AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

There is, we believe, an organic sequence of activities that it is useful to consider in designing both personal growth and leadership development laboratories. The attempt in this section is to delineate this sequence in terms of the laboratory components previously discussed. The flow of activities within the two kinds of learning programs overlaps somewhat although the emphasis is often different; we believe that it is important to consider the design of these two kinds of laboratories because they are the most common types to be developed by group facilitators.

Personal Growth. The model for many personal growth laboratories has been based on the design, or lack of design, associated with two-week laboratories held in a retreat setting. Participants and staff would meet for the first time without having an organized plan for activities, and together they would work through structuring a learning experience out of the ambiguities of an unstructured situation. A power vacuum would be artificially created by the phenomenon of facilitators' refusal to accept responsibility for telling participants what to do. The typical participant response would be a series of "plop" statements, such as, "Why don't we introduce ourselves?" Long periods of silence would be experienced, and after the frustration created by the situation reached a significantly high level, the group would begin to focus with varying degrees of hostility on the trainers. The comments would then tend to be, "What are we supposed to be doing here? If they're paying you, they're paying you too much." The net result of this was that the group members would eventually come to accept that they are responsible for their own learning. On the way to that awareness, they would have resolved their issues around the power vacuum. This would inevitably include issues about leadership expectations, and frequently the plethora of feeling about authority figures would be opened up and discussed.

Although the learnings inherent in dealing with the power vacuum were important, they consumed an inordinate amount of time when the design was translated to the weekend or weekly meeting models that have become more prevalent. The learning for facilitators has been that what worked in a two-week design in the woods does not necessarily work in a group that has a shorter lifetime. The training issue then becomes

how to accelerate learning given restrictive time constraints. The use of activities to focus on learning concepts, to generate learning data, and to accelerate the growth of group development and individual awareness signals a beginning to a set of solutions for the design dilemma.

In a personal growth laboratory, there are definite learning goals that involve the use of skills in their accomplishment; however, there is less emphasis on skill building than there is in the leadership development laboratory. The two key goals in personal growth are developing awareness of self and others and increasing skills in interpersonal relationships. Toward these ends, skills in listening, expressing, and responding are needed, and their development must be integrated into the design of the laboratory. These three skills will be discussed more thoroughly when an account of all of the skills necessary for leadership development is made. This is one of the areas in which these two basic laboratory concepts overlap.

The sequence of events leading to the optimum use of time in fostering the learning goals in personal growth can be developed from the flow of learning that is implied in the following tabulation. The intent here is to spell out a series of things that need to be done in the laboratory in a logical flow, from getting acquainted to going home. This sequence is relevant both to retreats and to spaced meetings. A variety of structures can be used to effect this sequence. This is not the design of an ideal laboratory so much as it is an outline of the learning needs of participants during a personal growth laboratory.

1. *Getting acquainted*. The major need at the beginning of the laboratory is to establish some familiarity of participants with one another, so that the initial caution with which people interact can be eased. The unfreezing process begins in the initial stages of the laboratory. A variety of getting-acquainted designs is available in the literature on activities in human relations training.

2. *Closing expectation gaps.* It is important that the goals of the laboratory experience be made explicit and that they are correlated with the goals of participants. It is equally important that participants and staff have a clear understanding of what each is expecting of the other. The most difficult training situation that we know of exists when participants expect one kind of experience and staff members expect something else. Under this condition there needs to be immediate clarification of assumptions.

3. *Legitimizing risk taking.* Early in the laboratory experience, it is significant for participants to test their willingness to know and to be known by other people, to let their feelings be expressed, to explore hearing how other people are reacting to them, and to attempt new ways of behaving in relation to other people. At this point it is important that risk taking be legitimized and reinforced as a norm in the laboratory setting.

4. *Learning about feedback.* Soon after the beginning of the laboratory experience, it is useful to provide some kind of instruction in the feedback process so that effective sharing can be heightened in the intensive, small-group sessions and in the free time between formally planned sessions. Lecturettes, structured activities, instruments, and

trainer interventions can serve to provide an atmosphere in which feedback becomes expected and experienced freely. These methods can also introduce some conceptual models that might guide participants in the sharing of information about each other.

5. *Developing an awareness of process.* After the intensive small group in a personal growth laboratory has had a brief history, it is often highly useful to begin to explore the dynamic processes that are emerging in the development of the group. This may be done through a group-on-group procedure or a variety of other designs previously discussed. The group can grow more rapidly if it stops occasionally in the interaction among members to process the kinds of patterns that are beginning to emerge in its development.

6. *Integrating conceptual models.* Transfer of training is more likely to be achieved if participants receive some assistance in integrating the behavioral and affective data of the laboratory experience through looking at some theoretical models of personal and group development. This may be done through the use of instruments, lecturettes, demonstrations, and so on.

7. *Experimenting with self-expression.* Growth in awareness of self and others can be heightened through the use of expressive techniques, such as nonverbal activities and guided imagery. Toward the middle of the laboratory experience, it is often useful to build into the design some opportunity for people to "stretch" their personal development through the use of symbolic self-expression.

8. *Planning back-home application.* Ideally, back-home application plans begin to develop from the beginning of the laboratory. For example, an early experience that is often useful is a goal-setting activity, with reassessment in the middle and the end of the laboratories. Often we use role-playing, contracting, and helping pairs for applying learnings of the laboratory to particular back-home situations. Toward the end of the experience, considerable effort should be placed on getting participants to accept responsibility for making definite plans for changes that they want to institute after the laboratory is over. These plans need to be evaluated in the light of some criteria for application, and this evaluation is often best done in collaboration with one or two other individuals with whom the participant feels comfortable.

9. *Assisting reentry.* Closure activities in a personal growth laboratory should enable the participant to move back into his or her ordinary environment with a minimal amount of difficulty. Activities that emphasize feeling and cause participants to be "high" can result in dysfunctional reentry into the immediate back-home situation. It is important to assist participants in exploring the observation that they are full of consciousness of themselves. At this point they are far more sensitive to their feelings and are more willing to be involved with people in open, trusting ways than are their real-life associates who have not just spent a comparable amount of time in a personal growth laboratory.

This general sequence does not imply a rigid structure. It is simply an attempt to highlight the needs of participants to develop an ability to talk with one another, to learn how to make sense out of the interaction that is occurring, and to heighten the development of ways that participants can use the experience in their everyday existence.

Leadership Development. Another genre of training events has been known by a number of euphemistic titles. One often sees labels such as "dynamics of leadership," "management development," "executive development," and "communication skills," and the events themselves are sometimes publicized as conferences, workshops, laboratories, or seminars. Thematic in these training events is a focus on skill building and conceptual development through experiential methods. They differ from personal growth laboratories more in degree than in kind. That is, there is a comparatively higher degree of emphasis on skill building and comparatively lower emphasis on growth in awareness of feelings about self and others. There is also a comparatively higher degree of structure within the design and a liberal use of simulations within the laboratory setting.

The skills that are being learned during a leadership development laboratory are multifarious. They include listening, expressing, responding, participating, collaborating, facilitating, observing, intervening, reporting, and conceptualizing. The skills that we discuss first are the ones that receive the most attention in the laboratory, and those toward the end receive comparatively less emphasis. This is, of course, a very subjective ranking of their criticalness within the training program.

Listening is a basic communication skill, and it is reinforced throughout the laboratory experience through structured exercises and through the process of paraphrasing within intensive small group meetings. Expressing one's thoughts and feelings is worked on through nonverbal exercises, through process-reporting exercises, through intensive group meetings, and so on. Responding to the communication of others is the third basic communication skill that is reinforced during the leadership training laboratory. The intent in working on this skill is to get people to develop a heightened awareness of and sensitivity to the people to whom they are responding, so that they are able to communicate within a system that has meaning to others.

Leaders need to know how to be followers because following is a part of leading. Participating in group activities in which the "leader" is simply one of a group of people working shoulder-to-shoulder is an important skill to focus on during the laboratory experience. In developing skill in collaborating, participants are encouraged to learn how to use conflict functionally, and to avoid conflict-reducing techniques in order to determine the best judgment of the group to solve problems. Leaders need to develop the ability to facilitate other people's growth by encouraging them to take responsibility for the task that faces the group. Some skill building is needed in defining leadership as the facilitation or the sharing of responsibility.

When observing, leaders need to be able to see the complexity of intraindividual, interindividual, intragroup and intergroup phenomena, so some skill development is

planned within the laboratory to help leaders to learn about the behavioral manifestations of interpersonal dynamics. Closely related to observing is the skill in using what one sees to help a group to improve its own internal functioning by learning about its ongoing process. Leaders need to develop the consultation skill of process intervention. In addition, leaders need skills in reporting or summarizing large batches of group content in order to provide succinct accounts of what has been decided.

Conceptualizing is perhaps the most complex of leadership skills. This involves looking at human interaction from a theoretical point of view. Conceptual models can be incorporated into leadership development laboratories in such a way as to allow the leaders to develop their own theories of leadership.

The following sequence is, we believe, an organic, logical, and effective flow of activities that need to take place in leadership development laboratories. Again, this sequence is proposed as relevant whether the laboratory takes place over a weekend or across a semester-long course.

1. *Getting acquainted.* Here the basic need is to infuse a note of psychological safety into the proceedings by familiarizing participants with one another and with staff members on a personal level. The effort is to create a climate in which people can have easy access to one another. It is important in the beginning of such laboratories for people to be able to establish their credentials. Often participants feel a strong need to impress people with who they are.

2. *Closing expectation gaps.* In a leadership development laboratory, as in a personal growth laboratory, it is important that the goals of the laboratory experience be made explicit and that they are correlated with the goals of participants. It is equally important that participants and staff have a clear understanding of what each is expecting of the other. If the facilitator determines that there is a wide expectation gap, he or she must immediately negotiate to close it.

3. *Roles and shared leadership.* An introduction is made to the concept of roles and functions that group members carry out and also to the notion of dynamic, shared leadership. This sets the tone for using theoretical material in an experiential format to focus on ourselves as leaders in relation to other people.

4. *Learning about feedback.* Soon after the beginning of the laboratory experience, it is useful to provide instruction in the feedback process so that effective sharing can be heightened. Lecturettes, activities, instruments, and trainer interventions can serve to provide an atmosphere in which feedback becomes expected and experienced freely.

5. *Developing an awareness of process.* After the leadership development laboratory has had a brief history, it is highly useful to begin to explore the dynamic processes that are emerging in the development of the group. This may be done through a group-on-group procedure or a variety of other designs previously discussed. The group can develop effectively if it stops occasionally in the interaction among members to process the kinds of leadership and roles that are beginning to emerge.

6. *Competition task.* We introduce an activity early in a leadership development laboratory that is likely to result in participants' exploring the functional and dysfunctional effects of interpersonal competition. Sometimes a competitive atmosphere is established deliberately, such as in an intergroup model-building exercise, or it may arise spontaneously in a relatively unstructured task experience.

7. *Collaboration task.* It is useful to follow a competitive experience with an activity in which people are expected to deliberately attempt to collaborate with other people on a task. We want to demonstrate that collaboration is possible within a culture that rewards a competitive spirit.

8. *Consensus task.* Closely related to the collaboration task is consensus seeking. A variety of structured experiences can be chosen as tasks to get groups of people to see leadership from the point of view of involving a number of people in arriving at collective judgments that are superior to individual judgments. What we are attempting to illustrate in this kind of exercise is the concept of synergy.

9. *Planning back-home applications.* Toward the end of the laboratory experience it is important for participants to begin to make definite plans for particular behaviors that they want to experiment with and/or change in their back-home leadership situation. It is useful sometimes to have participants write themselves letters about what they are going to attempt to change based on cognitive material of the laboratory and their own experience during its development.

In addition to a sequence of activities fostering skill building and the development of a set of leadership concepts, some material is thematic throughout a leadership development laboratory design. Three concepts need to be stressed during the laboratory itself: process awareness, criteria of effective feedback, and theories of leadership. The design of the leadership development laboratory in general, then, consists of warming up participants to experimenting with leadership phenomena, involving them in a series of activities to explore leadership from the point of view of looking at themselves in roles, looking at group effects and the dynamics of competition and collaboration, and planning the transfer of learning to the leadership situation back home.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN DESIGNING LABORATORIES

The facilitator who wants to improve his or her ability to design personal growth and leadership development laboratories can take a number of steps toward such growth. The first step in skill development in this regard is to build a repertoire of materials to use in design work. The facilitator can become familiar with activities and instruments available for use in training and can memorize any array of lecture materials to be called on at a moment's notice to explain particular phenomena in the laboratory setting.

A second step in improving one' s ability to design laboratories is to actively seek out opportunities to work with a variety of other facilitators. This has a number of important advantages. First, it offers the opportunity to receive concentrated, highly

specific feedback on ones style as a facilitator. Second, it can improve the facilitator's ability to diagnose participants' needs. Third, it enables the facilitator to spend staff time critiquing the design and debriefing laboratories after they are completed. This, we believe, is the best professional development strategy that is currently available. There is no substitute for experience with other trained professionals working in a laboratory setting with live participants.

A third step that the facilitator can take is seeking out opportunities to work with various client groups. This requires being flexible in design and avoiding developing design packages that may be irrelevant to the learning needs of particular clients. There are obvious ethical restrictions on the facilitator seeking out clients. Because human relations training is generally considered to be a professional-level activity, professional ethics require that one not overrepresent his or her qualifications. But within ethical restrictions, the facilitator can grow professionally by generating experience in working with a variety of different kinds of participants.

Another activity that can result in professional development in designing laboratories is studying other facilitators' designs. This is a somewhat controversial subject in that, within the field of laboratory education, there is a tendency for facilitators to be closed and possessive about the designs that they have developed. It is not uncommon for facilitators to conclude that they have developed a program that is highly salable, and often, one encounters reluctance to share designs with other professionals. What has happened, then, within this field, is the systematic violation of a norm that we try to sell to clients, that is, to be open and collaborative. Pfeiffer & Company conducted a life-planning laboratory some time ago in which over half of the participants attended primarily to take the design away so that they could conduct the laboratory itself. We renamed the event the "rip-off lab," and we had a good laugh about it. What was significant about that experience was that before the laboratory began, the participants' hidden agenda was a taboo topic. We made it an open subject and legitimized it so that people would not feel the need to conceal their motives to the laboratory staff. In studying other facilitators' designs, it is important that the design not be accepted in full. They are almost always, to some degree, irrelevant to the particular needs of the client system for which one is attempting to plan. Adaptation should be the keynote.

A fifth step that the group facilitator can take in developing skills in the area of design is attending professional development workshops. Many learning experiences are available for the behavioral science consultant that afford the opportunity to obtain supervised practice in the design of laboratories. Various training organizations offer such professional development programs.

Finally, it is highly useful for facilitators to attend laboratories occasionally as participants rather than as staff members. The critical point in effectiveness with regard to facilitation is the human element. The most significant ethical boundary impinging on the facilitator is the need to remain healthy: not to be self-deceptive about personal identity, goals, and so on. Participating in laboratories as a participant means living by

the same kind of values that we are attempting to teach other people and continuing to develop our ability to provide experiences in which we can make meaningful human contact with other people. The major need in staff development is to integrate one's personal and professional development. Personal growth is necessary but not sufficient; that is, one can be a highly effective person, but this strength simply gives the facilitator the room to grow in effectiveness in using the technology of laboratory education to foster other people's development.

What we have attempted in this paper is to spell out some of the learning about the process of design of laboratories to enhance personal growth and leadership development so that facilitators can explore this task more straightforwardly and creatively. We look forward to the development in the field of a norm of increased sharing of such ideas.

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THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING MODEL AND ITS APPLICATION TO LARGE GROUPS

Stephen E. Marks and William L. Davis

Helping professionals are constantly confronted with the task of finding more efficient and effective means of working with individuals. They are committed to promoting the psychological health of communities, but they find that their efforts are often thwarted because of the models that guide their daily activities. Consequently, one of the most serious indictments of the helping professions is that practitioners simply do not reach enough people. This paper presents a model that addresses itself to this concern and provides a viable alternative that can be used with larger numbers of individuals without sacrificing the quality of the professional service.

The application of experiential learning techniques to large groups is based on many of the same principles as traditional individual and group counseling and other types of group work. It is certainly not a new approach, but it is sufficiently different to require additional knowledge and skills to implement successfully. Conducting a workshop or a lab for thirty or fifty people is not only possible but may be an even more desirable option than spending the same time with eight to twelve individuals. In some cases, the workshop approach will always be an inappropriate substitute for individual and small-group work, but without knowledge of the application of experiential learning techniques to large groups, the facilitator's effectiveness is drastically limited.

NATURE OF THE EXPERIENTIAL MODEL

The nature of the experiential model can be illuminated by comparing it with didactic and therapy models and by considering its rationale, its basic components, and its intricacies of implementation.

Experiential vs. Didactic

The experiential model is to the didactic model as participating in a heated discussion is to listening to a lecture. Involvement and responsibility in an experiential model are centered in learner participation and active involvement. However, in the didactic model the focus is primarily on the teacher, while the learner's responsibility is to take notes, listen, think, memorize, or duplicate on examination the content of the course.

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Many of the differences between the experiential facilitator and the didactic leader may be symbolized by the differences between the director and the actor. In the two models the leader has distinct and different responsibilities. The experiential facilitator is responsible for assessing the group, selecting the activity, and conducting the experience. Although the experiential facilitator must know how to set the stage and create the atmosphere, the didactic leader is traditionally an actor who is seen as publicly responsible for the whole performance.

Focus

Specifically, the focus of the experiential model is on content and process: The participants experience the issues as well as identify them intellectually. In contrast, the didactic model concentrates on content: Issues are often identified and labeled in the abstract. Another basic difference is that the participant's stance (interest, involvement, motivation, attention span, readiness, etc.) with respect to the learning situation is much more readily identified by both the leader and the participant in the experiential setting than in the didactic setting. The experiential participant is continually encouraged to explore his or her learning stance overtly. However, in a traditional didactic model participants are not typically required to interact, and their stances are often undeclared, unchallenged, or vaguely known to either participant or leader.

Personal relevancy in experiential learning is derived from the maxim that under normal circumstances nothing is more relevant to us than ourselves. Stated in another way, experiential learning legitimizes a forum for acquiring self knowledge because, regardless of the issue under consideration, the participants have a mandate to see, to hear about, and to examine their own uniqueness in action. The experiential model, then, allows both cognitive and affective behavioral involvement. The didactic model usually makes most things outside the intellectual presentation and discourse seem inappropriate. Thus experiential learning—in combining a personal reference point, cognitive and affective involvement and feedback, and theoretical and conceptual material—results in a more complete learning model. Evaluation in experiential learning is usually more continuous and more internal than the evaluation procedures traditionally employed in a didactic model.

The experiential facilitator and participants will be more aware of their reactions to the experience, whether positive or negative, because commenting on the process is a legitimate thing to do. The didactic leader, by contrast, may often be left wondering how he or she is doing.

Experiential vs. Therapy

Contrasting the experiential learning model to the therapy model will further clarify the characteristics of the former. Even though both models deal with feelings, there are some real differences between the two approaches that permit the experiential model to be used more flexibly.

Membership

In terms of *membership,* the experiential model can be used with small to very large groups of "normal" individuals, whereas therapy is usually oriented toward single individuals, families, or small groups that are in crisis or have some specific problem or concern. Membership in therapy groups usually implies that the participants see themselves as needing help or assistance and are seen as clients, or patients, rather than individuals with general learning or personal growth objectives.

Leadership

With respect to *leadership,* the major difference between the two groups is that in the experiential model things happen without the facilitator, whereas in the therapy model things usually happen as a direct result of leader interventions in the process. Basically, the therapist's role requires his or her active intervention; on the other hand, the facilitator in an experiential learning setting is not integral to the interactions among participants.

Intensity

These two models also differ in *intensity.* The experiential model is typically less intense. Ideally it permits individuals to establish their own level of interactions and it attempts to respect an individual's wish to be or not to be involved. Intensity is determined by the activities and by the readiness and personal learning stance of each participant in a particular group. Thus, with sixty individuals divided into ten groups of six, one group might respond very personally and deeply to the topic "How do I see myself right now?"; another group might handle the situation superficially. How they respond, however, is their decision; the leader is not there to evaluate, direct, or influence their discussion unless they request it. Consequently, much valuable information for the participants can be lost in this approach because they consciously choose not to talk about it, are unaware of it, or simply lack the skills and insight to handle it productively.

A therapy setting tends to be a more intense and focused experience. With the presence of a leader, information is less likely to be lost or missed, but the participants have much less control in determining the nature and direction of the activity. There is a much greater possibility that individuals will be led or pushed into situations or confronted with their behavior; and the decision as to whether this will happen rests overwhelmingly with the leader.

Content and Process

There are also *content* and *process* differences with respect to the two models. The experiential model employs many structured experiences. Once individuals are involved, they cannot help being themselves. However, it is not unusual for participants to

criticize such activities as unreal or artificial and to offer this as the reason or justification for not getting involved.

In a therapy group, participants ordinarily deal with one another more directly on a more sustained basis. In contrast to the experiential model, the content in therapy is at times very real. Consequently, a risk encountered in the therapy model is that people may become frightened and withhold information or withdraw. For therapy patients, reluctance to participate may stem from discomfort in confronting reality; for experiential participants the reluctance may flow from impatience with unreality.

Transferability

There are also differences between the two models in terms of *transferability.* In the experiential model, issues are generally self-initiated. Therefore, the probability that an individual will be able to repeat, outside the group setting, the behavior he or she learned is increased because that person changed on his or her own, without expert help. The learner's ownership of decisions to change behavior is high.

In the therapy model greater changes can be expected to occur within the group setting. The participant will have less ownership of the changes, however, because they have been sponsored by someone else, the therapist.

POTENTIAL HAZARDS

When using the experiential learning model, there are potential pitfalls that must be identified and avoided if the activity is to be successful. Individuals should not be pushed into activities; their choice to be or not to be involved should always be respected. Consequently, great care should be taken so that experiences are not set up in ways that make it difficult for individuals to decline to participate. A participant may learn more about himself or herself by being allowed not to participate than by being coerced into becoming a reluctant participant.

Facilitator Responsibility

The facilitator must consciously avoid assuming responsibility for others in the model. Participants will often try to shift responsibility or blame to the facilitator or the situation, yet the greatest potential for learning rests in participants' becoming fully aware of their responsibility for their behavior.

Task Focus

In addition, the experience must not become too exclusively focused on the task. Many of the activities can be experienced at a "games" level, but the facilitator must not lose sight of the fact that the objective is to examine the process and related issues generated by the experience and not to focus on the content itself. When experiences are run as

games, they are likely to produce very little of value; the result is seen as proof of the ineffectiveness of the activity and of the model generally.

It is important also for facilitators to realize that there is considerable skill involved in working with people and in conducting these activities. Explicit directions for conducting a particular experience should not be confused with a guarantee of even minimal success. Facilitators have to know much more about the model than simply its step-by-step instructions.

Facilitator Vulnerability

One of the major dimensions that differentiates this model from others is that the facilitator is much more vulnerable in terms of feeling and behavior. Facilitators are no more visible in this model, but because it provides a vehicle for them to receive feedback, they must be prepared to confront actions and feelings toward them with which they might ordinarily never have to deal. Finally, facilitators should remember that the use of the experiential model takes time; they should take care not to crowd the experience, leaving sufficient time for debriefing and summarizing. Effectiveness is directly related to thorough planning.

Given that facilitators understand the basic components of the experiential model, the most important skill they can bring to the situation is their ability to be sensitive to people; to know where they are and what they expect, fear, or anticipate; to select the appropriate leadership style, experience, content presentation, and timing sequence to fit the diverse needs of the situation.

ADVANTAGES

One of the major strengths of this approach is that it can be adapted to many situations or content areas. Once a particular topic, issue, concern, or learning objective is identified, activities or experiences can be designed. Many types of activities can be presented through this model. They can be used in the development of personal growth, communication skills, interpersonal relationships, life/career planning, leadership, decision making, problem solving, creativity, group roles, group dynamics, conflict resolution, bargaining, individual and group competition and collaboration, planning and organizing, and interviewing techniques.

Central Issues Confronted

Another reason for the power and impact of the experiential learning model is that it confronts basic psychological issues with which individuals have to deal every day. Not only does this add to the interest and involvement of the participants during an activity, but it contributes significantly to the transfer of learning. Once the relationship between these issues and their demonstration in the experience is seen, the relevance of the model becomes clear.

The model gives participants an opportunity to examine their feelings and behavior related to interaction with other individuals. The issues of intimacy, anger, and aggression are central to most individuals' daily interactions, and participants gain an increased awareness of these factors through focused experiences. They also begin to identify their own personal styles in relationships. Because participants are confronted not only with their personal response to different emotions, but are also involved in situations that potentially could generate a broad spectrum of feelings, the model also provides an excellent forum for the expression of emotions. Examining these feelings identifies and legitimizes individual differences and helps to expand participants' awareness and understanding of the function their emotions play in their behavior.

Reactions toward status, success, competition, and cooperation are also often elicited, and these could have meaning for the participants in other areas of their lives. Even though people compete and collaborate every day, their reactions are usually unclear and often distorted. The model provides the opportunity to examine these behaviors.

RATIONALE FOR USE

There are five major reasons for using the experiential learning model. First, more people can be reached using the same resources. This can broaden the effect of the facilitator, producing higher efficiency in learning.

Second, the technique can be applied in various settings and adapted to meet the diverse learning objectives of nearly any group of individuals. Representative activities and populations include career planning in the school system, communication-skills training for university undergraduates and graduates, leadership training programs for business and industry, and organization development.

Third, the use of this model enables experiential exploration of communication skills and interpersonal relationships to be conducted within organizations. The helping professions are able to operationalize their mental health objectives for a much larger number of people.

Fourth, using the experiential model provides participants with the opportunity to experience and understand issues related to responsibility. It gives them the opportunity to be responsible for their own learning and behavior rather than having this responsibility rest with someone else.

Fifth, the model provides people with an experience in which they are able to demonstrate for themselves that within a peer group they are able to be very therapeutic for one another, helping one another to grow. They are able to observe that they can make exciting learning outcomes occur for one another without an instructor, trainer, counselor, or teacher directly involved. The mental health implications of this situation are obvious.

ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

The facilitator has a central role in the implementation of the experiential model, but in many ways his or her duties and responsibilities are much different from what they would be in other models. These responsibilities in terms of process and content will be considered under each of the five following steps.

Step 1: Preparation

A major portion of the leader's responsibilities rests in work prior to the event. He or she must diagnose the learning needs of the group and set some objectives for the planned activity. Accurate diagnosis is critical, because the activity should not only cover the appropriate content issues, but must also be compatible with the readiness and sophistication of the group.

Next, the facilitator must identify and prepare all the materials needed for the experience. A closely related task is to ensure that the physical facilities are adequate.

The facilitator should spend some time reviewing the material and the sequencing of the events in the planned experience. Consequences must be anticipated and contingency plans developed. This preparation should be completed before the session begins.

Step 2: Introduction

At the beginning of the session, the leader has several critical process tasks that affect the quality of the entire experience. First, he or she must introduce the activity and provide the participants with clear instructions. Because there is a considerable tendency on the part of participants to question and evaluate the proposed activity, the primary objective at this stage must be involvement. If the group is allowed to discuss the activity fully, it might never get to the activity itself. Participants should be asked to accept the principle of "suspended judgment," to become involved in the activity, and to be prepared to evaluate it later. A group's rejection of this principle could indicate a lack of trust, suggesting that the facilitator invest further effort in diagnosing the learning readiness of the group.

A second issue that facilitators must confront is their degree of nondeceptiveness toward the group in terms of introductions and task directions. It is important to note that giving directions about an activity is a deliberate act; certain things are stated and others are omitted to ensure that the activity will be effective.

Pitfalls

Several pitfalls can be identified pertaining to the facilitator's role at this stage in the process. First, it is possible that he or she may choose an inappropriate leadership style. Presenting the introduction and instructions is a directive, authoritarian action, not a nondirective, democratic one. Relinquishing directive leadership at this phase through a

wish to be democratic can seriously interfere with, if not destroy, the experience. A democratic leadership stance, however, is equally appropriate at later stages in the process. One of the most important facilitator skills is identifying what approach is appropriate for a given situation.

The facilitator should be careful not to use too much detail in describing the task, but should be specific rather than general. For example, if the total group is to be divided into subgroups of eight members, the facilitator should not simply ask the participants to form groups of eight. Rather, they should be taken through the process in a specific sequence of actions, e.g., moving from single participant to pairs to foursomes to final subgroups of eight. Also, the facilitator should not entertain questions related to the process if he or she has no intention of altering the actions.

Step 3: Activity

During this step of the process the facilitator has both content and process tasks. In terms of content, he or she is responsible for conducting the experience, giving instructions, distributing material, and performing any other functions required by the specific activity. While the groups are working, the facilitator notes the actions of participants and compiles a list of issues or relevant points pertaining to the focus of the activity that can be illustrated by observable behavior. The process responsibility of the facilitator seems quite simple on the surface: Consciously and deliberately he or she must not become involved. However, participants often make many attempts to draw the facilitator into their process, and these invitations are sometimes difficult to refuse. The facilitator should be able to accept the basic principle of this approach that learning can take place without direct expert intervention.

Step 4: Debriefing

The observations that the facilitator made during the activity step can form the basis of the debriefing. If participant observers have been used, their comments are solicited. It is during this phase that the facilitator attempts to help participants relate their experience to existing knowledge.

Step 5: Summary

During the last phase of the model the facilitator has several further content tasks and some critical process responsibilities. He or she links observations of the activity to theory, making connections and generalizations helpful to the participants. As an integral part of this generalizing activity, questions can be legitimized pertaining to both the content of the activity and the process by which it was conducted, including the facilitator's behavior.

Activities that appear to be unsuccessful in fostering expected learnings can be useful if meaningful principles can be extracted. Whatever happens during the activity can provide data for learning.

In order to maximize the learning that occurs and the chances that it will transfer, the time spent in steps 4 and 5 should at least equal the time required for the introduction and implementation of the actual experience. Inadequate provision for these steps is perhaps the most common design error that facilitators make.

CONCLUSION

Experiential learning techniques offer great benefits for both participants and facilitators. Although some hazards exist in the implementation, careful consideration of the activities to be chosen and of the rationale and uses of the experiential learning model will provide the facilitator with an extremely practical technique for use with large groups.

STRUCTURED EXPERIENCES IN GROUPS: A THEORETICAL AND RESEARCH DISCUSSION

Robert R. Kurtz

The increased use of structured experiences by facilitators in various types of growth groups has aroused a heady controversy among theoreticians and practitioners alike in recent years. Theoretical positions on the use of structured experiences range from total opposition (e.g., Argyris, 1967; Rogers, 1970) to firm belief in their value (e.g., Fagan, 1971; Otto, 1970; Schutz, 1967). Although this theoretical controversy has generated little useful discussion and even less empirical evidence, such evidence would be valuable in decisions about what interventions to use and when to use them. A consideration of the theoretical controversy concerning structured experiences and a review of the results of research on structured experiences in groups should aid in reaching tentative conclusions about their use.

DEFINITION OF STRUCTURED EXPERIENCE

A structured experience is an intervention in a group's process that involves a set of specific instructions for participants to follow. These instructions specify a participant's behavioral alternatives at a particular moment in the life of the group. For example, if a group leader says, "Pick out the person who puzzles you the most in this group and tell why," he or she is offering a structured experience. Although some facilitator interventions clearly fit into this pattern, others, of course, do not.

Pfeiffer and Jones (1972) object to calling this type of intervention an "exercise" because of the connotations of the word "exercise." Instead, they name it a "structured experience" and define it as a design for focusing learning. Numerous manuals have been published describing the great variety of structured experiences available to the group facilitator (e.g., Malamud & Machover, 1965; Schutz, 1967; Otto, 1970; Pfeiffer & Jones, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975).

THEORETICAL CONTROVERSY

One of the first writers to deal directly with the controversy about the use of what he labeled "programmed activities" in groups was Bach (1954). Looking at the negative side, he noted that these activities tend to reinforce the authoritative role of the group leader by focusing on the leader rather than centering on the group, and that they

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frequently lack spontaneity. However, Bach also pointed out several advantages of this technique:

1. Programmed activities enable the individual to understand different aspects of his or her personality and social roles.
2. Programmed activities equalize the participation of dominant and less expressive members, balancing the sources of stimulation in a group.
3. Programmed activities help differentiate the norms of the growth or therapy group (which foster exploration) from the norms of everyday culture (which tend not to).
4. Programmed activities provide an opportunity for the individual in the group to act out, and therefore engage in, a wide repertoire of behavior.
5. Programmed activities, by providing a structured format, help reduce the anxiety aroused by free expression and ambiguity.

Negative

More negatively, Rogers (1970) argues that structured activities may have desirable immediate effects but will be disappointing in the long run. Although he does not clarify how this might happen, others offer more detailed arguments. Argyris (1967), one of the most outspoken critics, argues that structured interventions are based on assumptions and goals that are contrary to laboratory findings about learning. Specifically, he says these interventions:

- lack a theoretical rationale supporting their use;
- stress the emotional aspects of the participant's experience at the expense of the cognitive labeling that enables one experience to be related to another;
- do not foster generalization, therefore diminishing back-home applications;
- give the leader such a dominant role in the participants' learning that they become dependent on him or her;
- focus members' attention on the instructions of the leader, rather than on his or her behavior, which has greater didactic and facilitative potential;
- encourage less member interdependence because of the leader's central role;
- cause members to lose the sense of competence and accomplishment that comes from identifying their own goals and discovering their own solutions; and
- move the group members out of the "here-and-now."

Positive

In support of structured experiences, Fagan (1971) argues that they are an effective means of producing changes in participants. She writes that they minimize the number

of sessions members spend groping aimlessly and uncertainly for some understanding of their behavior. Otto (1970), another advocate, offers a handbook with anecdotal accounts from his workshops to illustrate how structured techniques have helped participants to actualize their potentials.

As the descriptions of the various theoretical positions demonstrate, structured interventions provoke extreme reactions in many writers. Either they threaten the very foundations of human relations training (e.g., Argyris, 1967) or they actualize human potential (e.g., Otto, 1970). Until recently, little research was available either to discredit or to support any of the theoretical positions. A brief exploration of recent research investigating the effects of these interventions may illuminate the issue.

RESEARCH ON STRUCTURED EXPERIENCES IN GROUPS

As a part of their recent research, Lieberman, Yalom, and Miles (1973) investigated the effect of structured exercises on participants in encounter groups. In a post hoc analysis of the group experiences, the authors classified groups as either "high exercise" or "low exercise." Participants in the high-exercise groups saw their groups as more cohesive and constructive, felt they had learned more as a result of their group experience, and perceived their leaders as more competent than did participants in low-exercise groups.

The authors also reported the effect of structured exercises on multiple outcome measures of participant learning. After analyzing these results, the authors concluded:

> Analysis of the impact of structured exercises shows that they are neither the royal road to existential bliss nor a robust means of inducing changes in participants. On balance, exercises appear at best irrelevant in that they do not yield markedly different results whether they are used or not; more likely, it can be inferred they are less effective in general than more unstructured strategies. Unfortunately, too many other factors of climate and leader strategy enter into such an equation to speak conclusively about the singular contribution of exercises in relationship to an individual's learning. (p. 419)

Levin and Kurtz (1974) studied the effects of "structured" and "nonstructured" T-groups on participants' perceptions of group cohesiveness, on ego involvement in the groups, and on self-perceived personality change. Structured-group leaders used structured experiences at the beginning of each group session to get the group started. No structured experiences were used at all in the nonstructured groups. The same group facilitators conducted both types of groups. The authors also investigated the effects of structured and nonstructured groups on participants' self-concepts and interpersonal orientations (Levin, 1973). The results indicated that members of the structured groups perceived their groups as more cohesive, more ego involving, and having more significant positive effects on their personalities than did members of the nonstructured groups. The differences in group format had no significant effects on outcome measures of personality change.

The results supported the Lieberman, Yalom, and Miles (1973) study even though the participant population was different (counselor candidates), the facilitators less

experienced, the types of groups varied (T-groups instead of encounter), and different measurement devices used.

In a study on vocational counseling, Pinkney (1973) investigated the effects of structured experiences on client perceptions of the counseling and on an outcome measure of vocational counseling success. Vocational clients were assigned either to individual or to group counseling. Each type of counseling was conducted using both a structured and a nonstructured format. The results indicated that the structured format produced more client satisfaction in both individual and group counseling. The structured-group counseling treatments produced more changes than the other treatments on the vocational counseling outcome measure. However, this result may have been confounded by the fact that the vocational counselors who conducted the structured groups were more experienced.

In a study on the effects of consciousness-raising groups on sex-role stereotyping among college students, Erskine (1974) found that participants in a structured-group format reported significantly more ego involvement and greater group satisfaction than participants in nonstructured groups. Again, no significant differences were found between the groups on an outcome measure.

RESEARCH RESULTS

There is a remarkable consistency in the results of the research on the use of structured experiences. This consistency is even more impressive considering that the research was conducted with different types of growth groups (encounter groups, T-groups, vocational groups, consciousness-raising groups), different levels of leader experience, and different instruments to define the variables.

Because of the consistency of results, the conclusions that can be drawn from the research may be stated with a good deal of confidence.

Positive

The research results indicate that structured experience interventions lead to:

- more cohesive groups;
- participants who are more involved in the group activities;
- participants who perceive their leaders in a more favorable light; and
- participants who report that they learned more from the group experiences.

Negative

Despite these conclusions about the positive effects of structured interventions, the research results are also consistent in supporting the conclusion that structured experiences do not effect measurable changes in participants.

A Moderate Position

Therefore, the research results tend to support the more moderate theoretical positions about the use of structured experiences in groups (e.g., Bach, 1954; Rogers, 1970). The results also tend to support Lieberman, Yalom, and Miles (1973) in their conclusion that factors other than the use of specific techniques make the difference in the outcomes of growth groups. This position has been taken by many other writers in the field of counseling and psychotherapy with regard to the differential effects of any specific techniques (e.g., Combs, Avila, & Purkey, 1973; Frank, 1963).

If the use of specific techniques such as structured experiences does not affect outcomes of growth groups, then what variables do? The evidence is far from complete, but the research suggests that the variables are linked to the facilitators (e.g., Lieberman, Yalom, & Miles, 1973; Truax, 1961): their abilities to convey caring responses to the participants; their abilities to help participants make their experiences meaningful to themselves; their empathic abilities; their genuineness and warmth; and other factors yet to be researched. In sum, the use of structured experiences will not produce a facilitative leader, nor will it hinder an effective one.

STRUCTURED EXPERIENCES AND GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Frequently, one of the arguments against using structured experiences in groups is that the experiences retard group development (e.g., Rabin, 1970). This view suggests that the group environment should be unstructured, with low personal risk. Presumably, the unstructured situation promotes a group atmosphere that facilitates self-exploration and leads to more effective behavioral repertoires by participants. However, Bednar, Melnick, and Kaul (1974) argue that a lack of structure early in counseling and psychotherapy groups produces exactly opposite effects. These authors propose a theory of group development in which group leaders use a high degree of structure early in counseling and psychotherapy groups and then use less structure as the group proceeds. The research results reported in this paper support their position.

Many theories of group development stress that the tasks of creating a group atmosphere with high cohesiveness, high member involvement, and high interpersonal trust are significant early in a group's development (e.g., Rogers, 1970; Schutz, 1967). Inasmuch as the research suggests that structured experiences promote higher group cohesiveness and greater member involvement, they can most effectively be used early in a group's development. This position is also supported by Goldstein, Heller, and Sechrest (1966), who generated their hypothesis from the social psychology research on groups. They propose that using a high degree of structure later in the group (after a high degree of cohesiveness has developed) will be less effective than imposing structure early in groups.

Other theorists argue that the use of structured experiences in groups tends to make the group excessively dependent on the leader (Bach, 1954; Argyris, 1967). The argument is that members will expect the group leader to start each session and to

provide structured experiences for each and every difficulty the members encounter. Although this expectation may occur, it certainly was not the case in Levin and Kurtz's study on T-groups (1974). Halfway through the T-group sessions, the facilitators received strong pressures from members to dispense with the structured experiences and to move to an unstructured format. The facilitators resisted this pressure for research purposes, but its emergence suggests that the participants did not depend on the experiences in order to function. This observation also tends to support Goldstein, Heller, and Sechrest's (1966) hypothesis about group development.

CONCLUSION

Although, until recently, little research was available either to discredit or to support any of the theoretical positions about the use of structured experiences in growth groups, this brief exploration indicates that structured experiences tend to promote increased group cohesiveness, higher member involvement, and greater learning for members. Research results also suggest that variables other than the use of structured experiences effect measurable change in participants as the result of their group experiences.

Some writers (Bednar, Melnick, & Kaul, 1974; Goldstein, Heller, & Sechrest, 1966) propose that structured experiences can be used most effectively early in a group's development. Many theories of group development stress that the early tasks in groups center around creating an atmosphere of high cohesion, member involvement, and interpersonal trust. The research suggests that structured experiences promote these effects. Therefore a reasonable conclusion is that structured experiences are a significantly valuable type of intervention.

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A MODEL FOR TRAINING DESIGN: SELECTING APPROPRIATE METHODS

Donald T. Simpson

Many trainers and consultants who are skilled at facilitating learning groups hesitate to attempt the design of a major training program. Instead, they adapt designs from their experience and rely heavily on instinct. In doing so, they restrict themselves to using methods with which they are comfortable—with the potential that the trainer's comfort may come at the learners' expense. What is needed, therefore, is a systematic, rational approach to designing a learning program that is based on current, sound research rather than on personal intuition. In this paper, the author presents such an approach in model form, concentrating on guidelines for selecting needs-analysis methods, a design strategy, and training methods.

THE NEED FOR A DESIGN MODEL

One effective way to bridge the gap between research and application is through the use of models. A model describes the reality of research, just as a set of blueprints describes a house. Of necessity, the individual who conceives a model of a particular process makes some assumptions and/or eliminates some variables. The resulting abstract thus allows its users to clarify their understanding of the process and to describe it with a common language.

The purpose of a training-design model is to describe the complex phenomena of adult learning in terms that can be used to design the training process. Ideally, the originator of such a model starts with research findings and philosophies about how adults learn and then works toward educational strategies described as methods and media. If a model is to be useful, it also should be applicable over a wide range of learning situations.

THE ROLE OF RESEARCH

Trainers base their actions with learning groups on their assumptions about the way in which people learn. These assumptions may be the result of an understanding of current research, personal values, and/or personal experience as learners. Whatever the source, it

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is helpful and necessary to examine these assumptions periodically and to determine their validity.

As designers of training programs, trainers become consumers of research. The designer begins with the philosophy and research of education, sociology, and psychology; combines the resulting data with the practical applications and constraints of "the real world"; and then develops a useful learning vehicle.

The model described in this paper is based on the philosophy of Pine and Horne (1969), who described the conditions that facilitate adult learning. It also draws on the ideas of Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia (1964), who classified different types of learning as follows:

- The cognitive domain, which allows an individual to learn and recall facts, concepts, and principles. In the author's model, this element is called the knowledge component.
- The psychomotor domain, which involves the motor or neuromuscular skills and allows an individual not only to move as desired, but also to solve problems and to communicate interpersonally. The author refers to this element as the skill component.
- The affective domain, which allows an individual to form and exercise values, attitudes, and feelings. This element is termed the attitudinal component in the author's model.

In addition, the model relies on Knowles' (1970) description of the way in which adults learn and the methods that are most effective in helping them to learn. The connection between the model and Knowles' work is explained later in this paper.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE OF THE MODEL

Figure 1 depicts a sequence for designing a training program. Each of the steps involved is dealt with separately in the following paragraphs.

Determine Needs

If a trainer designs and trains in accordance with incorrectly defined needs, that work is in vain. Before considering design strategies or delivery, the trainer must be confident that the right issues are being addressed. Often, management identifies as a training problem an issue that cannot be addressed properly through training. Thus it is the trainer's responsibility, whenever possible, to provide the objectivity demanded by a needs determination. It would be desirable, of course, always to conduct the most accurate and complete analysis possible. Most organizations, however, do not have unlimited resources, especially during difficult economic times; in addition, the training effort under consideration may not warrant a costly, time-consuming needs assessment. Therefore, it is often necessary to compromise for the sake of practicality.

Newstrom and Lilyquest (1979) describe five criteria that affect the selection of needs-analysis methods. For simplicity in application, these five are combined into three as follows:

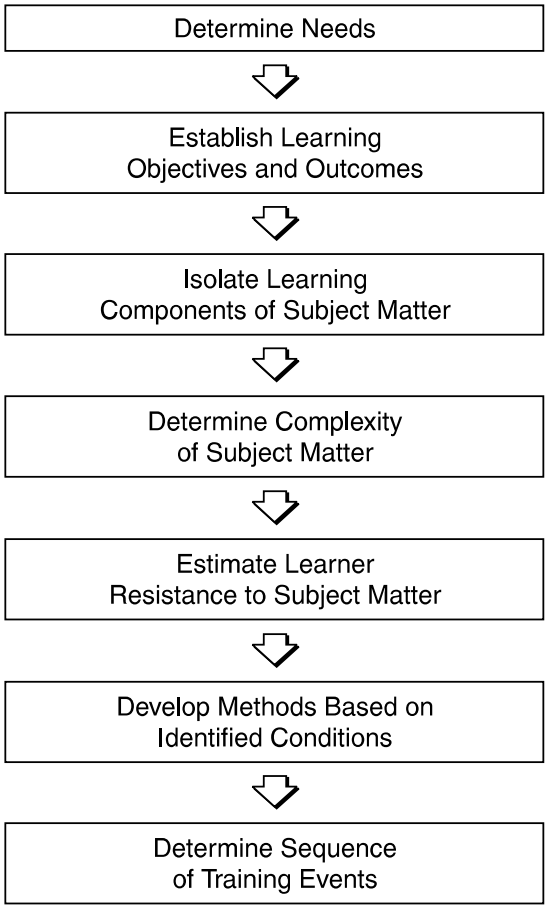

Figure 1. A Model for Designing a Training Program

1. *Cost.* When planning a needs assessment, the cost must be considered in terms of money and time. In general, the more accurate and the more complete the assessment, the more it will cost and the longer it will take. Also, as more people are involved in the effort, both types of expenditure tend to increase. Some anticipated learner populations are so large that the cost of surveying or interviewing all participants becomes prohibitive; in these cases the trainer must employ sampling techniques.

2. *Accuracy.* The degree of accuracy required varies with the type of program being contemplated. Some training programs are so critical to the organization that the needs must be determined with absolute accuracy; interventions involving the way in which people control a major manufacturing process or the way in which a hospital staff carries out key medical procedures are examples of such critical efforts. Other types of training, however, may not demand a high degree of accuracy; examples are orientation programs for new employees or introductions of new administrative procedures within

which there will be reviews and checks. Obviously, when extreme accuracy is a necessity, the cost of the assessment is increased.

3. *Commitment.* A commitment to the training effort, especially on the part of the prospective learners, is an important factor. Conducting a timely, accurate assessment of training needs is a wasted effort if the would-be learners resist the program. Thus it is important that the trainer build commitment into the design. One way to accomplish this—although it usually involves time, effort, and money—is to involve the learners in the assessment of their own needs. Similarly, management commitment to a training effort can be enhanced by involving the decision makers early and often.

Thus, it becomes apparent that the degrees of accuracy and commitment required in a given situation affect the cost of needs assessment. Figure 2 is a categorization of assessment methods that are appropriate under various circumstances. Different methods often can be combined to achieve a balance among the factors of cost, accuracy, and commitment. For example, a general survey may be used to indicate trends as well as to identify specific individuals for in-depth interviews. Examination of data, such as records of customer complaints or funding sources, may be combined with task analysis of selected positions and interviewing. Combining methods is also a way of effecting a reality check on the determination of training needs.

	Low Demands for Accuracy	High Demands for Accuracy
Moderate Commitment Required	General survey Trend data Opinions/instinct	Task analysis Mission analysis Assessment center with limited feedback Detailed data analysis
High Commitment Required	One-on-one interviews Group interviews Critical incidents followed by interviews	A combination of methods: mission/task analysis, survey, interviews, and feedback/clarification meetings

Figure 2. Needs-Assessment Methods That Accommodate Requirements for Accuracy and Commitment

Establish Learning Objectives and Outcomes

It is essential that the trainer design the program in accordance with appropriate learning objectives and the corresponding knowledge, behaviors, and/or skills to be gained. If people are trained to know or do something for which they have no use in "real life," the training program becomes a waste of trainer time, learner time, and money. In addition, learners who are unable to apply their learnings because of organizational regulations or other factors often experience a deep sense of frustration. Under these circumstances,

training becomes dysfunctional. Thus it is important to ensure that all of those whose functioning might be affected by a training program—management as well as participants, for example—understand fully and commit themselves to the learning objectives and content. One way to enhance such commitment, as noted earlier, is to involve everyone throughout the process of program development.

Involvement need not mean one-on-one interviews with every person who might be affected. It often takes the form of negotiating training time and objectives with management, feeding back survey results to learners, and educating both management and learners regarding the rationale behind the training design. Removing the element of mystery from the design fosters commitment and trust.

Another important reason for involving others in establishing objectives and outcomes is that this approach provides another reality check. Those who are closest to the environment in which the training will be applied can easily identify anything impractical or unworkable.

Isolate Learning Components of Subject Matter

In designing a training experience, the trainer should start by reexamining the program objectives in terms of the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes to be gained. For example, it is a good idea to look for the verbs in the objectives: Verbs such as *know, list, describe,* and *discuss* indicate a strong knowledge component, whereas verbs like *conduct, operate, construct,* and *perform* indicate a strong skill component. Although all learning involves all three components, isolating the three allows the trainer to consider specific methods best suited to the subject matter.

Knowledge Components

In general, these components are most effectively addressed through some method that allows self-paced learning. Such methods include assigned reading; written or computer-assisted, programmed instruction; and individual, analytical work, such as with case studies. Many professionals in the field of adult education have published research strongly indicating that everyone gains knowledge in an individualized, self-paced way (Knowles, 1970); yet training in knowledge components often continues routinely to be done in groups. In addition, bringing people together unnecessarily for this purpose increases the cost of training in terms of effort, time, and money. Thus, it would seem to be more desirable to develop materials that can be sent to individual learners rather than to send the learners to the materials.

Skill Components

Components dealing with skills suggest a strategy of interaction with the materials, machines, or people involved. The need to learn interpersonal skills, for example, implies that the participants must work with other people during the training experience, whereas the need to learn how to operate a machine implies that the participants must

actually use that equipment during training. In other words, learning skills means learning by doing. Often the trainer must turn to simulation for practical reasons; learners need to practice new skills in the relatively safe environment provided by a training setting before they feel confident enough to risk using them in "the real world." However, the greater the similarity between the training environment and the "real-life" environment, the more effective the training.

Attitudinal Components

These components, which deal with the affective domain, suggest an experiential approach designed to evoke specific behaviors and to provide continued positive reinforcement of a particular attitude. Training seldom effects total and instant conversions because attitudes form over time, usually as the long-term result of specific behaviors and the experienced consequences of those behaviors. Thus, in most training programs, attitudinal components become variables associated with the more immediate objectives related to knowledge and skill. If the trainer provides a design that enables learners to acquire the knowledge and skill needed to accomplish a particular task and if he or she follows up with positive reinforcement, then it is likely that the learners will develop a positive attitude toward that task.

Determine Complexity of Subject Matter

As the complexity of the subject matter increases, so must the learner interaction with that subject matter. Too much interaction with a simple topic either bores or insults learners, and too little interaction with complex material results in a failure to learn. The facilitator can gauge whether the chosen methods are appropriate in this regard by evaluating learnings at intervals during a field test.

Learner readiness for a given subject matter is a related concern. If readiness is overestimated or if some learners do not meet prerequisites, the trainer may need to spend more time on the topic than planned.

Estimate Learner Resistance to Subject Matter

The learners' resistance to the subject matter, as anticipated by the trainer, is an important consideration. The ability to estimate resistance depends on one's knowledge of the topic, the organization involved, the sociology of the learners as a group, and the events that led to training. Dealing with resistance is similar to dealing with complexity of subject matter: The higher the level of anticipated resistance, the greater the need for planned interaction between and among the learners. For some topics and with some learners, learning can occur with no learner interaction whatsoever. When the anticipated resistance is particularly high, confrontation is in order, leading not only to increased learner/learner interaction, but also to greater learner/trainer interaction.

Develop Methods Based on Identified Conditions

In order to develop appropriate training methods, it is necessary to combine the determinations regarding the isolation of learning components, the complexity of the subject matter, and the anticipated resistance to the subject matter. The key principle involved is that methods are chosen according to their ability to address the identified conditions. Adhering to this principle keeps the trainer from inappropriately designing personal biases into the program. For example, many trainers favor experiential methods because of their particular applicability in fostering the learning of interpersonal skills. But to apply such methods to a simple knowledge component might be inappropriate; a precourse or intersession reading assignment might not only suffice for this purpose, but also save group time for a more suitable use, such as skill practice. Figure 3 presents methods that are appropriate under specific circumstances.

Appropriate Methods

Emphasis on Knowledge Components

	Low Complexity	*High Complexity*
Low resistance	Reading Lecture/panel discussion Film/slide/tape	Programmed instruction Case study/analysis Experiential/lecture
High Resistance	Group discussion	Interactive case study Interactive instruments Simulation/game

Emphasis on Skill components

	Low Complexity	*High Complexity*
Low Resistance	Demonstration (e.g., film) + practice	Modeling On-the-job training + feedback Instruments
High Resistance	Structured experience Group role play Modeling	Role play Psychodrama Simulation/game

Figure 3. Training Methods That Are Appropriate Under Specific Circumstances

The use of many training methods or tools can be varied in accordance with specific conditions. For example, a case study can be used in several ways, as illustrated in Figure 4.

Determine Sequence of Training Events

When establishing the sequence of events in a training program, the trainer should consider the following issues:

Identified Conditions	Suggested Learner Activities
Emphasis on Knowledge Components	
Low complexity, low resistance	Read the case as an example of some concept described earlier.
High complexity, low resistance	Read and analyze the case, perhaps by responding to summary questions or by writing essays.
Low complexity, high resistance	Read and discuss the case.
High complexity, high resistance	Read, analyze, and discuss the case, perhaps developing a group analysis or recommendation.
Emphasis on Skill Components	
Low complexity, low resistance	Read the case as an example of a skill such as problem identification.
High complexity, low resistance	Read and analyze the case, perhaps working out a problem-analysis sequence.
Low complexity, high resistance High complexity, high resistance }	Read the case, analyze it, and develop a role play or simulation from it that includes interaction with others.

Figure 4. Example of Ways To Use a Case Study To Accommodate Different Conditions

1. *Prerequisite Learning.* Some types of knowledge and skill are dependent on other types as prerequisites. For instance, one must know how to add and subtract before attempting to learn multiplication and division. Similarly, basic communication skills are prerequisite to counseling. The trainer must keep prerequisites in mind when establishing a sequence of training activities.

2. *Affective Set.* It is a good idea to begin a training program by building learner rapport, confidence, and receptivity. Getting acquainted activities and icebreakers pave the way for later learning, including the development of deeper trust and teamwork.

3. *Participation.* Generally, participation by learners increases over time as they become more comfortable with the trainer, one another, and the learning environment. Depending on other factors, the more participative elements of the program usually should be scheduled to take place after a degree of comfort has been established.

4. *Complexity/Risk.* The learners' willingness to offer opinions, deal openly with feelings, and tackle complex material also increases with time spent in the learning environment. Thus, progressing from the familiar to the unfamiliar is a useful guide.

5. *Theory/Practice.* An emphasis on knowledge components often dictates that theory be presented before practice. When the emphasis is on skill or attitude components, the trainer may present theory and rationale before practice or, as in the experiential or laboratory approach, draw conclusions from experience.

SUMMARY

The author's model for designing a training program is based on current research regarding the way in which people learn. The developmental sequence of the model begins with an assessment of the specific needs involved. Then objectives for the learning program are determined, along with expected outcomes. Subsequently, the learning components of the subject matter are categorized as consisting of knowledge, skill, and/or attitudes so that they can be addressed properly. At this point, it is important that the trainer involve all those who might be affected by the training; allowing them to have input not only increases their commitment and trust, but also provides valuable information as to what may or may not be possible to achieve in the actual work environment. The next step is to determine the complexity of the subject matter so that the trainer can select appropriate methods and time frames. The degree of learner readiness is also assessed at this point; resistance to subject matter as well as prerequisite knowledge or abilities are issues that must be analyzed and incorporated into the design.

After all existing conditions have been identified, the trainer is ready to develop a program that allows for the treatment of these conditions. Once methods have been selected, the trainer can establish a sequence of training events to follow.

Thus, with this model, the learning objectives dictate content as well as methods so that the trainer can overcome any predisposition for using only a few favorite techniques. In this way, program participants can be provided with effective learning experiences.

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MODELING: TEACHING BY LIVING THE THEORY

Beverly Byrum-Gaw and C. Jesse Carlock

Various sources have described modeling as one of the basic means by which new behaviors are taught or existing behaviors are modified. The concept of vicarious learning—learning through observation of models—has been widely researched within the framework of social-learning theory (Bandura, 1965; Bandura & Walters, 1963) and training methodology (Zemke, 1982). This application of modeling allows the learner to observe the behavior of appropriate models as well as the consequences of this behavior. Subsequently, the learner practices the observed activities until they are performed skillfully.

Most modeling is carried out through preplanned demonstrations during which the model sets up and highlights discrete behaviors to be observed (Robinson, 1982; Robinson & Gaines, 1980). According to Robinson and Gaines, modeling is particularly useful in teaching skills and specific ways to employ these skills, whereas other methods are useful in transmitting information.

The authors feel, however, that these descriptions and definitions are too limited in scope. The general purpose of modeling, as they see it, is to demonstrate an appropriate integration of theory and practice—to prove that theory is livable and viable by involving the learner cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally. This expanded viewpoint includes the notion that modeling benefits the model—the professional trainer—as well as the learner. For instance, competence is an issue of continual importance to the professional trainer. In discussing competence, Pfeiffer and Jones (1974) maintain that there are four facets of training with which the professional must be concerned: oneself, theory, technique, and skill. They suggest that theory, technique, and skill can be acquired through reading, education, and training; however, developing oneself (that is, maintaining awareness, clarity of purpose, and an orientation toward growth) is both the most important and the most difficult task that faces the professional.

Modeling offers the trainer a way to continue self-development as well as to demonstrate theory, technique, and skill in a clear and efficient manner. Through modeling, the trainer not only learns and relearns theory by living it, but also remains current and consistent with what he or she must be willing to speak to in terms of underlying issues of personal concern as well as those that appear to be affecting the learners' work. By modeling such openness, the trainer practices this value and demonstrates it for others, thereby increasing his or her consistency and credibility as well as encouraging others to take the same risk.

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When presented with the idea that modeling can enhance professional competence, many trainers are skeptical. They fear that by revealing how they actually think and feel in a given situation, they will forfeit their professional distance. To acknowledge and express feelings of anger, for example, is to be involved in what is happening, and a number of trainers feel that such involvement might reduce credibility rather than increase it. The authors' observations, however, indicate that appropriate modeling in process can and should move from the professional distance needed to establish credibility to the personal and spontaneous behavior that comes from living one's theory. The end result can be training that is more focused, relevant, and practical.

As a training or teaching approach, modeling offers the following benefits:

- *Provides motivation.* The learner is motivated to become aware of beneficial alternatives to present behavior.
- *Fosters self-acceptance.* The learner is encouraged to accept his or her present identity and to continue personal development.
- *Promotes change.* The learner makes a conscious decision to try behavioral alternatives.
- *Reduces the tension of learning.* The learner is allowed to practice the components of a skill one at a time; consequently, each learning task is simplified and is less stressful. In addition, the learner witnesses the model's comfort with practicing new behavior.
- *Allows for reinforcement.* Skills are practiced over time until they become refined and ultimately integrated into the learner's own style.
- *Creates a positive learning environment.* Throughout the process the trainer models the learner's development, thus equalizing power in the learning environment, reducing the distance between the role of the teacher and that of the learner, and creating an atmosphere in which each learner is permitted to progress at his or her own rate.

HOW MODELING WORKS

A prerequisite to the experiential training approach of modeling is to motivate the learners to become involved and to experiment, which is accomplished by explaining the benefits of the specific skill to be learned. Once this groundwork has been laid, the modeling process (Figure 1) can begin.

1. At the first step, *awareness,* the learners pay attention to their present behavior; in addition, because modeling reveals untried or unthought-of alternatives, the learners realize the existence of options for behaving differently.

In this step, if the modeling involved is immediate and spontaneous, the appropriate climate must be established for it to be accepted in a nondefensive manner. For example,

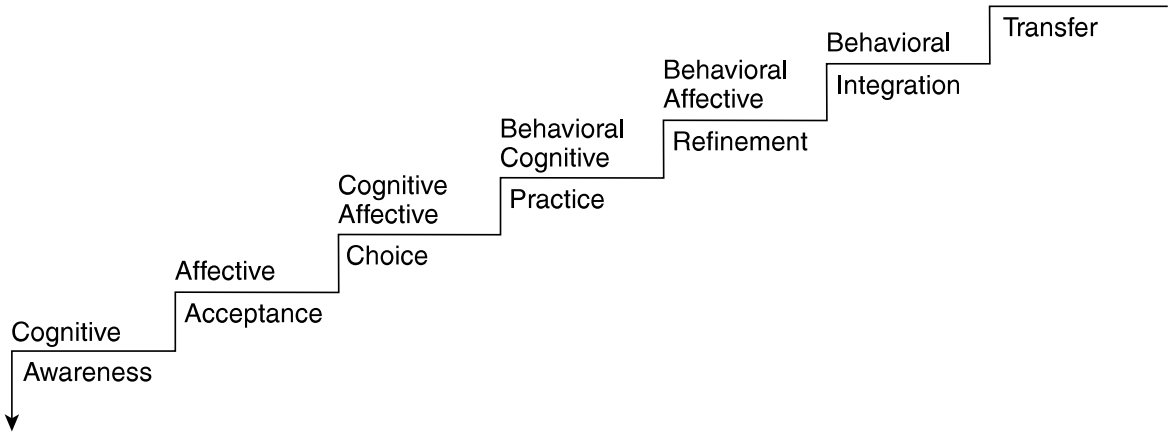

Figure 1. Steps Involved in the Process of Modeling

in establishing the climate for the skill of active listening, the trainer should discuss the purpose of and underlying attitudes essential to this skill, such as openness to others, nonevaluation, and receptivity. If the modeling is planned, the trainer as model may demonstrate or role play the skill, calling attention to it and consciously focusing on it.

2. The second step, *acceptance,* allows the learners to acknowledge that their present patterns of behavior no longer provide the benefits or payoffs that they once did.

3. *Choice,* the third step, consists of the learners' commitment to change and to adopting a new mode of behavior. To facilitate the accomplishment of this step, the trainer models the skill spontaneously as an appropriate response to what is occurring in the learning environment. For example, a learner expresses disagreement with something the trainer has said, and the trainer demonstrates the skill of active listening. Attention is not called to this skill, except perhaps in retrospect. This immediate and spontaneous modeling, which appears natural in the situation and fully integrated into the trainer's own behavior, motivates the learners to choose to invest time and effort in acquiring the new skill. If spontaneous modeling is not employed, the individual learner may see the skill simply as a technique that cannot possibly be incorporated into his or her behavioral repertoire.

4. The fourth step involves the *practice* of the new behavior, which usually takes place during a structured activity. For example, the learners may be given a formula for active listening to use in trios. During this phase the new behavior or skill is often formulary and rigid and involves strong feelings of self-consciousness.

5. The fifth step, *refinement,* is taken when each learner modifies the new skill to fit his or her personal style. At this point the skill is still undertaken consciously. Each learner receives feedback from the trainer regarding skill practice as well as reinforcement for continuing to work, which fosters refinement. Subsequently, the trainer structures the learning environment so that the learners have a chance to talk and listen to one another as they employ the new skill. In addition, each learner may be

asked to list situations in which he or she can use the skill further as a means of refining and integrating it. Finally, in the trainer's own spontaneous and immediate modeling, he or she shows how the skill can progress from a formulary behavior to a characteristic behavior.

6. The sixth step, *integration,* occurs when the new skill is finally used unconsciously and effortlessly (Gaw, 1978).

7. *Transfer*, the final step, is accomplished when the individual learner uses the skill as part of his or her normal behavior pattern in situations other than the learning environment.

After refinement and integration, two problems commonly arise, making transfer difficult. When the learner leaves the learning environment, he or she may no longer receive accurate feedback on use of the skill or use of the skill may not be supported. The only way to handle these difficulties is to provide follow-up by contracting for posttests or surveys, additional sessions involving those from the nonsupportive environments, and/or observations of these environments.

TYPES OF MODELING

Modeling can be explained further by viewing its dimensions: conscious/unconscious, verbal/nonverbal, and personal/impersonal (subjective/objective). These dimensions, which are described in the following paragraphs, are, in effect, types of modeling that can be used in various ways.

Conscious/Unconscious

Modeling may be employed consciously in any given situation. In other words, the trainer might assess a current situation; determine that modeling might be useful to show how a particular skill, such as asking open-ended questions, could be used; and then intentionally exhibit that skill. Similarly, the trainer might determine before a training session that a particular skill, such as reflecting feelings, might be modeled effectively with the group and then plan to model that skill. In both instances the trainer observes a condition in the environment and decides to model accordingly. This conscious employment of modeling implies that the trainer recognizes the steps involved in developing a particular skill and engages in these steps to heighten the trainees' awareness of the process. With conscious modeling the left brain predominates, and the trainer, using logical processes, determines what might be appropriate.

With unconscious modeling, the right brain is acting. In this case, modeling is spontaneous and is employed unintentionally; it is probable that the trainer is not even aware, at least initially, of modeling a given skill. For example, the trainer might spontaneously disclose at the start of a session that "This has been one of those days when nothing has gone smoothly, but now I'm going to block that out of my mind and start anew. Let's begin with a 'centering' activity; I could use one, and maybe you

could, too." With this introduction to the training experience, the trainer begins with a self-disclosure and then provides an example of blocking out unrelated concerns as well as the technique of "centering."

Verbal/Nonverbal

The trainer may model verbal skills and/or nonverbal behaviors. With the modeling of verbal skills, the content of communication is emphasized, and the actual words that are useful in dealing with a particular situation are demonstrated. Verbal behavior is much more within conscious control than is nonverbal behavior; with nonverbal behavior, the process of communication is emphasized and its subtleties are demonstrated, although the behavior itself is often unintentional and unconscious. An example of employing conscious, verbal modeling as well as the unconscious, nonverbal variety is as follows: During an assertiveness-training workshop, six learners arrive for a session at intervals, ten to fifteen minutes late. The trainer becomes aware of feeling irritated and spontaneously begins the workshop by saying, "I'm annoyed that so many of you arrived late, making it impossible for us to begin on time without continual interruptions. In this situation we are all held back. I want us to begin on time." This verbal message contains all the elements of an effective, assertive statement. In addition, the trainer delivers the message in a strong voice; with a serious facial expression; with one hand on the hip; and from a stance in which the trainer's weight is equally distributed on both legs.

Personal/Impersonal (Subjective/Objective)

The trainer may use either personal or impersonal material. With the modeling of personal material, the trainer's experience of data in the environment is filtered through his or her feelings, self-concept, and life history. This type of modeling, consequently, involves some risk in that the trainer must be willing to deal publicly with personal issues. Another drawback is that subjective perceptions cannot be verified by other observers. Impersonal or objective material, on the other hand, is based essentially on unfiltered data gathered through the sensory apparatus. Thus, when these data are used for modeling purposes, they offer the advantages of low risk for the trainer as well as easy confirmation by observers. For example, if the trainer states, "I've noticed that only the men have spoken up today," this assertion can be corroborated easily because it is based on observable data.

However, the use of personal data can also be advantageous. Bringing one's own feelings, thoughts, memories, and fantasies into the training process closes the gap of professional distance and allows for greater intimacy between the trainer and the trainees.

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS THAT CAN BE MODELED

The specific behaviors or skills that can be modeled are numerous. Although it is possible to model technical skills, such as operating a machine, drawing a blueprint, or presenting a sales talk, the skills that the professional trainer is most interested in modeling are interpersonal ones. Figure 2 provides a list of interpersonal skills that can be modeled effectively as well as examples of ways in which the modeling of these skills can be accomplished in a training situation.

DETERMINING WHEN AND HOW TO USE MODELING

When determining whether to use modeling and what type of modeling might be appropriate in a given situation, the trainer should use his or her best judgment in assessing a group's readiness. The following factors should be considered carefully:

Skill	Example
Focus on Self	
Disclosure	The trainer discloses facts about self, here-and-now feelings, beliefs, values, desires, needs, and/or expectations.
Assertion	The learners resist, and the trainer uses the "broken record" technique: No matter what kinds of responses are received from the learners, the trainer simply keeps repeating exactly what he or she wants to have happen.
Focus on Other	
Acceptance	The trainer gives a nonevaluative response to a learner who is disagreeing with him or her.
Confrontation	The trainer informs a learner that a particular behavior manifested by that learner affects the trainer negatively; in addition, the trainer clarifies preferences and consequences.
Feedback	The trainer tells a learner how he or she perceives that learner.
Support	The trainer expresses appreciation for something that a learner has said or done.
Mutual Focus	
Conflict Management	The trainer identifies an issue of conflict between a learner and himself or herself; the two parties generate alternatives and agree on appropriate action.
Immediacy	The learner tells a learner how he or she is reacting to that learner at the moment.
Mutuality	The trainer cooperates with a learner for reciprocal achievement of goals.
Flexibility	The trainer abandons his or her original plan and accepts a new approach suggested by the learner.

Figure 2. Interpersonal Skills That Can Be Modeled Effectively

1. *The degree to which the group is attached to traditional sources of power.* For example, a trainer might use personal, subjective modeling earlier with a group of educators than with a group of learners from the armed forces. In general, if the trainer meets the group on its own familiar ground, trust and rapport can be developed; then the group can be led into unfamiliar territory.

2. *The extent of the trainer's credibility.* In some cases credibility is automatically established on the basis of a reputation that has preceded the trainer. For example, a well-known leader of the human-potential movement can have immediate credibility with a group, and, therefore, can successfully introduce radically different perspectives earlier than can an unknown trainer who must spend more time qualifying. However, credibility can be established not only through reputation and demonstrations of competence, but also through status-conferring elements such as gender, social power, ethnic status, credentials, and interpersonal attractiveness (Bandura, 1969). The higher the trainer's degree of credibility, the earlier he or she can use higher-risk modeling. All trainers, however, must observe certain unspoken boundaries of propriety in order to retain credibility.

3. *The degree to which the group is open to consideration of new ideas.* The learners' flexibility is an important issue, as is their motivation to discover alternative solutions, to acquire new skills, and to adopt different attitudes. When the learners are convinced that what they are presently doing is not working, they become committed to the training experience; under these circumstances, the trainer is justified in making a personal investment in the experience and taking risks with techniques such as modeling.

In addition, the trainer should examine the learners' patterns of reacting to change and providing support to one another. If they do not have experience in venturing into the unknown and supporting one another during the aftermath of such ventures, the trainer probably should not use modeling.

4. *The group's current stage of development.* In the early stages of a group's existence, developing trust and establishing valued norms are tasks of primary importance. Until these tasks have been accomplished to the group's satisfaction, the trainer should not involve the learners in the risks inherent in some types of modeling (Carlock & Byrum-Gaw, 1982). For example, highly personal disclosures that are delivered too early may alarm or alienate the learners (Weigel, Dinges, Dyer, & Straumfjord, 1972) and/or diminish the trainer's credibility.

5. *Technical considerations, such as number of learners and time frame*. In general, with groups of twenty or more participants, risks should be taken more slowly. Greater numbers of learners increase the anxiety of the trainer as well as that of the learners; consequently, interactions in such groups might best be kept to a level of safety not afforded by some types of modeling. With the high risks that are sometimes associated with modeling come intense reactions, which are more difficult to manage with greater numbers of learners.

The time frame within which the trainer must work also affects the level of risk that can be taken. It would be unethical to leave highly charged situations unfinished. Thus, before deciding to use modeling, the trainer must ensure that adequate time exists in which to deal with any repercussions.

6. *The learners' degree of psychological sophistication and psychological level of functioning.* The more psychologically sophisticated the group, the earlier that high risks can be taken. Familiarity provides the groundwork for moving more rapidly to deeper stages of training. Also, the higher the learners' level of self-esteem, the less easily they will be threatened by new material.

7. *The degree of distance that the trainer wants to establish at the time.* For example, if the trainer is having difficulty blocking out some serious personal concern at the moment, he or she may want to maintain more distance than usual—particularly with a new group, with large numbers of people, or with an unsophisticated group. The trainer must respect his or her personal needs in this regard.

Even after a particular type of modeling has been selected and employed, the trainer must continue to be sensitive to cues from the learners; when any new data become available, the original assessment should be reviewed and revised as necessary. In addition to considering the factors previously discussed, the trainer might want to determine answers to the following questions:

- How much am I willing to risk?
- How can I legitimate my choice of a type or level of modeling?
- How might my choice of the type of modeling I employ coordinate with or expand my style?
- How competent do I feel in my understanding of an integration of the skill to be modeled?
- What is the nature of my contract with the learners (purpose, goals, time frame, and so forth)?

CONCLUSION

The modeling process offers the trainer an opportunity to grow professionally as well as to increase the effectiveness of training. In essence, the trainer as model is required to complete four functions. The effective model must structure the learning process by presenting objectives, purpose, rationale, and explanation, thereby serving as a knowledgeable *director.* He or she must also operate as an *encourager,* inviting the learners to participate in simulated activities and challenging them to experience fully. Similarly, the model functions as a *supporter* by maintaining a safe learning environment and by rewarding new behavior. Finally, when modeling becomes spontaneous, immediate, and integrated, the model becomes a *reflector,* mirroring the

learners and their contexts. At this point the trainer as model is interacting fully and equally with the participants.

Modeling that stops short of the integrated ideal proposed by the authors narrows operation to an overuse of one of these four functions. The director refuses to let go of power and control and elevates himself or herself to an elitist position. The encourager turns challenging into competition, and learners are left to their own devices for "winning." The supporter controls feedback in ways that foster dependence, and the reflector becomes involved in personal issues and thinks and reacts without clarity. A combination of these functions is crucial to effective modeling, just as is a blending of the dimensions of modeling discussed previously—conscious/unconscious, verbal/nonverbal, and personal/impersonal. Although movement from one end of these continua to the other must take place to live one's theory, the move must be developmental, evolutionary, and continually balanced against the factors involved in a particular learning situation.

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THE EXPECTANCY THEORY OF MOTIVATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

John A. Sample

Human resource development (HRD) practitioners have long considered motivation theory in the design of learning programs for employees and managers. Although the "content" theories of Maslow and Herzberg have been used widely over the years, the newer "process" theories (expectancy, equity, path-goal) are now receiving more attention. Instructional design for training and development should incorporate the "process" theories of motivation, which suggest that motivation is a combined function of an individual's perception that effort will lead to performance and of the desirability of the outcomes that could result from such performance. In this approach, people are presumed to be practical, reasoning beings who have anticipations and expectations about their future in an organization. According to Casio (1982):

> Individuals make conscious choices among outcomes according to their estimated probabilities of occurrence and the personal values attached to them . . . . The individual seeks first to determine "what's in it for me, and is it important to me?". . . . It is the anticipation of reward that energizes behavior and the perceived value of various outcomes that gives behavior its direction. (p. 283)

Designers and coordinators of HRD systems should ask themselves: "Why should our employees and managers sacrifice valuable work time to attend training and development programs? Of what future utility to them is the effort to learn and the desire to perform at higher levels? Does the future utility include more money, promotion, more autonomy, job satisfaction, or some other intrinsic or extrinsic reward?" These questions are important in considering motivation from the perspective of "expectancy-valence" theory, which links effort (e.g., completing a training program) to performance on the job (a first-level outcome), which then becomes instrumental in the employee's receiving a promotion, raise, or other valued reward (a second-level outcome). Campbell, Dunnette, and Weick (1970) cite support for the utility of the expectancy model in training and development. They stress that an individual's anticipation or expectancy about how well he or she will absorb the program content will greatly influence the person's motivation and attitudes in the learning situation. The clearer the link between training and development, the individual's performance, and valued rewards and outcomes, the more positive will be the employee's attitude and motivation to seek out and complete a learning activity.

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Expectancy theory also can help to explain attendance and dropout patterns. When an adult "perceives that his or her expectations of gaining specific benefits from participation are unlikely to be realized, he or she will probably drop out" (Darkenwald, 1982, p. 286).

THE EXPECTANCY MODEL

Connolly (1976) states that "expectancy type models have become firmly established as the dominant paradigm for research on work related motivation" (p. 37). Depending on the source one quotes, as few as thirty and as many as fifty empirical studies have been conducted in business and industry (Campbell & Pritchard, 1976; Connolly, 1976; Kopelman & Thompson, 1976). The theoretical foundations of the expectancy-valence theory of motivation were laid by Tolman (1932) and have been developed in business and industry by Vroom (1964) and Lawler (1975) and in educational settings by Mowday (1978) and Miskel, DeFrain, and Wilcox (1980). Cross (1981) cites extensively the work by Rubenson, a Swedish educator, who investigated the competing forces that motivate adults to participate in continuing education.

Basic Elements of Expectancy

The basic variables in this theory are expectancies, outcomes, instrumentalities, and valences; they are interrelated as shown in Figure 1.

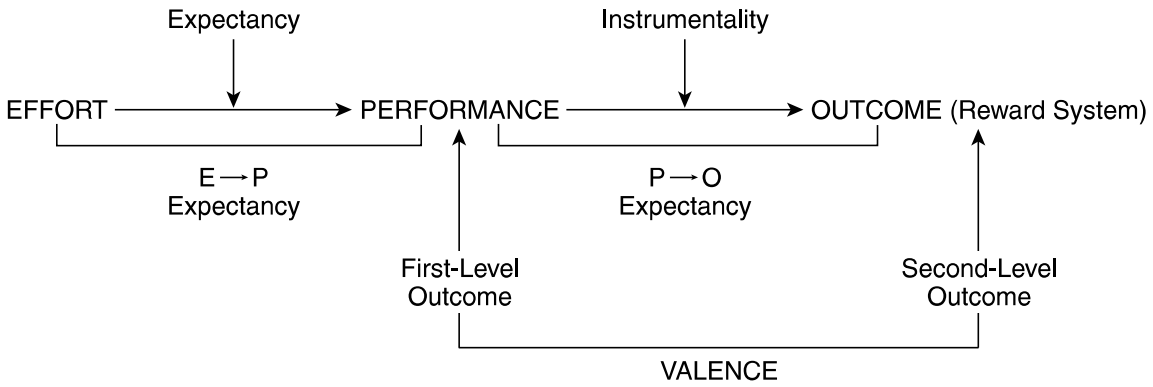

Figure 1. Key Variables in Expectancy-Valence Theory

Expectancy

Vroom (1964) defines expectancy as the perceived relationship between a given degree of effort and a given level of performance—a first-level outcome. For example, attending a management development program (effort) may lead to increased productivity on the job (performance). An expectancy can be expressed as a subjective probability ranging from 0.00 to 1.00. Lawler (1975) has taken the generalized notion of expectancy and divided it into two specific types: effort → performance and

performance → outcome. An E → P expectancy reflects a belief that effort will lead to a desired level of performance. The closer the "perceived" relationship between effort and resulting job performance, the greater the E → P expectancy. A belief that performance will lead to a particular outcome (a promotion or raise) is a P → O expectancy. E → P and P → O are the expectancy variables.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the consequences of one's behavior and, in this context, they refer to the reward system. Rewards may be intrinsic (recognition, commendation, autonomy, etc.) or extrinsic (raise, promotion, or transfer to valued assignment).

Instrumentality

Whereas expectancy relates to first-level outcomes (performance), instrumentality relates first-level outcomes to second-level outcomes (the reward system). Instrumentality deals with the question "To what extent does the actuality of a first-level outcome become instrumental in obtaining second-level outcomes?" Employees tend to see beyond immediate performance outcomes (meeting goals and objectives) and begin to assess consequences in terms of desired secondary results (raise, promotion, etc.).

Valence

Valence is the fourth major component in the expectancy-valence equation. It can be defined as the perceived value that employees place on first-and second-level outcomes. Valences have theoretical values of from + 1.00 to – 1.00. Employees may desire to join a particular work group (group membership = first-level outcome) because they believe that joining will enhance their status in the organization (second-level outcome). An outcome has a valence of zero when the employee is indifferent to its attainment. Valence is expressed as a negative value if employees strongly want to avoid the outcome (being fired, demoted, or subject to chastisement).

THE EXPECTANCY MODEL APPLIED TO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The importance of the interrelationships of the key variables is indicated in Figure 2.

Suppose that a manager in example 1 places a high value on management development and believes that effort to increase knowledge, develop new skills, and adopt new attitudes is a worthwhile endeavor. Suppose further that this manager believes that management development efforts will lead to increased performance. In this example, the manager has a hypothetical E → P expectancy of 0.90. If this same manager believes that increased performance will lead to promotion, raise, or other

KEY VARIABLES

Examples	Effort → Performance / E → P expectancy	x	Performance → Outcome / P → O expectancy	x	VALENCE	=	Motivational Force
1	Expectancy that increased effort through management development will increase performance/productivity. (E → P = 0.90)	x	Expectancy that increased performance/productivity will lead to a promotion and/or merit increase. (P → O = 1.00)	x	High positive valence (0.90)	=	0.81
2	Same as above (E → P = 0.90)	x	Expectancy that increased productivity will not lead to a promotion and/or merit raise. (P → O = 0.10)	x	Same as above (0.90)	=	0.081

Figure 2. Two Examples of Expectancy Variables

valued outcome, the manager could have a high P → O expectancy of 1.00. If the manager truly values increased performance (a first-level outcome) and a promotion or some other valued reward (a second-level outcome), he or she could be described as placing a high valence of 0.90 on these two outcomes.

At this point, it would be reasonable to state that the manager has a high motivational force to perform because of the multiplicative outcome (0.90 x 1.00 x 0.90 = 0.81). If skills and abilities are high and the role descriptions clear (i.e., job/task description), the manager could expect to realize job success (Steers & Porter, 1975).

In example 2, if the probabilities for the variables remain constant except that the manager does not expect performance to lead to a desired outcome (P → O expectancy of 0.10), a computation of the motivational force (0.90 x 0.10 x 0.90 = 0.081) indicates little desire to perform.

Implications for Training and Development

Several implications of expectancy theory are of interest to training and development practitioners. A useful framework for applying the theory is suggested by Steers (1981).

Clarify Effort → Performance Expectancies

Determinants of E → P expectancies are varied and interrelated. The setting of explicit and moderately difficult but potentially achievable goals and performance standards should clarify for the employees precisely what is expected of them (Casio, 1982; Hackman & Suttle, 1977). Ambiguous job design and task descriptions can lead to what Steers (1981) refers to as "wasted efforts while employees search for answers." Personality factors also are key determinants. According to Lawler (1975), employees with low self-esteem are susceptible to low E → P expectancies. Motivating them is difficult because of their predisposition to believe that they cannot perform well. Conversely, employees with high self-esteem will have more realistic expectancies and

will respond more predictably and realistically to their environment. The situation becomes problematic when an employee, who believes that he or she is performing well, will not believe that extra effort (such as voluntary participation in training and development) will improve performance. Coaching and supervision can be extremely helpful in clarifying goal expectations and bolstering the self-esteem of employees.

Training and development are critically important if the employee is to focus effort on job-related performance. Without appropriate goal setting and learning activities (both on the job and in the training setting), many employees cannot be expected to link effort to performance. Employees who are denied access to relevant training and development experiences may become discouraged. Casio (1982) states:

> The implications . . . for training and development are obvious: Explicit goal setting (a cognitive activity) by the *individual* trainee should lead to enhanced commitment to the training (motivation), greater effort, and more efficient learning. (p. 284)

Clarify Performance → Outcome Expectancies

A critical responsibility of the supervisor is to facilitate the link between actual performance and the reward system. Employees need to believe that effort will lead to performance and that performance will lead to rewards desired by the employees. Supervisors may have to work with higher management to "recast the reward and promotion (career) systems so that rewards and promotions more closely reflect performance" (Hackman & Suttle, 1977). The performance appraisal system becomes an important key in linking performance to a desired reward. Management by objectives (MBO) and behaviorally anchored rating scales (BARS) are useful appraisal methods that link performance to the reward system (Baird, Beatty, & Schneider, 1982).

These implications for training and development apply primarily to supervisory and management development programs. In such programs, the power of intrinsic rewards (praise, positive feedback) also should be covered in depth, and the participation ethic in workrelated decisions should be emphasized (Hackman & Suttle, 1977).

Selection and Placement

Most HRD practitioners would agree that scarce budget resources should be spent on selection rather than on training and development, since the former can be less expensive than the latter. Often it is necessary to integrate selection and training/development functions. However, "training and development are not necessarily the *only* alternatives available for enhancing the person/job/organization match, and it is narrow-minded to view them as a panacea for all organizational ills" (Casio, 1982). Job placement is critical for employees who desire opportunities to perform, thereby increasing the probabilities that their performance will become instrumental in achieving valued rewards. The selection, training, and development of highly motivated employees for dead-end performance opportunities will stifle effort → performance → outcome expectancies.

CONCLUSION

In the past, training and development practitioners have approached the motivational aspects of organizational life through the need and content theories of Maslow and Herzberg. This article introduces an important process theory: expectancy-valence theory. The basic principles are simple and sound: Employees look to the future when assessing present effort and performance on the job, especially when the reward system is contingent on performance.

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THE HRD PROFESSIONAL: MASTER OF MANY ROLES

Tom W. Goad

The job of human resource development (HRD) practitioners is as varied and continually changing as the field itself. "Trainers" do much more than train people. The field of HRD, driven by technology and rapid growth, requires its practitioners to continually review, update, and validate their numerous roles.

Jacob Bronowski (1973) said of the human being: "He makes plans, inventions, new discoveries, by putting different talents together; and his discoveries become more subtle and penetrating as he learns to combine his talents in complex and intimate ways" (p. 20). He easily could have been talking about trainers. As the HRD field grows and diversifies, it becomes acutely necessary to learn a multiplicity of roles. As Kevin O'Sullivan says, "No longer confined by earlier narrow definitions of training, the profession has evolved to encompass a multitude of disciplines and approaches" (Craig, 1976, p. xi). Gordon Lippitt (1979) says, "The key to the preparation of an HRD professional is a mixed background of interdisciplinary education and experience" (p. 66). Jan Margolis (1979) also is explicit: "It is no longer possible for top human resource executives to be single disciplines. They must be generalists" (p. 41). To meet today's needs and demands, HRD practitioners (trainers) must be masters of many roles.

As part of its ongoing competency study, the American Society for Training and Development (McLagan & McCullough, 1983) identified fifteen roles of the training element of HRD. These are:

1. evaluator
2. group facilitator
3. individual-development counselor
4. instructional writer
5. instructor
6. manager of training and development
7. marketer
8. media specialist
9. needs analyst
10. program administrator

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11. program designer
12. strategist
13. task analyst
14. theoretician
15. transfer agent

Thirty-one competencies also were identified as necessary to fulfill these roles. Because the fifteen roles deal primarily with the instructional aspect of HRD, they are limited in scope. To fit the broader, generalized pattern of the field, the following are proposed to represent the major roles of the HRD professional:

1. facilitator
2. communicator
3. writer
4. analyst/evaluator
5. psychologist
6. anthropologist
7. leader/motivator
8. manager
9. marketer
10. financial analyst
11. computer user

There are other roles, of course, but these represent most of the functions performed in HRD.

Figure 1 shows how the selected roles fit within the training cycle.

FACILITATOR

Though a person of many roles, a trainer is most of all a *facilitator of learning*. Being a facilitator provides a common focus for all trainer roles. Flexibility is essential in this role; the situation may call for the facilitator to be active (maintaining total control of the process) or to adapt at any stage along the continuum, including being totally passive.

Several important developments have direct bearing on the role of the facilitator. These are:

1. *Adult learning theory.* Research in this area has shown that adults control their own learning to a large extent. Thus, the trainer's role truly is to facilitate the learning process rather than to "teach" in a traditional sense.

	Analysis	Design	Development	Implementation	Evaluation
Facilitator	X	X	X	X	X
Communicator	X	X	X	X	X
Writer	X	X	X		X
Analyst/Evaluator	X				X
Psychologist		X		X	
Anthropologist	X			X	
Leader/Motivator				X	
Manager	X	X	X	X	X
Marketer	X	X			
Financial analyst	X				X
Computer user			X	X	

Figure 1. Application of Selected Roles to the Training Cycle

2. *Whole-person concepts.* Awareness of the physical and spiritual needs of learners can help trainers to be more effective in facilitating cognizant or psychological change.
3. *The impact of technology.* Because trainers are called on to work with highly educated people—many of whom are in "high-tech" industries—they must be aware of the growing tendency for workers to become machine oriented rather than person oriented. It can be difficult for a trainer to introduce a personal or interpersonal focus with such people. In addition, more and more trainers are required to be computer literate themselves.
4. *Our "information society."* Because so much information is available, the trainer must sort out a "digestible" amount of pertinent information for each training situation.
5. *The emerging importance of human resource planning and development*. As HRD becomes a recognized, integrated function within organizations, more and more trainers will become managers. This will require each of them to have a broader focus and a broader concern for his or her constituent organization.

COMMUNICATOR

Communication is the essence of training; good trainers are good communicators. Communication is a closed-loop, two-way process consisting of a sender, receiver, message, and channel. This model is shown in Figure 2.

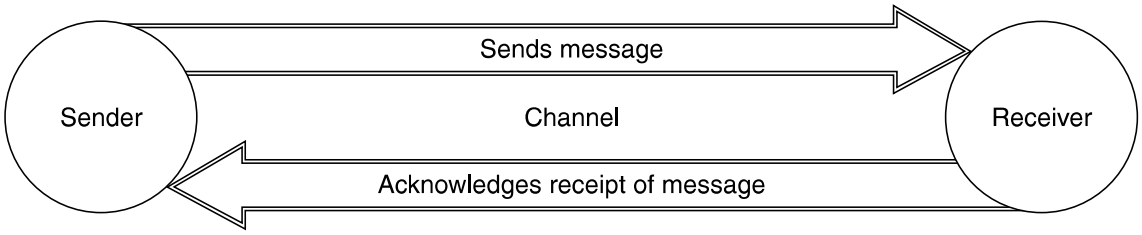

Figure 2. A Model of the Communication Process

When two or more people are together, communication of some sort is likely to occur (except, perhaps, on an elevator). It can be an exchange of words; it can be visual (with eye contact or through symbols, pictures, or sign language); it can take the form of action (such as pointing, gesturing, physical contact, facial expression, or bodily stance). Communication can even exist in what does not happen. The facilitator must be skilled in delivering and interpreting both verbal and nonverbal communication. In most cases, the facilitator also must have some mastery of written communication. (This can be a critical role and is discussed separately.)

The role of trainer as communicator involves two subroles:

1. communicating as the means of facilitating learning
2. providing communication training to others

Setting an example for learners is an integral part of the second subrole. Various levels of communication training also are provided as part of most other types of training, such as supervisory skills and assertiveness training. Because communication skills are necessary in most aspects of life, they must be some of the trainer's principal strengths.

WRITER

There are three things to hope for when writing: "that the reader will read it, understand it, and remember it" (Texas Department of Public Welfare, 1975). Considering the massive amount of writing that finds its way to readers, that is a lot to hope for.

If communication is the essence of training, writing is the fabric that holds it together. Society is too complex to rely on word of mouth. The written word has taken on a new dimension in our lives. All the words in the audio and visual media and most computer and electronic data originated in written words. A person who cannot write effectively is limited in his or her ability to communicate, especially in the world of business.

Today's trainer must be able to communicate (and, often, to teach others how to communicate) in a variety of written media, including:

1. Training materials: training plans, lesson plans, handouts, and experiential materials;
2. Audiovisual media: visual aids, scripts, and storyboards;

3. Courseware: for computer-assisted instruction;
4. User documentation: textbooks, participant work books, and operator instructions; and
5. Everyday correspondence: letters, memorandums, reports, and evaluations.

ANALYST/EVALUATOR

The times we live in have been called the systems age. The concept of systems analysis—viewing the "big picture" before breaking it into its components—is one useful result of the systems approach.

Evaluation is a special form of analysis. It is analysis applied "after the fact," performed to determine if the action taken has achieved the objectives established in the front-end analysis.

In addition to the systems approach, other elements vital to success in analysis are the top-down approach, feedback, and goal setting.

As can be seen in Figure 3, analysis and evaluation comprise two-fifths of the training cycle. In fact, they anchor both ends of a complete training process. Analysis determines whether training is needed, and evaluation assesses whether or not it was successful.

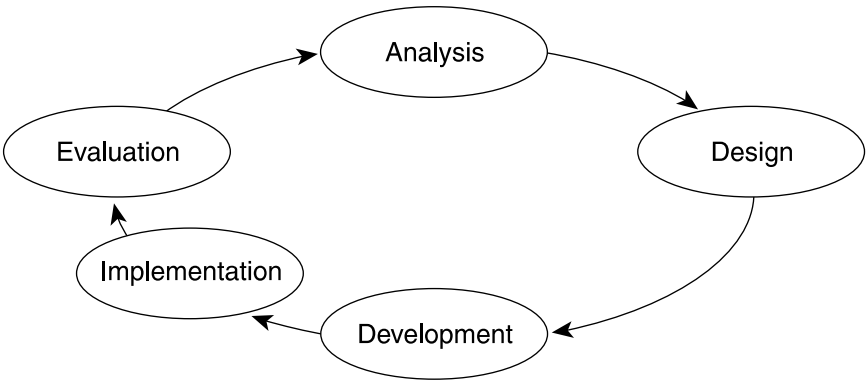

Figure 3. The Five Steps of the Training Process

However, evaluation is not always the last step in the process. One model (Howard, 1979) places evaluation in the middle, feeding into all other phases.

The role of trainer as analyst/evaluator includes several subroles. These are:

1. needs assessment
2. task and skills analysis
3. training planning
4. performance evaluation

5. training evaluation
6. instrumentation

BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST-PSYCHOLOGIST AND ANTHROPOLOGIST

An understanding of human behavior is essential to effective training. Studying the behavioral sciences involves more than experiential learning from daily interactions with others. Practical experience should be supplemented with more formal learning.

The trainer as behavioral scientist functions as both psychologist and anthropologist. This distinction is somewhat arbitrary because human behavior is so complex, but these two roles encompass most of what the trainer as behavioral scientist does.

Psychologist

The Dictionary of Psychology (Chaplin, 1975) defines "psychologist" as: "An individual who by means of a course of training at least through the level of the master's degree, and in most cases through the doctorate, has made a specialized study of the science of psychology" (p. 421). Although many effective trainers do not have doctoral degrees, some ongoing training and education are essential if HRD professionals are to compete in and keep up with their rapidly expanding profession.

There are several subroles of trainer as psychologist. These include:

1. counselor
2. learning theorist (with emphasis on adult learning theory)
3. conflict manager
4. stress manager
5. whole-person developer
6. mind expander
7. life-cycle expert

Anthropologist

Whether because of curiosity or because of a healthy sort of vanity, people are fascinated with information about themselves. One way in which humans gain insights about themselves is by studying their pasts. Anthropology indicates trends in human behavior as evidenced through the evolution of culture, and most trainers are involved in some form of cultural anthropology. The most common form is the study of organizational culture. This includes identifying and dealing with the changing cultures within organizations. On a larger scale, the growing multinationalism in corporations, world economics, population growth, and global communications have required many trainers to develop expertise in the area of cross-cultural relationships.

LEADER/MOTIVATOR

Leadership is getting things done through others. Whereas management has to do with procedures, principles, and operations, leadership involves personal interactions and emotions—the human element of human resources. An understanding of human behavior enhances leadership because leadership involves influencing the behavior of others, interpersonal relationships, and teamwork.

Motivation is an integral part of leadership. Whether they be physiological or psychological, motives influence behavior.

The trainer as leader/motivator is involved in:

1. leading/motivating learners
2. executive and supervisory development
3. human relations training
4. motivational aspects of sales training
5. mentor/protégé relationships and training

MANAGER

Management traditionally includes functions such as planning, coordinating, staffing, directing, delegating, and controlling. It may involve managing people, managing resources, or managing oneself.

The job of the trainer as manager includes such functions as:

1. Managing the training function or some portion of it (people and/or resources);
2. Management development (training others to be managers);
3. Dealing effectively with other managers and organizational groups;
4. Making organization development interventions; and
5. Managing one's own time, tasks, and professional development.

MARKETER

Marketing, whether it involves advertising, selling, predicting consumer needs and trends, working toward the acceptance of an idea or program, or merely facilitating some type of exchange, has become a major task of most organizations. Even governmental agencies market to lawmakers and allocating committees. In highly competitive, commercial enterprises, marketing is a crucial function.

Although it may not be obvious why trainers might be involved in marketing, most trainers have some responsibility for developing training programs and frequently must "market" them either to their organizations or to their clients. Obtaining the funding for a training or OD program is a form of marketing; doing a needs analysis is another; and selling oneself to trainees, employers, and clients is a third. In addition, more and more

trainers are called on to provide sales and marketing training, and they must have a basic knowledge of marketing theory and techniques in order to do this.

FINANCIAL ANALYST

The increasing organizational concern with the "bottom line" affects all HRD practitioners. As technology becomes more expensive and inflation raises costs even more, the "soft" organizational assets, such as training and development, are increasingly called on to justify their existence and their programs. Many HRD professionals are required to perform the following tasks:

1. budgeting and forecasting
2. estimating the costs of training
3. determining the cost effectiveness of training
4. conducting training in finance
5. determining productivity
6. providing data for accounting
7. pricing training products

COMPUTER USER

Computers and automation are finding their way into more and more professions, and trainers are finding more things for computers to do.

Computer literacy (how to use computers) is a major concern of the trainer as computer user. Some of the requirements of being computer literate are knowing how to power-up and initialize components, knowing how to react to the prompts needed to access programs, understanding some of the more common terminology, being able to assess whether automation will be worth the time and cost, and perhaps knowing how to use a modem to access another system. The result is being able to put an amazingly versatile tool to the most beneficial use.

The trainer also may be required to help to train others, if not in using computers, at least in other areas that involve computers as part of the training design. Such applications include computer-assisted instruction (CAI), computer-managed instruction (CMI), and computer-based training (CBT). Gradually, more and more trainers will be required to train others in the areas of word processing, artificial intelligence, telecommunications, audiovisual control, simulators, and computer testing.

OTHER ROLES

When they are standing in front of trainees or clients, HRD professionals are expected to be experts in whatever subject matter is to be taught or is of interest to the client. Trainers also are expected to be entertainers—to be able to enliven a presentation or use

humor effectively. All successful trainers are, at times, politicians, and most of them have lobbied for something they believe in. Thus, two of the outstanding characteristics of a good trainer are adaptability and versatility. The trainer is one thing to one person and plays a different role for a person with different needs. To keep up with the changes brought about by the increase in technology and the decline in productivity, today's HRD professionals must continually increase and update their skills.

Obviously, all trainers cannot be generalists in the complete sense of the word. Yet the need to broaden skills and interests to roles other than those directly related to delivering instruction is becoming more critical. Although one cannot be everything to everybody, a professional trainer can add a broader dimension to the facilitation of learning by becoming more of a generalist. Furthermore, because of the increasing awareness of the importance of human resource development and the need for on-the-job training, many large organizations are hiring operational people to fill top HRD positions ("HRD Takes Its Place," 1984).

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THIRTY YEARS OF HUMAN SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING—ONE PERSPECTIVE

Hedley G. Dimock

In 1947, the National Camp Training Institute was established by the Taylor Statten Camps, Algonquin Park, Ontario, in cooperation with the University of Toronto. Charles E. Hendry, director of the school of social work, led the ten-day residential program given that summer. During the program he made extensive use of role playing, case studies, and small group discussions. This was my first exposure to methods of education and training other than the traditional lecture and discussion methods. This article is an attempt to put into perspective my thirty years of experience with trends in training since then. In closing I'll attempt to summarize the present "state-of-the-art" and make some hunches about future directions.

THE EARLY YEARS

The 1947 Training Institute provides a useful example of training methods and educational philosophies for that time. Hendry, the Institute leader, had pioneered the application of Dewey's educational theories (Dewey, 1915, 1939, 1940), Dr. Blatz's radical ideas about child rearing (Blatz & Bott, 1928), and current social sciences in the camping field. His book, *Camping and Character* (Dimock & Hendry, 1929) set the standards for modern camping and became the springboard for a series of Camping Institutes (Dimock, 193042). These institutes dealt at length with leadership training and provided early forums for Carl Rogers and Goodwin Watson and others who were to have a great influence on human service workers' training and their later practices in the field. During the 1930s, social sciences were in vogue, including progressive education, mental hygiene, the application of sociology to group and community processes, and new personnel developments that emphasized educational supervision. Hendry brought this background to the National Institute, as well as additional experience in Boys Clubs of America and Boy Scouts. The National Institute also involved Ron Lippitt and Alvin Zander (who were soon to start the National Training Institute in Bethel, Maine and revolutionize education and training).

The three innovations in training that were presented at the National Institute (role playing, the case method, and the small-group or workshop method) had been developed earlier but were not well known. Another innovation was the use of educational films.

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Role Playing

Role playing was an adaption of Moreno's (1934, 1946) psychodrama and socio-drama for educational purposes. Hendry called it "reality practice as educational method" (Hendry, Lippitt, & Zander, 1944). Learners were encouraged to try out different ways of handling situations and assessing their outcomes. It was a powerful educational method and one of the first to add affective (feeling) dimensions to the traditional cognitive (thinking) approaches. It also represented a major shift in learning theory; in role playing, the learner participates in the teaching-learning process and shares responsibility for what is learned.

Role playing concepts were quickly expanded to include the following: (1) skits in which specific roles were assigned the players, (2) demonstrations that observers could critique, (3) complacency shock approaches that would alert the trainees to the importance and emotional dynamics of a problem, and (4) simulations or reenactments of actual or possible situations that would involve the learners in working through the situations presented (Lippitt, 1943; Bavelas, 1947; Argyris, 1951). Maier (1952) popularized role playing methods in problem solving and decision making, introduced multiple role playing that involved scores of trainees as players simultaneously, and integrated role playing with the case method in several creative ways.

The Case Method

The case method was in use by the 1930s (Fraser, 1931) but did not gain much acceptance until it was adopted as the Harvard Case Method for business training some years later (Andrews, 1951, 1953). The camping area again reflects the acceptance and use of the case method in the human services with some attention given to its use in the 1947 National Institute based on Ure's (1935) *Fifty Cases for Camp Counselors.* The development of interest in the case method for training in the camping field is reflected in the later publication of Becker's *Human Relations in Camping* (1960). Case studies were often used by traditional educators/trainers simply as examples to round out or illustrate their lectures. More often students were asked to figure out what they would do in the situation presented in the case; after a few student comments, the teacher delivered the usual lecture. In the process, the students were told the correct answer to the case. However, even when used as an extension of the lecture method, case studies did add a new dimension to learning theory. The learners shifted from a passive listening role to being challenged to think through a personal course of action that could later be compared to the teacher's answer. This was an important shift and its significance increased during the next few years with the introduction of the incident process (Pigors & Pigors, 1954, 1955), in which students were responsible for collecting the relevant data about the case and figuring out what they would need to know in order to handle the case in an effective way. This shifted responsibility for much of the process of learning to the students and demonstrated that there was not one "correct" answer to the case study, just informed choices.

The Workshop Method

The workshop method or use of small groups in the learning process had even more impact on educational method and theory than role playing or the case method. In the workshop method, learners worked in small groups on interests or problems they had helped to identify and used the teacher as a coordinator of the workshop activities and resource person.

Educational Films

The audiovisual innovation stem in training is an important one to identify at this point because of its pervasive influence during the next thirty years and its potential for the future. Audiovisuals add the seeing dimension to the listening dimension of the traditional lecture, enhancing the probability of some affective response through an identification with the characters in the film. This response may be similar to watching a role playing demonstration, yet is unlikely to be as powerful as participating in a role play.

Traditional educators tend to use a film as a recreational activity or diversion to lighten the intensity of their lectures. Yet the real value of films is in their integration with the lecture, small group, case study, and role playing approaches. This integration of methods was accomplished by Maier (1952) when he integrated the case method with role playing and the small group/workshop approach. It was built on by Malamud (1955), who added and integrated educational films with interpersonal sharing and feedback.

Summary of Human Service Education and Training Moving into the 1950s

Traditional education methods dominated the human services in the early 1950s. These methods tended to see learning as a passive activity—essentially reading, listening, and memorizing. The teacher designed the education activities and was responsible for covering the material and evaluating the students' progress. The student-teacher relationship was authoritarian in focus, based on the assumption that teachers knew what students should learn. The teaching process had those who did know telling the students what they should know, drilling them in the knowledge, and then testing them to see how much they remembered.

In each of the human services—education, health services, recreation, and community work—there is one body of knowledge and professional competencies that relates to technical skills and another that relates to the human dimension (human relations, leadership or helping, and interpersonal relations). In recreation the technical skills may be how to play ten group games or make pottery; in nursing the technical skills range from giving an injection to cardiac resuscitation. However, nursing has been defined as the practice of interpersonal relations and recreation talks about its programs as leisure time education. As the camping illustration demonstrated, most of the

technical skills were taught with learning-by-doing methods. The knowledge, attitudes, understandings, self-insights and skills related to working more effectively with people were more likely taught by the lecture method with appropriate related readings.

The camping illustration suggested that by the close of the 1940s, four trends in educational method had emerged that started moving the human services away from the traditional model. In order of importance, these were the workshop method, role playing, the case method, and educational films. Two other major influences on education and training had also emerged at this time. They were the group dynamics-human relations training combination that started the National Training laboratories in 1947 (Bradford, 1974), and the publication in 1942 of Carl Rogers' first book on a new approach to helping people called client-centered therapy. Both of these innovations were to have a powerful, pervasive influence during the next decade.

Examining three major components of an educational system can help to summarize it and compare and contrast it with other systems. These three components of a system are its goals, its assumptions about how learning takes place (and the educational methods used to implement these assumptions), and who is responsible for what in the learning process.

Education's goals during this period were to transmit the culture and teach mental discipline; learning then was assumed to be a cognitive activity. Responsibility for curriculum rested with experts in the field of study, and teachers were responsible for the learning process. Only when students failed were they seen as responsible for their learning.

The orientation to teaching and training in the human services at the close of the 1940s era can be summarized as knowledgeable teachers giving the important understandings and know-how in that field to receptive students.

CHANGES DURING THE 1950s

The important innovations in educational theory and practice of the 1950s had all surfaced previously but became well known and accepted during this decade. These included the following approaches:

- the progressive education movement started by John Dewey (1915, 1930) in the United States and represented in Canada by the University of Toronto's Institute of Child Studies and St. George's School in Montreal;
- the client-centered, non-directive counseling approach to helping people (Rogers, 1942; Axline, 1947);
- the various approaches to using the learners' interests as the curriculum for educational programs (Kelley, 1951; Maier, 1952); and
- the social-psychological concepts of education and change that led to the group dynamics and progressive management movements, and culminated in the human relations training revolution.

No one or two innovative stems stood out in the 1950s; rather it was the accumulation and integration of these several areas that accounted for the most significant impact.

Progressive Education

Progressive education is most closely associated with John Dewey. It is based on the twin assumptions that people "learn-by-doing" and that the role of the teacher is one of guiding and facilitating the learning process. The initiative and responsibility for learning was moved from the teacher to the student, and "learning-by-doing" was seen to involve perceptual, motor, and emotional dimensions in addition to the traditional cognitive one.

Progressive education stressed working with the whole person in teaching situations, and this focused the attention of educators on previous experiences, home and social environment, ethnic and religious mores, nutrition and physical health, goals and motivations, and personality and personal abilities. Above all it stressed that *how* people were taught could be as important as *what* they were taught. Expertise in subject content was no longer a basis for qualifying as a teacher. These concepts developed during the 1950s made their major impact in the next decade as part of the humanistic education thrust. Growth and development concepts, mental hygiene, and classroom methods became standard components in the training programs required for most teacher certification programs.

Field Theory and Group Dynamics

Although Kurt Lewin is best known as the founder of the group dynamics school of thought, he conceived field theory as well (also known as topological and vector psychology theories of learning). Field theory assumes that a person and that person's environment are interdependent factors in a learning situation. To understand, influence, and predict behavior requires knowing the person—the person's physical condition, needs, and abilities as well as the environmental, social, and cultural forces that compose the person's life space. Learning, or the development of insights, is seen as change in the structure of a person's life space. Lewinian learning has little to do with knowledge and the ability to verbalize concepts, but is based on awareness of relationships or patterns in one's life space. Popular offshoots of field theory have been the powerful force-field analysis concept (forces sustaining and forces restraining a particular action) and the unfreezing-learning-refreezing model of adult learning.

Lewin's students at the University of Iowa's Child Welfare Research Station in the late 1930s and early 1940s carried out many now classical studies on autocratic-democratic leadership (Lewin, Lippitt & White, 1939; White & Lippitt, 1960). They also looked at the use of small groups with group discussion and decision as a training method of behavior change (Lewin & Grabbe, 1945). Field theory and the applications of the leadership and small-group insights gained considerable acceptance in the 1950s with their inclusion in the standard texts in child psychology (Carmichael, 1954), social psychology (Swanson, Newcomb, & Hartley, 1952), group dynamics (Cartwright &

Zander, 1953) and management training (Maier, 1952). All the related concepts and techniques in group dynamics, field theory, leadership, action research, and the management of change were pulled together as a book *Human Relations in Curriculum Change,* which had a huge impact on the education field (Benne & Muntyan, 1951).

Human Relations Training

Kurt Lewin established the Research Center for Group Dynamics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1945. The following summer the Center staff led a workshop on interracial problems (Lippitt, 1949). After each day's sessions, the workshop staff met to review the day and to hear observer reports from each work group. The observers reported on "here-and-now" group process concerns, such as leadership, decision making, interaction, and individual member roles. The participants asked to attend these sessions, and soon everyone was analyzing and reflecting on what had happened during the day. This discussion of group process became the focus of the training groups (T-groups for short) that were the basic training component the following summer for programs held at the newly established National Training Laboratory in Group Development at Bethel, Maine.

The National Training Laboratory became the center of the human relations training movement, along with the Research Center for Group Dynamics (which moved to the University of Michigan in 1947); they became academic associates and leaders in group dynamics theory and practice. Human relations training became very popular rather quickly and spread to Canada in the early 1950s. A grassroots group from Saskatchewan attended Bethel and set up a similar summer residential program in Saskatchewan that continued into the mid-1960s. The Canadian YMCA experimented with a residential laboratory training program, and, in 1957, the first academic human relations training course was established at Sir George Williams University in Montreal. During the same year, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario established a laboratory training program at Honey Harbour that ran for the next twenty years.

The basic element of human relations training is a T-group activity in which participants in a group observe and analyze their own experiences in the group as the major part of their learnings. This reflexive, group analysis process fit well with the workshop method and the work conference method that also used small group activity as the training method. During this decade, there were numerous human service conferences and professional training programs that used these methods—often to the surprise of the participants who came with their pens and notebooks and were expecting to, once again, be told what they should be doing and how they should be doing it.

Nothing has influenced the education and training of human service workers during the past thirty years as much as the integration of progressive education, field theory and group dynamics, role playing (psychodrama), and the workshop method into this new ideology of human relations training.

THE REVOLUTION OF THE 1960s

The humanistic trends identified in the preceding sections reached the apex of their acceptance and influence during the Sixties. Social, political, and economic developments were all interwoven with the human service revolutions. The growth rate in the economy was bounding ahead and huge sums of money were put into all human service programs. In the United States, Johnson's "Just Society" paid for all kinds of individual and community development programs, increased welfare and subsidies to the disadvantaged, and established health care protection from the cradle to the grave.

Group Dynamics and Action Research

During the Sixties several universities introduced courses in group dynamics, and a large number of group-oriented continuing education programs were offered in the human service field. The small group and workshop methods became well established, and many traditional programs were enlarged to include a small-group or "buzz"-group component. By the mid-Sixties much of the group dynamics tradition had been incorporated by Human Relations Training and what was left reverted to group development and leadership training (Miles, 1959).

Action research moved in two different directions during these years. Many psychologists did not understand that Lewin's concept of action research integrated personal reeducation and social change into the same process (Benne, 1976). However, they knew it was popular and began to call any research they were doing that related to people "action research." The other, and appropriate, direction was into the emerging field of organization development, in which action research became the major intervention strategy under the name of survey feedback, self-analysis, or some kind of utilization-focused research.

Human Relations Training

During this decade human relations training permeated most human service training programs and scores of training centers sprang up across the country. Small-group courses were added in several universities and many community colleges such that the training of most human service workers included some small-group experience. Others related to the human services were also affected as human relations training was incorporated by universities into training student leaders, YMCA staff, Boy Scouts, volunteer leaders, and board members of churches and other community organizations.

Human relations training was the most visible and preferred training trend during the decade. During this time, it developed a very solid body of theory and clearly described training methods (Bradford, Gibb, & Benne, 1964; Schein & Bennis, 1965). Consistent research was also being carried out and reported on to professionals and training staff (Schutz, 1960; Durham & Gibb, 1960, 1967; Dimock, 1965, 1970). This research and theory building did a lot to integrate progressive education, emerging management concepts in business and industry (McGregor, 1960) field theory and group

dynamics, and the more psychoanalytic orientations developing at the Tavistock Institute in England (Thelen, 1954; Bion, 1961). The theory and practice consolidated during the decade of the Sixties has been pervasive in explaining personal and organizational change in the human services and became the springboard from which the new field of organization development was launched. It has been my experience that many people in the field who are using these concepts—professors, students, and practitioners—are not aware of the legacy that came from the human relations training movement.

The Human Growth Thrust

Human relations training was based on field theory and group dynamics research and theory. Its basic elements were a reflexive, self-analytic focus on group process with a goal of understanding more about helping groups to become more effective. The trainer's role or leadership style was clearly positioned in the democratic or participative stance and the small-group/workshop method provided much of the content for training. In time, the study of the group's process was expected to become the major content.

However, during the Sixties the approach became so popular that the demand for training exceeded the cadre of people who had the skills required in participative leadership, group analysis, and group development theory. The people who had these skills were usually social psychologists or adult educators who had considerable experience in working with community groups and in conducting action research.

As the popularity of human relations or T-group training peaked, many professionals rushed in to help cover the demand. Most of the first new group to arrive were clinical psychologists and as they used the new training method they modified it to use their skills and understandings. Whereas T-groups focused on understanding how groups set goals and worked toward them, the new psychologists (who called their groups sensitivity training) focused on individual behavior in the group setting. This used their individual diagnostic skills and shifted the T-group to more of a modified group-therapy approach. Thus, the human growth movement came into being and quickly expanded as it encouraged people with all kinds of backgrounds and skills to use them to facilitate the personal growth of participants in these new group experiences.

The first group to develop its own version of human relations training was the University of California at Los Angeles (Weschler & Reisel, 1959; Tannenbaum, Weschler, & Massarik, 1961), and most of the developments of the human potential movement were based in California. By the end of the decade, Eselen was operational, as well as the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute and the Centre for Studies of the Person—all in southern California. People with skills in music, dance, arts and crafts, audiovisual techniques (especially film, video, and TV), poetry, psychodrama, individual therapy (gestalt, rational-emotive, Rogerian, transactional, reality, etc.), dream analysis, drug use, sensory relaxation, nonverbal communication, out-of-body travel, rolfing, yoga, altered states of consciousness, bioenergetics, hypnosis, and so on

(as the list is almost endless) added their expertise to this rapidly growing human potential movement.

Although human relations training reflected the democratic (interdependent) organization and community change interests of the Forties and Fifties, human potential reflected the mood of the Sixties. This was the "me-now" era; independence and counterdependence were reflected in the hippie fad, along with the "do your own thing" approach, and the rise of protests and group activism. Although the two training methods were very different and represented very different eras, they are frequently coupled as if they were one. The human growth trainers had doctrines that they taught in directive ways to the learners. They were often gurus who had the answers. Although learners were free to participate or not, the teaching style was traditional, in that it was directive and the process determined by the teacher. Yet the progressive spin-off was present because the teaching method was always experiential—learning-by-doing. It was almost totally affective (feeling) oriented, with a goal of freeing up creative potential in participants and helping them to become more authentic and self-actualizing.

These innovative methods also had a profound effect on the content and administration of human service education. The role of the human service helper moved along the continuum from telling and directing clients based on expert information to facilitating the learning and decision making of the service recipient. The medical model with the workers responsible for the service participant's improvement moved to a collaborative, consulting model that joined worker and client in a common goal. At the same time, the importance of the worker's knowledge and skills in the technical area gave way to the worker's self-understanding, interpersonal sensitivity, and ability to use the self as part of the helping process. Patients became clients and collaborators in their developmental program.

Degree requirements and professional certification crumbled in many areas as it was found that sensitive, authentic people were as successful as professionally trained workers. This shift to the personal qualities of workers, and the concept of using oneself as the major tool of helping, was especially common in the new areas of human service that sprang up in the Sixties—community development, street work, day care, emergency health and counseling services, free schools, minority group advocacy, and consumer protection. But other traditional areas also were affected: the YMCA dismantled its university-based certification program for staff; schools hired people who were not certified teachers; and social service agencies that had restricted new staff to those with a degree in social work actively sought others who could do the new jobs.

Human Service Program Developments

Interwoven with the changes in selecting and training human service workers that I described previously were significant program developments. They continued to affect and be affected by the changes in training.

All areas of human service tried to humanize their programs and were involved in some kind of outreach activity in an attempt to reach people they had been missing. Human service programs became proactive rather than reactive and prevention rather than treatment oriented. For example, street clinics and hot line services were set up for youth involved in drug and sex issues. Community workers headed these programs with doctors and nurses assisting. Informal education and counseling programs were held at the clinic and in local schools as part of the prevention program. School boards established alternative schools and programs to get at hard-to-reach youth while individual schools targeted potential dropouts for group guidance and other remedial programs. YMCA clubs and community organizations fielded teams of street workers and set up drop-in centers to get in touch with disadvantaged or alienated youth. Counselors in schools and universities started working with teachers and school-wide programs rather than just seeing individual students. Most community services that had only responded to needs with treatment—a disabled child, a broken home, a distressed person, an unwanted pregnancy, or unemployment—added an outreach education/counseling component and usually an advocacy, networking, community relations program.

With the monies available for the rapid expansion of human service programs, there was a chronic shortage of trained workers; students flooded into the professional programs in colleges and universities. The universities in turn responded by enlarging old programs and creating new ones. Often people with fewer years of training took over some areas of work previously done by more "senior" people. Paramedics assisted doctors, nursing aides and nursing assistants took over some jobs previously done by registered nurses, counselors did the therapy previously handled by psychologists and psychiatrists, case aides helped out professional social workers, and so on down the list of human services.

Just as important and pervasive in its influence was the move to using peers and indigenous leaders in place of professional helpers. Carkhuff was a major experimenter, researcher, and writer about peer helping; he started training parents to act as helpers (therapists) with their disturbed children (Carkhuff & Bierman, 1969). He also used lay helpers with hospitalized mental patients (Carkhuff, 1969) and then expanded into general areas of helping with a broad focus. His former student, Bierman, set up a community-wide peer helper program in Guelph, Ontario, a few years later. The indigenous leader concept was used extensively in the community development projects that proliferated in the 1960s. The peer counseling method was especially popular in disadvantaged and "hard-to-reach" youth programs and soon became an acceptable way of providing help within the school system.

The impact of the lay helper movement on human service education and training was twofold. First, the well-documented evidence that peers could be just as helpful as trained professionals broke down some of the rigid barriers defining who was allowed to do what. Second, many of the professionals who had previously been providing the helping services directly were now expected to do the selection and training of the lay

helpers. Education programs in colleges and universities picked up this new expectation from the field and shifted their focus from the knowledge and skills needed for providing direct service to those required for training other people to do the work. Human service professionals were no longer just "doers," they were trainers and consultants. Books and programs for developing trainers leaped in popularity (Dimock, 1973).

THE REASSESSMENT OF THE 1970s

Newton's Third Law of Motion states that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Or, as Galton and others illustrated, there is always a regression toward the mean. Certainly this was the case in the decade of the Seventies as the excesses, fads, and silliness of the Sixties were reexamined and put into a new and more pragmatic framework. The fun, excitement, and spontaneity of the previous decade gave way to more thoughtful activities that tended to reflect more traditional approaches. But even the traditional approaches were never to be the same after the revolutions of the Sixties. Let's look first at the excesses of the "me-now" decade and the failures of humanistic education and the human relations training movement. Then we can explore the awesome contributions and long-term legacies of the decade and see how these provided the springboard for the solid integrated advances that were forthcoming.

Etzioni (1983), in reviewing the 1960s, argues that the individually oriented and self-fulfillment trends distanced people from one another and put heavy pressures on families, schools, and other social systems that were based on interdependence and cooperation. He cites pollster Yankelovich's study that showed eighty percent of the population of the United States embracing in varying degrees a self-fulfillment orientation, in which ego needs, sensation, and excitement take priority over work and needs of others, including spouse and children.

The stress placed on independence and self-sufficiency not only broke down the structure of many human service group programs (school interest groups, YMCA/YWCA clubs, Scout troops, and social/recreational groups), but it also put considerable pressure on young couples, making them reluctant to seek help with problems of family relations and child rearing. As a result, human service programs had to shift their focus from strong, cohesive groups fulfilling members' needs through the give-and-take of interdependent relations to an individual development focus where the needs of others was a secondary consideration. Social workers and psychologists working with family problems had to develop integrated techniques for countering these attitudes.

During the Sixties, the independent style of relating (as contrasted with the interdependent style of the Fifties) and the disenchantment with the way things were, led to an increase of people who did not hold regular jobs. This trendy, anti-Establishment life style was very popular during the economic bonanza of the 1960s, when people could regularly quit jobs knowing there were several more readily available. As jobs

became scarce in the next decade, the ego satisfaction of quitting jobs and turning down new jobs, which was the fun of the anti-Establishment life style, came to an abrupt end. Young people once again wanted education and training that would give them job security.

This trend would ordinarily have been expected to reduce the number of students seeking human service professional training, and yet the number stayed the same or increased. One reason for this was the rapid expansion of human service jobs in the early 1970s, and another reason was that some human service professional groups tightened certification requirements to practice in their field. Education, social work, psychology, and nursing all strengthened their control of their fields with increased certification requirements backed by laws. Probably much of this was a direct reaction to the looseness of the lay-helper thrust of the 1960s.

The Failure of Humanistic Education

Humanistic education as a dominant movement failed. Free schools, open classrooms, confluent education, and self-directed learning are hard to find these days. Part of the failure was related to the problem of changing an entrenched, bureaucratic system where seniority determined salary and merit pay proposals were routinely rejected by teachers' unions. A review of thirty years of research on leadership training (Stogdill, 1974) indicates that attempts to change the way workers deal with other people have not been successful. Other research (APA Monitor, April, 1983) has shown that teacher training in new behaviors does not persist once the teacher gets back to the classroom.

In brief, humanistic educators operated on the mistaken assumption that their success in increasing the learning of their students and their satisfaction with the learning process would ensure their acceptance and future role in education. But their inability to consider others in the educational system (teachers, administrators, school board, and parents), typical of the "me-now" independent-oriented 1960s, contributed to their failure. In the process, however, they made a lasting contribution to the education and training of human service professionals. Self-directed learning, though under fire, is still alive and well today (Tough, 1982). There is an increased readiness to consider a variety of ways in which individuals typically learn (Kolb, 1975), which is one of the true fulfillments of the humanistic education movement. The acceptance of experiential learning paved the way for the almost immediate utilization of personal computers in educational programs at all levels.

Although most of the insights and methods of humanistic education were not integrated into ongoing educational programs, the learnings from these failures were recognized by the new field of organization development and became one of the underpinnings of its new theory and technology.

New Developments During the 1970s

After the unstructured, participant-directed training focus popular in the Sixties, the next decade saw a sharp move in the opposite direction as structured activities, simulations,

and packaged programs increased in popularity. Structured activities were extensions of the skill training exercises used by the National Training Laboratory at Bethel, Maine, and updated by Pfeiffer and Jones (1969 to date), who built the Pfeiffer & Company training and consulting organization around them. For many people, these leader-led, highly focused experiences were a welcome relief from the unstructured introspection and highly emotional confrontations of T-groups and encounter groups. They were particularly suited to short-term training timetables. The availability of handbooks and "hip pocket guides" made it possible for a new wave of trainers to get into the training business.

The popularity of packaged programs was also partially because of the ease with which they could be administered. The Blake Grid Program (Blake & Mouton, 1964) was one of the early prototypes that packaged a series of activities that were almost self-operating and that relatively inexperienced trainers (usually on the staff of the organization using the program) could handle. The Grid program became used worldwide and is still in use. Sensitivity training and encounter groups contained an element of risk and were usually led by highly trained professionals (whose presence also escalated training costs). Betty Berzon (Soloman & Berzon, 1972) put together a series of audiotape recordings that therapy and encounter groups used as a self-directed program. These were developed in such a way that a group could use the first session as a program by itself or add on the following sessions in sequence. Information booklets for participants could accompany the program. This format became very popular for a variety of programs during the Seventies when audiocassettes became commonplace and videotape equipment was practical to use and affordable.

A large variety of preplanned, structured activities and programs emerged that could be led without a great deal of technical training. As these programs became big business, they were taken over by major training organizations and book publishers and merchandised as any other product. High quality films, video recordings, cassette tapes, participants' workbooks, and trainers' kits for the leaders emerged. By the mid-Seventies many of these programs included a computer component, an extension of the teaching machine approach of the previous decade.

The improved technology available for training at this time played a significant role in shifting training in the human services to a cafeteria assortment of training events lasting from a day to three days, each with a specific focus. These programs ranged from all-day simulations such as Starpower, to Situational Leadership in a three-day format, to stress training by the hour or day. Even the in-house training programs put together by organizations tended to be composed of a series of these modules. Although these programs appeared to be job related, they were often described by participants as more entertainment than education. In any case, the era of the flexible, open-ended, participant-focused workshop was over.

This decade was also characterized by the general acceptance of the organization development (OD) movement that started in the early Sixties. This field was pioneered by many of the same social scientists who had been heavily involved in the action

research and T-group side (as contrasted with the personal growth and encounter group side) of human relations training. It is likely that the OD movement evolved out of the natural extension of the T-group approach to include more organizational aspects and concerns—especially when research (Dimock, 1971) suggested that this training method had little impact on organizational effectiveness. It is likely that as the popularity of T-groups waned in the Seventies, more of the former trainers moved into OD as the place where the action was.

Organization development popularized survey feedback, team building, intergroup collaboration, conflict management, organizational goal setting, and role clarification/negotiating. In the mid-Seventies, it blended into the more social technical approach of Quality of Work Life proponents. As the interest in Japanese management increased, training for quality circles became the trend. Although the Japanese version had a statistical quality control function, the North American model was more a worker participation group; this made a complete circle back to the action research activities (Coch & French, 1948) that led to the start of the human relations training movement.

Although quality circles have not been picked up by human service organizations, the whole OD movement has been well accepted and in some cases led by the human services. The national councils of YMCA clubs in Canada and the U.S. started their first organization development program in 1961, and school systems saw OD and Quality of Work Life as useful to their interests (Schmuck et al., 1972, 1977).

A LOOK AT THE 1980s AND THE FUTURE

A major influence on the education and training of human service workers at this time is thought to be the economic recession in which we have been involved. The recession is described as instigating a "back to basics" approach based on a return to traditional methods of teaching/training and reality-based feedback for learners. The previous description of the 1970s, however, suggests that most of the present trends were well established by the middle of that decade. It is also likely that they became more relevant and acceptable as the recession deepened. A more important aspect of the recession is the large pool of well-trained people looking for jobs. The availability of people practically begging for jobs has meant that human service organizations can deal with their staff in rather impersonal ways as a technique to handle the emotional stress of separation (firing) and reorganization as funding decreases and downsizing becomes necessary.

My prediction of trends for the future includes second-generation human relations training for human service workers who have been in the field for less than fifteen years. The focus of this human relations training will, I believe, be both interpersonal awareness and group leadership skills.

My second prediction for the future is a reflection of the present enthusiasm for high-tech packaged programs and their development with a few wrinkles in the future. A case in point is the program called "Towards Excellence." It is based on the nonfiction

best seller, *In Search of Excellence* (Peters & Waterman, 1982). The program includes a series of activities for participants (about twenty to twenty-five hours), backed by video recordings by the senior author and individual cassettes and workbooks for each program participant.

The third major trend I see for this decade is not an easy one to document or substantiate. It suggests that more education and training will take place on-the-job with intact work groups. Although this has some commonality with the apprenticeship system, it also includes the learnings from the Quality Circle approach of the past few years.

The historical perspective of this article suggests that education and training in the human services has gone through cycles in which old philosophies and methods are rediscovered and given new names and that educational advances or fads tend to fade out in a few years following a regression toward the mean pattern. Although these themes are present, the "state-of-the-art" has been clearly influenced by advances and developments during these years. New understandings about the needs of learners, how youth and adults learn, factors affecting the climate for learning, and methods to facilitate learner involvement and self-direction in the learning process have forged a new era in education. The information explosion, coupled with the ubiquitous personal computer, will bring additional changes that will alter our educational programs to an extent comparable to the printing press and the availability of inexpensive, mass-produced reading materials.

B.F. Skinner, the father of behavior modification and the teaching machine, went on record (Skinner, 1983) to say that the use of computers could cut in half the time and effort needed to teach what is now being taught in American schools. There will be humanistic counterforces to the universal use of computers as a major educational method, and this tension sets the stage for a good deal of excitement and creativity in education for the second half of this decade.

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THEME DEVELOPMENT: FINALLY GETTING CONTROL OF THE DESIGN PROCESS

H.B. Karp

A highly talented colleague and close friend recently lost a sizeable training contract for an odd reason. The program was a three-day, management-development public workshop being offered through a prestigious university. At the end of the first day, the workshop was going very well and the participants seemed engaged and satisfied. On the second day of the program, as my colleague was leaving to lunch, the client overheard him say to his partner "What do you want to do when we get back?"

The client was horrified that his welfare was being left in the "lap of the gods." Not having a complete and comprehensive design for a program is extremely risky. It forces the trainer to use his or her talent to develop a program rather than using that talent to achieve an intended outcome. In addition, not having a developed theme for a program heightens the probability that there will be inconsistencies or blank spaces in the design.

A theme is to a training program what a mission is to an organization. It is the beacon that guides the design process easily and effectively. Once a clear theme has been developed and established, the designer of the training program will be better able to set learning objectives and design unique modules that will support the entire learning process.

A clear theme is invaluable as a means of working creatively with the client, with colleagues, and most of all with the program participants. The theme allows the trainers to be uniquely themselves while still supporting the central purpose of the training program. Similarly, if the theme is visible and agreed on among the designers and the client, there will be less resistance from the client to unique or more innovative design suggestions.

In the incident with my friend, a strong program theme had not been established. Had there been a clearly stated and mutually understood theme for the program, his developing a module dealing with current concerns might have been seen as a creative, on-the-spot, design innovation rather than as a lapse of responsibility.

WHAT IS A THEME?

The term "theme" needs to be defined so that it can be distinguished from other training elements such as learning objectives or designs. For our purposes, theme is the unifying element that represents the purpose of the program.

Characteristics of a Theme

Given the preceding definition, a theme has four identifying characteristics: It is *general, clearly understood, unique,* and *results oriented.*

General. The program theme is stated in general terms and is as succinct as possible. The theme provides a rationale that permits the program design to adjust to individual differences. A theme that is stated in general terms (for example, "Assertive Leadership for the Newly Appointed Supervisor") will allow each attending supervisor-participant to develop a unique and specific understanding of that theme within the context of the training program.

Clearly understood. One of the theme's subtle but important functions is to provide a common frame of reference for everyone who is associated with the training program. The client, the program designers, the trainers, the line managers, the HR or financial support people, and the current and prospective participants, all need to have a common and agreed-on awareness of the program theme. The rule of thumb is that the theme should be stated briefly and clearly so that it is understood by everyone.

Unique. The theme's most important function is to give the program its unique and specific purpose. A well-conceived theme conveys an idea of how this training program will fit the needs of the participant. To illustrate, compare the two following program titles: "Basic Non-Parametric Statistics" and "Practical Introductory Non-Parametric Statistics for the Terminally Frightened."

The first title, "Basic Non-Parametric Statistics," is technically correct and does conform to the criterion of clarity. The problem is that there is nothing in the title/theme that differentiates this program from any other course or program being offered on the subject.

The second title is a more unique and precise description of the program. "Practical" says that the focus of the program is on hands-on applications rather than on statistical or mathematical theory. "Introductory" acknowledges that the participants are expected to have little or no prior experience with the subject matter. "Non-Parametric Statistics" clearly identifies the subject matter. And, "for the Terminally Frightened," playfully identifies the target group and acknowledges the concerns the participants may have, and simultaneously sends a very clear message that the participants can expect to have some fun at this program.

Results oriented. Inherent in the theme statement are the criteria for improving performance. Effective themes generally support observable outcomes rather than changes in attitude. That is, even if the learning objective of the program is attitudinal, the theme should keep the focus on outcomes rather than on processes. For example, for a personal growth workshop, a theme and title of "Making Better Choices" would be preferable to "Feeling Better About Yourself." The first title is results oriented; participants can expect to achieve personal growth by improving their decision-making skills. The second title offers only the abstract goal of "feeling better."

Functions of the Theme

The program's theme provides four necessary functions: *criteria for program design, control, a common basis for working together,* and *personalization.*

Provides criteria for program design. From a design standpoint, the theme provides the background from which to draw the design. The stronger and clearer the theme statement, the easier it is to design creatively, without losing the message. This point is particularly useful if there is a team approach being taken to the design and delivery of the program.

Training is an art form in any of its aspects. Except possibly for beginners who are trying to learn the rudiments of training through emulation, no two trainers use the same methods, the same designs, or interact with the participants in the same manner. A strong theme provides the basis for resolving differences of opinion and creativity among trainers, and it also makes it safer for creative differences to emerge and be considered.

Provides essential control. The program's theme protects the training program from becoming a conglomeration of unrelated activities, games, and pieces of information. An experienced trainer knows that there are two sure-fire ways of losing a group. The first is to bore them, and the second is to only entertain them.

The participants have usually given up something of value to attend the program (for example, they have paid fees, taken time away from their jobs, given up vacation time, and so on). This implies that the participants have come to the program having made sizeable investments. It is essential that the participants leave feeling that there was a reasonable return on their investments. The theme's guidelines allow the trainer to design creatively, knowing that everything that is put into the design will support the learning objectives of the participants.

Provides a common basis for working together. Once the theme is surfaced, stated simply and clearly, and mutually agreed on, there is a commonality of understanding among all the individuals who are connected with the program. The needs, concerns, and perspectives of the client, the trainers, the participants, the support people, and so forth, are all going to be somewhat unique and different. The stronger the one common thread of understanding, the theme, the easier it will be for individuals to negotiate with and support one another, as well as the program itself.

Personalizes the design. Anybody with a good speaking ability, an attractive appearance, and a little self-confidence can follow a script and conduct what appears to be an effective training program. This is common practice and some adequate training is being conducted in this manner today. So long as the group is large enough and the message simple enough to discourage difficult individual questions and participant confrontation, it will continue.

The professional trainer, on the other hand, is a person with a message. How the theme is phrased is as much a statement of how the trainer sees the world and how he or she uniquely contributes to it as it is a statement of what is important to the client.

The theme is the one place that allows the trainer to place his or her signature on the training effort. For example, suppose that a large corporation has regionalized its training strategy. Each region is required to conduct a program entitled "Increasing Supervisory Effectiveness" and to cover the same topic areas, but each region has latitude in how to design and present the program. One trainer's theme statement is "A Collaborative Approach to Increased Productivity." A second trainer's theme is "Increasing Self-Reliance in the First-Line Supervisor."

It is quite reasonable to assume that both programs could cover the same material and meet the learning objectives of the corporation superbly, while providing observably different and unique training experiences. The highest probability is that the participants would be getting the best possible exposure because each program was developed from the respective trainer's area of expertise and personal commitment. Most people are familiar with this phenomenon having been exposed to multiple sections of the same course in high school or college.

Developing the Theme

Themes originate from many sources. Three of the more common sources are *initial contacts, needs analyses,* and *learning objectives.*

The initial contact. Suppose a prospective client begins the first conversation with a trainer by explaining that supervisors are not holding the people they manage accountable. The trainer then may develop the following program theme from this conversation, "Developing Strong Supportive Supervision." The trainer may alter the program theme once he or she has learned more about the situation, but a preliminary theme can be established.

The needs analysis. A trainer may be asked to perform a needs assessment concerning a drop in performance. While working on the needs assessment, he or she discovers that the drop in performance may not be due to the workers' incompetence, but to their unwillingness to ask their supervisors questions and to take reasonable risks. The real problem may be restrictive or harsh management. The trainer must then shift the focus from technical training to supervisory training and perhaps develop a new theme such as "Increasing Supervisory Options for Developing Collaborative Effort."

The learning objectives. When the training program begins, what the participants want or need individually is related to—but always somewhat different from—the learning objectives developed by the trainer. Listening to the participants' individual learning objectives before the program format is disclosed gives the trainer an opportunity to hear what they want and then tailor the theme to the participants' specific needs.

For example, in asking the participants what they would like at the beginning of a supervisory training program, several of the participants might mention that they are having problems dealing with the inappropriate behavior of their subordinates. Although this issue was not covered in the trainer's original objectives, it is possible to cast the training program materials (communications, feedback, conflict management, and so on) within this context. The trainer may revise his or her theme to include a sub-theme such as "Increasing Your Comfort in Dealing with Difficult People."

Theme Statement

There are three elements embedded in every theme statement: *what the content is*, *who it is for,* and *what is unique.*

What the content is. This is the statement that clearly says what the training program is about. This element is usually expressed in one or two words such as "leadership," "training skills," or "parametric statistics."

Who it is for. The theme should identify the target group. This is necessary for setting the appropriate level of intensity or complexity of design for the program. This is expressed as newly appointed supervisors, nonfinancial managers, or experienced mental health professionals.

What is unique. This element is what gives the theme its particular and specific character and differentiates it from every other program. This is expressed as "A systems approach to . . .," ". . . from the Gestalt perspective," or "A layman's view to . . . ."

The theme of the program should be clear and observable as an integral part of the program. In most cases it can be included in the title of the program, either as the sole title, or as a subtitle.

CONCLUSION

It is practically impossible to design a program or module outside the context of a theme. Working with a theme is a process with which most trainers are already familiar. The theme needs to be developed and established before beginning to work on the design of the training program. A clear and precise theme will allow the trainer to maintain control of the design process by making sure that each element in the format supports the purpose of the program, the client's objectives, and the trainer's need to make a singular and important professional contribution.

CO-FACILITATING

J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones

We believe that co-facilitating a group is superior to working alone. In this paper we will discuss the major advantages, some potential disadvantages, and some suggestions for avoiding the dangers in co-facilitating. The Co-Facilitating Inventory, which appears at the end of the paper, is a guide to maximizing the learning experience of working together.

ADVANTAGES

Facilitating Group Development

One of the most convincing reasons for working with a colleague as a co-facilitator is to complement each other's styles. One person may have a group-dynamics focus while the other may have an intra-individual focus. Together they may be able to monitor and facilitate individual and group development better than either of them could do separately.

Dealing with Heightened Affect

In personal growth groups, highly emotional situations occasionally arise, and the facilitator must be able to deal not only with persons who have a heightened affect but also with the "audience effect." It is difficult to help an individual work through deeply felt reactions and at the same time to assist other group members in integrating this experience in terms of its potential learning. In such situations, it is always profitable to have a co-facilitator. One facilitator can "work with" the person(s) experiencing significant emotionality, while the other facilitator assists participants in dealing with their reactions to the situation.

Personal and Professional Development

Co-facilitating offers each partner support for his or her personal development. Facilitating personal growth groups and team-building sessions can be a lonely activity; the opportunities for meaningful personal development are lessened by the complexity of the facilitator's monitoring and intervening tasks. With co-facilitators, each can better work his or her personal development issues both in and out of the group setting.

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Another major advantage of co-facilitating is the opportunity for professional growth. Participants are usually not able to offer meaningful feedback on facilitator competence. When facilitators work together, they can provide each other with a rich source of professional reactions. In this way, each group experience becomes a practicum for the facilitators involved.

Synergistic Effect

The remark that "two heads are better than one" has often been validated experientially in consensus-seeking tasks in laboratory training. When people work together collaboratively, a synergistic effect often develops. That is, the outcome of the deliberation exceeds the sum of the contribution of the individuals. Co-facilitating can generate synergistic outcomes through the personal and professional interchange resulting from working toward a common task.

Modeling

One way participants learn in groups is by studying facilitators as behavioral models. Co-facilitating provides not only two models of individuals coping with their own life situations, but it also offers a model for meaningful, effective two-person relationships. The interaction between the co-facilitators gives participants a way to gauge pair relationships. The likelihood that the training will transfer to participants' back-home, everyday situations is increased.

Reduced Dependency

A recurring issue in both personal development groups and team-building sessions is the problem of dependency on the facilitator. Facilitators who work many groups alone sometimes dread having repeatedly to face participants' unresolved authority conflicts. With co-facilitators, the leadership is shared, and therefore the dependency problem is somewhat dissipated.

Appropriate Pacing

Working with a partner can help a facilitator to pace himself or herself more effectively. Observing and intervening in a group session is demanding, and the facilitator is sometimes not able to relax enough to permit the process to emerge at its own rate. Co-facilitators can check each other's timing of events and provide some respite from the detailed monitoring necessary to provide meaningful interventions.

Sharp Focus

A final advantage is that issues can be focused more sharply when they are seen by two facilitators. Facilitators usually have "favorite" issues that are likely to emerge in their groups, and co-facilitating can offset biases.

POTENTIAL DISADVANTAGES

Different Orientations

Some dangers are, however, inherent in co-facilitation. It is important to be sensitive to potential problems. Individuals with different orientations—theoretical, technical, personal—can easily impair each other's effect in the group. It is, for example, difficult to imagine a good melding of a Tavistock-oriented "consultant" and an Esalen-trained encounter group leader. Such partners would likely discover themselves working at cross-purposes.

Extra Energy

Co-facilitating takes energy. Not only is the facilitator occupied with the development of the participants and of the group, but he or she also has to expend effort to develop and maintain the relationship that may be pivotal to the success of the training. The training subgoals include not only the facilitator's personal and professional development, but also the relationship with his or her coworker.

Threat and Competition

Because two professionals in a group may constitute more of a threat to individual participants than one would, they may see co-facilitators as colluding with each other. The "clinicking" that co-facilitators engage in between sessions can arouse suspicion and create an emotional distance between facilitators and participants.

Co-facilitators can become competitive with each other. Although they may deny any concern for popularity, they may, without knowing it, engage in behavior that meets other needs besides those inherent in the training.

Overtraining

It is clearly possible to "overtrain" a group, particularly with the presence of two active facilitators. It is important to recognize that too many interventions may stifle both participation and learning. This is especially true when facilitators play the "two-on-one" game, simultaneously attempting to interpret and facilitate one participant. Group-member helpfulness is one of the most potent dimensions of personal growth and team-building activities. After an initiation period, participants—as well as facilitators—can make meaningful interventions. It is important that facilitators stay out of the way in order to permit this process to occur.

Blind Spots

Co-facilitators may have mutual blind spots in observing inter-and-intra-individual dynamics, and it is possible to reinforce each other's failure to attend to particular areas. If co-facilitators are similar in their theory and technique, it is quite likely that they will pay attention to the same data. Thus they may neglect, or pay less attention to, other data

and thereby increase the possibility that they will fail to notice significant learning opportunities that are outside their normal purview.

A Misleading Model

In any human relations situation there is always the possibility that people will react to assumptions rather than to clear understandings of each other. This, of course, can occur to co-facilitators if they are not clear about each other's positions on recurring and predictable group issues. In this case, they can provide an ineffective model for the participants.

When the relationship between co-facilitators is tense, mistrustful, and/or closed, the modeling is negative. Participants may mistakenly conclude that what "works" in human relations is to behave in ways directly opposed to the values on which human relations training is based.

Different Rhythms

A final potential disadvantage in co-facilitating is that the facilitators' intervention rhythms may be different. One may intervene on a "beat" of ten, while the other intervenes on a "beat" of three. The facilitator who is slower to react or who hesitates in the hope that participants will take responsibility for the maintenance of the group, may find obtrusive the partner who intervenes more rapidly. Disjunctive contacts that may result between the co-facilitators provide a negative model.

AVOIDING THE DANGERS

Facilitators who are considering joining together to work with a small group can engage in a number of activities to obviate these potential disadvantages. The obvious first step is to share orientations to and experiences with similar kinds of group situations.

A second way of avoiding the problems of ineffective co-facilitation is to solicit feedback frequently and regularly. As a check on behavioral perception, there is no substitute for honest and straightforward reactions.

In order to counteract one facilitator's tendency to overtrain the group and to cut into the rhythm of interventions of his or her partner, it may be useful to count to ten—or twenty—before intervening. If any participant speaks during that time, the count is begun again at zero.

It is important that the co-facilitators be honest both in presenting themselves and in soliciting feedback from participants. In this way, they can de-emphasize the impact of their presence in the group. Each co-facilitator needs to monitor the reasons for his or her behavior in the group. Each intervention should be "located." That is, the facilitator needs to know what he or she is observing and responding to, what the needs in the group seem to be, and what the intervention is designed to elicit. Otherwise, it is likely that the intervention will meet the personal needs of the facilitator at the expense of the needs of the participants.

Testing Assumptions

It seems axiomatic that all assumptions need to be tested continuously. Facilitators are clearly not above making errors in communication. It is critical that they check the bases of their professional judgments.

If co-facilitators experience difficulty in working together, they may solicit a third party as a consultant. This activity may produce a great deal of learning not only for themselves but also for observers.

In confronting the potential disadvantages of co-facilitating, partners can create for themselves opportunities to experiment with and to enlarge both their personal development and their professional expertise. We believe that the advantages of co-facilitating clearly outweigh any potential problems or dangers.

CO-FACILITATING INVENTORY

Name _____

Training Event _____

Dates _____

PREWORK

Learning Theory

In the space below write a statement of approximately one hundred words to explain your concept of how people learn.

Personal Motivation

Complete the following sentence:

I am involved in training because . . .

Expectations

I expect the following things to happen in the group in which we will be working:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

The *best* thing that could happen would be . . .

The *worst* thing that could happen would be . . .

Intervention Style

The following are my typical responses in the type of group with which we are going to be working:

1. *When starting the group, I usually . . .*
2. *When someone talks too much, I usually . . .*
3. *When the group is silent, I usually . . .*
4. *When an individual is silent for a long period of time, I usually . . .*
5. *When someone cries, I usually . . .*
6. *When someone comes late, I usually . . .*
7. *When someone introduces outside information about family or friends, I usually . . .*
8. *When group members are excessively polite and unwilling to confront one another, I usually . . .*
9. *When there is conflict in the group, I usually . . .*
10. *When there is a group attack on one individual, I usually . . .*
11. *When group members discuss sexual feelings about one another or about me, I usually . . .*
12. *If there is physical violence, I usually . . .*

My favorite interventions in this type of group are:

My typical "intervention rhythm" (fast/slow) is:

My style is characteristically more (a) nurturing or (b) confronting.

The thing that makes me most uncomfortable in groups like this is:

Training Experience

Approximate Dates	Duration	Type of Event	Your Role

Additional Background Information

List scores from such instruments as FIRO-B, POI, GTQ-C, Opinionnaire on Assumptions About Human Relations Training, and the Group Leadership Functions Scale. Comment on what these data mean to you.

Exchange

Photocopy these prework pages to share with your co-facilitator. (Time permitting, this exchange should take place about a week before the training event.)

INITIAL INTERVIEW

Background

1. Share reactions to the prework: the activity, each other's data, surprises, etc.
2. Further explain items about your past experiences as a participant and as a co-facilitator.
3. Share the personal growth efforts that you are making right now. Indicate what personal issues you anticipate working on in the group.
4. State some of your co-facilitator behavior patterns and indicate the behaviors your co-facilitator might see as idiosyncratic. Share what you will be attempting to improve in your style during the life of this group.
5. Note issues that have arisen in your past work with other co-facilitators.
6. Together define the training goals of the event with which you are about to work.
7. Come to a consensus about the expectations and experiences of the participants. Discuss your reactions to the makeup of the group, its size, and any other special considerations.

Operating Norms

1. Decide where you will sit in the group meetings.
2. Decide who says the first/last word in each session.
3. Determine whether there will be open-ended or specific time periods and whether you will be able to leave the group when you want to or whether you will be responsible for remaining a part of the group. Do you end the group at appointed times?
4. Decide your norms for attendance for yourselves and for group members.
5. Agree on how much "there-and-then" discussion will be allowed and how you define "here-and-now."
6. Discuss whether and how you are going to make theory inputs.
7. Determine an approach to the problem of "back-home" application.

Co-Facilitating Style

1. Where, when, and how do we deal with issues between us?
2. Can we agree to disagree?
3. Will we encourage or discourage conflict?
4. How much of our behavior will be role determined, and how much will be personal and individual?
5. Is it possible to use each other's energy; that is, can I be "out" while you are "in"?

6. How do we establish and maintain growth-producing norms?
7. What is nonnegotiable with each of us as co-facilitators?

Ethics

1. What are our responsibilities if someone has psychological difficulty? Are we responsible for referral? What responsibilities do we have after the group experience is over?'
2. What responsibilities do we have for screening?
3. Are we adequately qualified? How have we communicated our qualifications to the group?
4. What are our ethical standards with regard to sexuality?

Private Processing

Take a half-hour break in order to examine privately the information that you have received from each other.

Reconsideration

1. Discuss any items that need further clarification.
2. Compare your status with that of your co-facilitator. If there is a difference, discuss the implications for working in this group.
3. Establish a contract for what each of you is going to do during the first session. What is the opening routine?

CLINICKING (Repeat after each group meeting.)

Diagnosis

1. On a ten-point scale, how did things go in this meeting?
2. What is happening in the group?
3. Is anyone “hurting”?

Soliciting Feedback

1. What did I do that was effective?
2. What did I do that was ineffective?
3. How am I working as a co-facilitator?
4. To what degree are we colluding, that is, not sharing all the information we have?

Renegotiation

1. As we reexamine our contract, is there anything that we need to renegotiate?
2. How are we feeling about each other?
3. What is each of us going to do in the next group meeting?

DEBRIEFING (After the training event.)

1. Have a final clinicking session.
2. Discuss the extent to which the training goals were achieved.
3. Discuss under what conditions you would work together again.
4. Discuss your personal and professional learnings from this event.
5. Solicit ideas for your continued personal growth.
6. Solicit ideas about improving your training competence.

REENTRY

John E. Jones

As they near the end of human relations training events, both participants and facilitators begin the process of moving from a training situation to their everyday lives and jobs. The need at this point is to bridge the somewhat idealistic mood of the training with the participants' more mundane existence. Using behavioral science theory in human relations laboratories, communication-skills workshops, etc., means moving from theory to practice. That is, laboratories and workshops deal with theory and teach the skills necessary to its practical application.

In order to accomplish personal and professional changes in training, it is often desirable to establish what is sometimes called a "cultural island"—an experimental society in which people deliberately try out their behavior and the application of behavioral science concepts to personal and leadership situations. Such an "artificial" environment permits a sense of psychological safety that may allow persons to relax their defensiveness and become more receptive to new learning.

The laboratory situation, however, implies a high degree of self-exploration on the part of participants. Typically this results in a heightened consciousness of self—feelings, attitudes, values, and reactions to other people—and an increased sensitivity to oneself, to others, and to one's impact on others. Because participants in laboratory training are urged to discuss their reactions to activities, to one another, and to observations of their own behavior, it is often noted that at the end of such training participants are filled with consciousness of themselves.

At the beginning of training, we typically are not reacting strongly—either positively or negatively—to social situations. After we spend time focused on the human relations in a setting characterized by a high degree of experimentation, risk taking, and skill building, our responsivity is increased. Our positive feelings feel even more positive, and our negative feelings feel even more negative. When we are "turned on," we feel that emotion intensely; when we are "turned off," or hurt, the negative response feels even more intense. This can be shown graphically (Figure 1). At the end of a training activity we are far more likely to feel intense positive and negative emotional reactions.

However, the people with whom we interact outside the training setting (those who have not attended the event) are likely to be at the same level of emotional responsivity as that at which we began. Although they may have been involved in interesting

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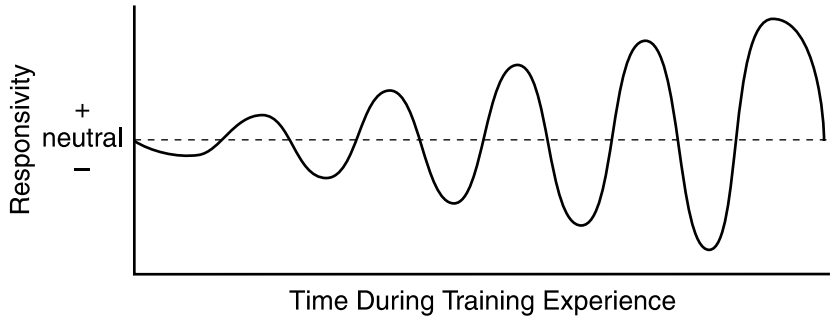

Figure 1. Responsivity of Participants During a Training Experience

activities during the time we were away from them, they probably have not engaged in self-exploration and the giving and receiving of highly focused feedback. Their responsivity during the time we are in training can be graphically displayed as in Figure 2.

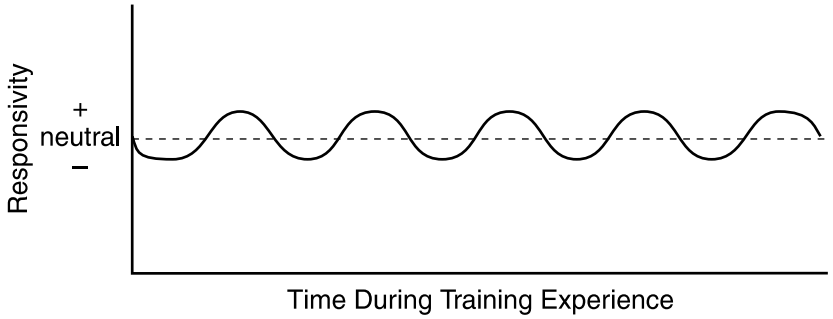

Figure 2. Responsivity of Nonparticipants During a Training Experience

It can be seen, then, that during a training period, other people with whom participants in training will interact following the training experience do not have a rise in responsivity comparable to that of participants. Their reactions to people and events around them remain less emotionally laden than those of participants, who have expended considerable energy in examining human reaction. During the time period of the training, the emotional consciousness of the two groups of people can be represented graphically (Figure 3). The intensity of our reactions to ourselves and to other people increases, while the responsivity of associates not involved in the training remains relatively constant.

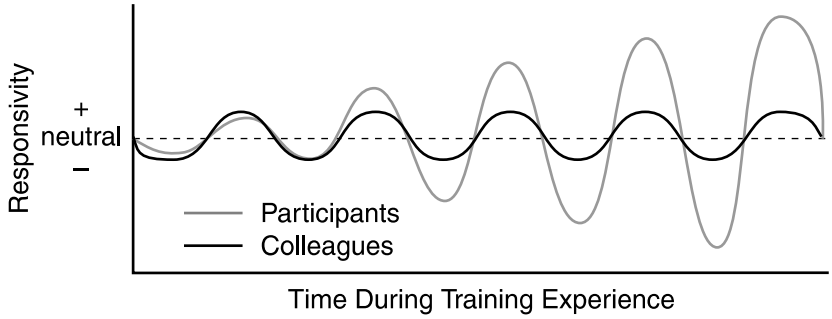

Figure 3. Responsivity of Participants and Nonparticipants During a Training Experience

In reentering our normal situations, it is important to recognize that the heightened responsivity that we experience at the end of training continues for some time. Because the responsivity of other persons is likely to vary comparatively less, we are reconnecting with our usual personal contacts from a different angle (Figure 4).

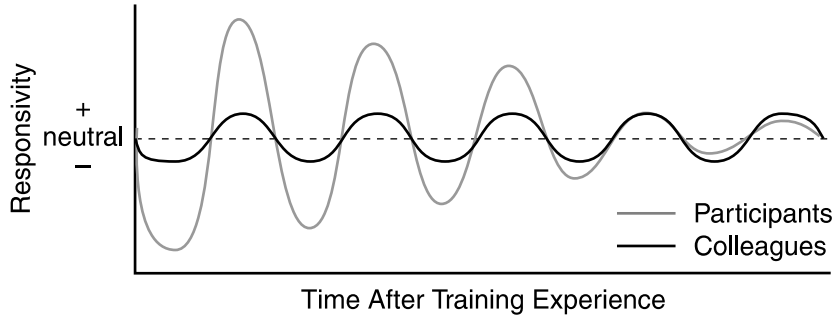

Figure 4. Participants' Responsivity over Time in Reconnecting with Colleagues After a Training Experience

In order to avoid dysfunctional encounters with these individuals, we must be aware that our heightened awareness may cause us to behave in counterproductive ways. Just as astronauts prepare carefully for reentry into the earth's environment after their journey into space, we, as participants in laboratory learning, should gear ourselves for connecting with our usual environments.

SUGGESTED TECHNIQUES

It is useful to remind ourselves that what others have been doing during our time of training is important also. It is insensitive to assume that what we have been doing is more significant than what our acquaintances have been doing. Showing interest in these people when seeing them again is a useful behavior. We might, for example, interview our colleagues about how they spent their time while we were away from them.

The human relations laboratory participant, on returning home from a weekend retreat, may enthusiastically tell a spouse or roommate, "You should have been there!

You can't possibly understand what happened. For the first time, I really related to someone." The participant is being terribly insensitive to a person who may be highly significant to him or her. It would be better to inquire about the other's activities in a creative, sensitive way. Human relations training "alumni," at this point, are probably more ready than other people to work experimentally on the improvement of relationships, and they should be particularly alert to the needs of others.

Because the total effects of human relations training are not apparent for some time, it is important that we continue to monitor our reactions to the training experience. Sometimes the learnings derived from participation in experiential learning environments are not crystallized until weeks or months afterwards. This continued learning from our experience can validate the observations that occurred in our cultural island. We should not, however, impose our emerging awareness on others.

After training it is critical that we make determined efforts to apply our learning to our personal and professional life situations. We can do this best, perhaps, if we solicit the assistance and collaboration of other people with whom we interact often.

Because the most impactful laboratory learning occurs in an environment in which people give each other support for behavioral experimentation, we can make an effort to build a support system for our continued learning. We will be more likely to build on the experiences of the laboratory if we can confide in one or more people with whom we can plan and contract for new behavior.

In summary, if the kinds of experiences that we have in an experimental laboratory situation are to be validated and extended into everyday life, we must be aware of the short-term emotional effects of the experience. We should also make definite plans to apply our learning. To do this, we need to be aware of our heightened responsivity and its effects on others around us.

TRAINING COMPONENTS FOR GROUP FACILITATORS

Robert K. Conyne

Appropriate training for group facilitators is a important issue in education and in the applied behavioral sciences. As this provocative area is being addressed by several professional organizations, training guidelines are emerging, but facilitators-in-training as well as their trainers may have a more immediate practical interest and concern. For these individuals, significant components for the training of a group facilitator (Massarik, 1972) can be outlined.

The group facilitator needs to be trained along definable dimensions. He or she needs more than the frequent request for a "bag of tricks"—for example, a "package of structured exercises." Instead, solid exposure to and integration of the following components are needed.

CONCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE

The group facilitator needs to know and understand people, groups, and facilitating styles. This conceptual knowledge may be obtained through formal means (e.g., a professional training program) and/or it may be sought through less formal ways (e.g., reading, attending seminars).

Understanding People

The group facilitator is in direct and often intense involvement with people. Knowing about people in a theoretical sense contributes to knowing them in a personal and professional sense. Although cognitive awareness has been dismissed by some facilitators and theorists who place emphasis on "gut" reactions, this tendency fortunately is now giving way to a renewed interest in the cognitive understanding of human functioning. This knowledge of people might be obtained through the study of normal and abnormal human behavior, theories of personality, and theories and techniques of counseling, as well as through other sources.

Understanding Groups

A good grasp of group interaction and dynamics is required. A "cognitive map" is crucial to the adequate understanding of how groups develop and how members relate to

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each other. Jones (1973) has provided a useful model for conceptualizing four stages of group development from beginning to end, focusing on dual dimensions of personal relations (the human side of group interaction) and task functions (the work side of group interaction). The Hill Interaction Matrix (Hill, 1965, 1973) offers a system rich in training possibilities. Through this matrix it is possible to develop a cognitive understanding of what group members say (content style), how they say it (work style), and the relative value of each content and work interaction.

Understanding Facilitating Styles

Lastly, knowledge of the theory underlying specific styles of group facilitation is needed. Recent research of Lieberman, Yalom, and Miles (1973), for example, has identified six such styles, each based on combinations of facilitator functions described later in this paper. For a thorough knowledge of each style, the trainee must understand and articulate such elements as the theory of growth/change, processes used, appropriate clientele, and supporting outcome evidence.

TRAINING EXPERIENCE

Experiential learning as a group member in various types of groups is a necessary beginning point. Being in a group as a full participating member is perhaps the best single way to learn about groups. Participation as a trainee in various group modalities such as Gestalt, transactional analysis, and basic encounter provides an even more specific learning background. Supervised co-facilitating experience as a junior facilitator represents the important introduction to the responsible role of group facilitator. At this point the crucial integration of theory, practice, and experience is approached directly. Supervised group facilitating, without a co-facilitator, may be the final step in the experiential training component. Of course, ongoing professional development is needed throughout one's practice. One way of acquiring such development is through laboratories, workshops, and professional conventions.

HUMANNESS

Specific attention should be given to the group facilitator as a human being who interacts with others. It is the person who defines the role. Greenwald's discussion (n.d.) of toxic and nourishing individuals is germane here. He suggests that the toxic individual extracts nourishment from others, while the nourishing person generates enrichment. Facilitator training can focus on giving trainees the opportunities to grow as individuals—in a sense, to become more nourishing. Structured into a training program could be combinations of personal counseling, personal growth groups, consciousness-raising groups, values-clarification exercises, sensory awareness groups, biofeedback training, and other experiences where the intent is to help trainees experience themselves and others in order to enhance their own nourishing characteristics.

FUNCTIONS

The group facilitator needs to function with demonstrated competency. The functions, used purposefully and appropriately, should be consistent with the facilitator's knowledge, personal style, and training experience. Functions performed could be structured or unstructured, verbal or nonverbal, exotic or traditional. When used by facilitators, they are intended and applied to effect desired outcomes.

The functions that may be performed by group facilitators are numerous and often confusing. Lieberman, Yalom, and Miles (1973) have empirically identified four basic functions, which they have labeled emotional stimulation, caring, meaning attribution, and executive function. The authors suggest that these functions "may constitute an empirically derived taxonomy for examining leadership in all forms of groups aimed at personal change, be they therapy or personal growth groups." Brief definitions of these functions follow (see also Conyne, 1975).

Emotional stimulation represents evocative, expressive facilitator behavior that is personal and highly charged emotionally. The facilitator performing this function is intensely and frequently in the center of the group. Personal confrontation is valued; high risk is pervasive.

Caring as a functional skill is evidenced by the development of specific, warm personal relationships with group members. These relationships are characterized by love, understanding, and genuineness. Caring is inversely related to technical proficiency.

Meaning attribution is represented by the facilitator's provision of cognitive behavior and definition of frameworks for change. As a functional skill, meaning attribution is typified by giving meaning to experience.

Executive function emphasizes a managerial approach demonstrated by stopping the action and asking members to process the experience, or by the facilitator's suggesting roles and procedures for group members to follow.

Included within these four basic functions are specific behaviors. Some of these behaviors (drawn from various sources: Bates & Johnson, 1972; W.G. Dyer, 1969; W.W. Dyer & Vriend, 1973; Lieberman, et al., 1973; Rogers, 1970; Yalom, 1970) are listed in Table 1. They are offered to provide a useful typology of facilitator functions and behaviors.

Collectively, the training components outlined can provide a viable approach to the training of group facilitators. Trainees need to give attention throughout their training to the integration of acquired learnings. This ongoing integration of theory and practice with experience is crucial for effective group facilitation.

Table 1. Facilitator Functions and Some Inclusive Behaviors

FUNCTIONS

BEHAVIORS	Emotional Stimulation	Caring	Meaning Attribution	Executive Function
	challenging	accepting	reflecting	gatekeeping
	confronting	understanding	interpreting	setting standards
	releasing strong emotion	supporting	explaining	giving directions
	intrusive modeling	modeling warmth	labeling	blocking
	catalyzing interaction	developing intimate relationships	linking	directing traffic

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DESIGNING AND FACILITATING EXPERIENTIAL GROUP ACTIVITIES: VARIABLES AND ISSUES

Cary L. Cooper and Kenneth Harrison

In designing and implementing experiential group activities, certain types of variables need to be considered. These variables can be seen in three major groups: initial, emergent, and evaluative (see Figure 1). Discussed here are the various subdivisions within each type, with specific points of consideration suggested for the facilitator designing an experiential group activity.

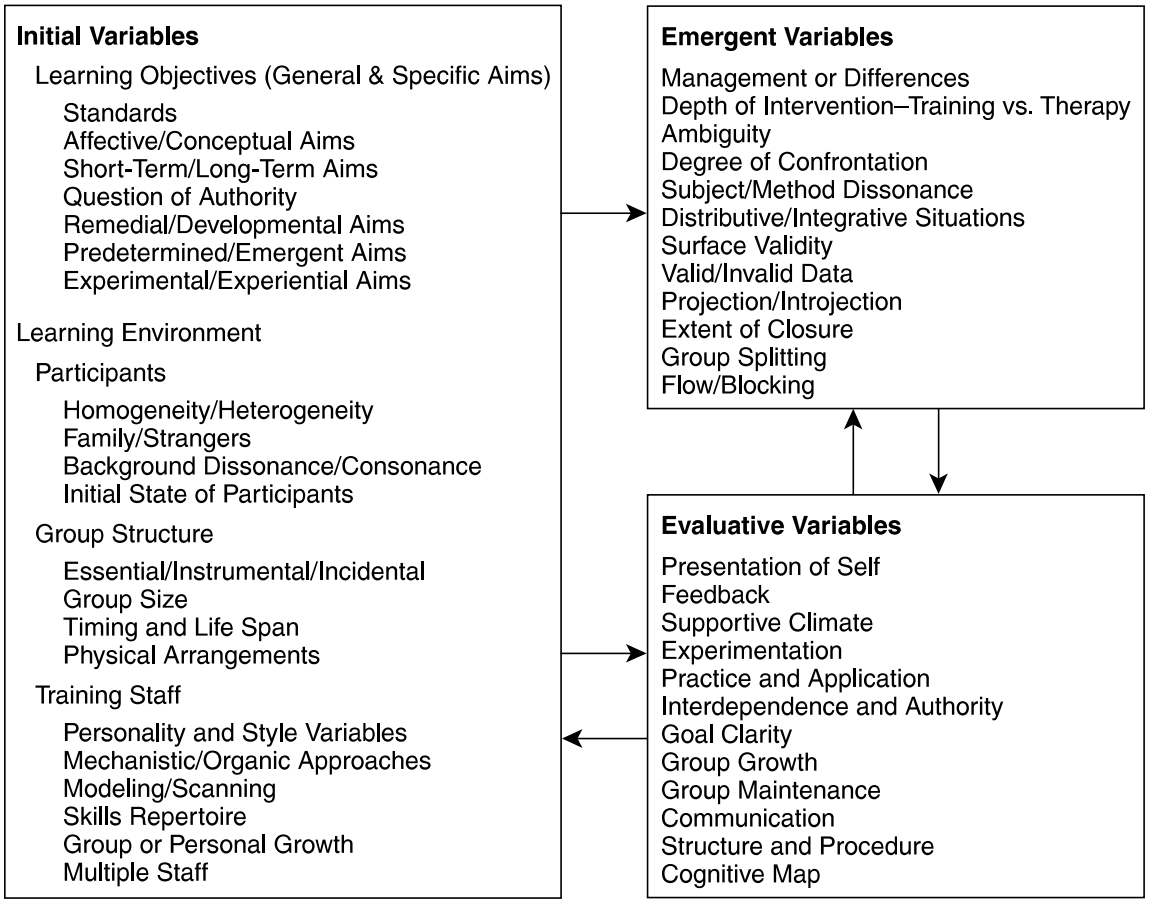

Figure 1. Design and Operational Variables for Group Training

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INITIAL VARIABLES

Factors to be considered prior to the group activity consist of aims (learning objectives) and the learning environment, including participants, group structure, and the training staff.

Learning Objectives

In designing a group experience, it is important to consider first the general aims or outcome desired and then the specific ways in which people should change, develop, or behave. The following points should be determined:

Standards. Who should set learning standards? Who should judge the results (participants, facilitators, both of these, outside individuals or groups)?

Affective/Conceptual Aims. To what extent are the aims emotional (usually personal) or conceptual (cognitive)?

Short-Term/Long-Term Aims. How long is the group learning intended to have an effect (days, months, years)?

Question of Authority. Who should set learning objectives (facilitator, participants, or both)?

Remedial/Developmental Aims. To what extent is the activity focused on remedial aims? To what extent is it focused on developmental aims? What are the implications of this focus? (Remedial work tends to focus on a participant's weaknesses, problems, or lacks; developmental work aims on building a participant's strengths.)

Predetermined/Emergent Aims. To what extent can the learning aims be determined prior to the experience? What are the possibilities that additional aims will emerge during the experience? To what extent does the facilitator impose certain aims, consciously or otherwise, by his or her own values and by setting norms?

Experimental/Experiential Aims. To what extent will the activity be a joint learning experiment, in which the facilitator has a special responsibility (e.g., for helping the group examine data in reviewing its work)? To what extent will the facilitator allow participants to experience the activity without reviewing their experience? The choice between these aims has implications for the training design (e.g., use of observers, data collection, process reviews) and for the facilitator's learning theory or models (e.g., one can experience something and "learn" without discussing that experience afterward).

Learning Environment

The principal components of the learning environment—participants, group structure, and training staff—must often be considered in relation to learning objectives.

Participants

The nature of participants and, especially, the similarities and differences among participants need to be considered. The following items are particularly significant.

Homogeneity/Heterogeneity. Heterogeneity can lead to greater confrontation but can also provide the group with a wider range of resources. Homogeneity, on the other hand, may lead to greater intimacy/affection, but promote less variety. This effect can restrict the number of learning possibilities available to the group.

Family/Strangers. Groups with established relationships (e.g., work groups and family groups) might achieve a greater transfer of learning but might also be reluctant to be entirely open. Instead, participants who are strangers (and unlikely to continue their relationship after the training) may gain greater intimacy and openness at the possible expense of a less effective transfer of learning.

Background Dissonance/Consonance. It is important to consider whether group training is dissonant with the norms and culture of the institutional background within which the activity is to take place. The participants may learn and change their attitudes in ways that are contrary to the ideology of their back-home situations, and the implications of this should be considered. Also, the organizational climate of the aegis under which training is organized may be supportive, hostile, curious, frivolous, skeptical, anxious, or impatient toward group training.

Initial State of Participants. If the initial state of the participants is inaccurately judged, learning may not be optimized. It may be necessary for the facilitator to find ways to check out his or her initial-state assumptions. Items to be determined include the amount of information the facilitators have and the assumptions facilitators make about the initial goals, needs, and readiness of the participants.

Group Structure

In assessing design issues, decisions must be made about whether the group is essential, instrumental, or incidental to the learning process; the group size; the timing and life span of the group; and the physical arrangements.

Essential/Instrumental/Incidental. In some training experiences (e.g., interpretive groups) the group itself is a central and essential part of the learning model. In others (e.g., T-groups, encounter groups, etc.) the group is instrumental in the learning process by providing both interaction opportunities and support. In yet other experiences (e.g., Gestalt and counseling), the group is largely incidental, because valuable work can be done as well in pairs, trios, etc. The group may, however, represent an economy or provide further opportunities for participants to learn by observing other individuals and identifying with them.

Group Size. The size of the total group training population is important in designing various learning experiences. One should seriously consider the number of participants

desired and the ways in which this population can be divided to achieve various objectives.

Timing and Life Span. Spaced sessions (e.g., two-hour weekly sessions) may produce a less intimate and less person-centered experience, whereas more condensed or intensive sessions (e.g., a one-week residential session) may offer more personal growth. Spaced sessions may allow greater analysis of group dynamics and encourage members to "work through" between sessions (e.g., a couples' group). Defined time limits may encourage participants to express useful information by the end of the allotted time period, but can also establish the facilitator's role as the locus of control or authority of the group. Norms will develop as a result of the following timing parameters, including the total time allocated to the group experience, the time distribution (sessions at regular intervals, one intensive week, etc.), and session time limits and adherence to limits.

Physical Arrangements. The physical arrangements are a significant consideration in facilitating the learning objectives. For example, a small-group session held in a lecture theater would have an entirely different atmosphere from one held in more intimate surroundings. Physical arrangements include where the groups will work, the kind of atmosphere the physical surroundings create (e.g., easy chairs, cushions, etc.), and how the physical environment can be arranged to support learning objectives.

Training Staff

Issues about staff include personality, style, potential role conflicts, learning models, philosophies, and assumptions. The resolution of these issues is critical to the successful fulfillment of the learning objectives.

Personality and Style Variables. Some facilitators work more readily with their own aggression, some with their affection, and others remain somewhat detached and unemotional. These differences may be justified or rationalized as differences in role perception and style, but they may really be due to personality differences among the staff. Because the models of role conflict and resolution of interpersonal differences in the staff team could influence participants' learning, it is important to review style preferences when selecting a training staff.

Mechanistic/Organic Approaches. If one staff member insists on structuring a group experience and another wants to respond to group needs spontaneously, the entire experience may suffer. It would be possible, however, to synthesize these two approaches into a more productive compromise.

Modeling/Scanning. Trainers who adopt a learning theory based on modeling might find that they are encouraging noticeable but short-term change. If instead they encourage group members to use one another as learning sources, through an approach based on scanning the interaction of group members, participants may *show* less change, but this approach may also prompt major internalized change.

Skills Repertoire. The trainer/facilitator's ability to handle certain types of group experience and his or her range of competence should be a training consideration.

Group or Personal Growth. Staff disagreement about the level of intervention may create normative problems in that participants receive conflicting messages about the learning objectives of the group. On the other hand, the conflict may provide participants with a wider range and greater breadth of learning. Issues of concern include the orientation of the trainer/facilitator toward understanding the dynamics of the group or toward developing the growth potential of the individual and whether both orientations can co-exist.

Multiple Staff. The composition of the staff will influence somewhat the norms and learning objectives of the participants. The inclusion of women may provide opportunities for focusing on issues that otherwise might not surface. Items for this variable include the number of staff involved, the compatibility of the staff, inclusion of both men and women, and inclusion of staff with specific occupational identifications.

EMERGENT VARIABLES

A number of dynamic variables emerge during the learning process in group work. Emergent variables include management of differences, depth and level of interventions, vagueness of direction, confrontation, dissonance in subject and method, distributive/integrative situations, credibility, validity (or nonvalidity) of data, projection and introjection, closure, subdivision of groups, and flow and blocking in learning and communication.

A facilitator who is aware of these variables may be more effective in dealing with them as they arise. However, he or she may also be more likely to provoke or precipitate such issues.

Management of Differences

There are likely to be differences in the starting states, needs, personalities, learning rates, and moods of the participants. Differences and conflict can be a source of creativity. In particular, some participants may want to learn about their own aggression or style of conflict resolution. Occasionally, however, it may be better temporarily to avoid conflict by providing other sources of learning that may ultimately help to resolve the differences, e.g., by splitting the group into compatible subgroups to develop feedback skills before coping with the total group conflict. The facilitator should consider how the group copes with differences and conflict—by ignoring them, debating, arguing, fighting, compromising.

Depth of Intervention—Training vs. Therapy

The group may intend to work on issues (e.g., the level of competence in group work) and not become involved in personal or therapeutic issues, but suddenly or gradually the group members may become more introspective, and the hazy boundary between training and therapy is reached.

"Interpretive" interventions would facilitate useful therapy work, whereas "behavioral-data-based" interventions leave options open. Focusing on there-and-then contributions from one member of the group and his or her personal problems will encourage a therapy-type group; interventions about the here-and-now skills and interpersonal relations between members encourage a training focus.

Therapy is concerned with people's sense of who they are, how they are, how they got to be that way, and what they could do to change. *Training* is concerned with what people can do with what they are, how they behave toward others, and their skills or competences.

Ambiguity

In discovery learning one must cope with ambiguity and uncertainty. Yet some common, recurring themes can be distinguished in T-groups. For example, when the trainer deliberately refuses to be a leader in the group, participants feel the leadership and structure vacuum and usually work to fill it. Participants often expect that the trainer/facilitator should give the group direction and help because he or she has had previous similar group experience; yet some training models include anxiety as a necessary force in the learning process.

Degree of Confrontation

As an integral part of many learning processes, people are confronted with feedback, evidence, and feelings from other group members and the facilitator. Judging the level of the confrontation is like gauging the difficulty of a jump across a gap—it must not be so small that it is unnoticeable, nor so large that one balks or fails. A confrontation level that is too low may lead to assimilation ("That's common sense, I already do/know that"). Too high a level of confrontation may lead to rejection ("That's nonsense, I don't agree"). The appropriate level of confrontation leads to accommodation ("How can I make sense of that? I am going to work on that"). The facilitator needs to determine elements in the process that provide confrontations and how the degree of confrontation can be optimized.

Subject/Method Dissonance

It is reasonable and comfortable—consonant—to learn about group dynamics in a group or about interpersonal relations while relating to others. However, it is uncomfortable—dissonant—to tell people to participate or to ask people to discuss their dependence. In the experiential situation, the contract, structure, and method should not be dissonant

with the learning aims. Considerations for the facilitator include the balance (or lack of it) between what the group is doing and the issues it is working on and problems that might arise with a high level of consonance.

Distributive/Integrative Situations

Distributive situations tend to be either analytical (e.g., subdividing issues and distributing the parts among people) or competitive and evaluative (e.g., allocating blame and attributing results to individuals). Integrative situations are usually cooperative or concerned with the Gestalt. Particularly in the use of structured experiences, participants' socialization toward competition can bias group work toward distributive activities. Integration is, however, central to the philosophy of group work. The facilitator needs to consider whether group work and particularly any structured experiences he or she may use as interventions are likely to work toward distribution or integration.

Surface Validity

Issues of validity and credibility appear very early in group life but become less important later. Unless people feel able to commit themselves initially to the work and life of the group (at least to the extent of making a start), it is difficult to gain their acceptance/commitment. Considerations include whether tasks, issues, exercises, and the setting of the group work appear realistic or valid to participants; whether members seem credible to each other; and the face credibility of the facilitator—influenced by such factors as age, sex, experience, manner, dress.

Valid/Invalid Data

It is useful for the facilitator to be clear about the ground rules for the validity of data and to share and compare these criteria with group members. The most valid data are descriptions of actual behavior ("You sat next to me in every session.") or expressions of personal feelings ("I feel warm and strong."). Less valid but complementary data are interpretations ("You sit by me because you feel isolated.") and guesses about motives ("You sit by me because you are trying to get to know me."). Interpretations and conjectures about motives cannot be verified—they can only be accepted or denied in comparison with the evidence offered. Their acceptance or denial, however, becomes another valid behavior. Still less valid data are "we" statements where "I" statements would be more accurate ("We all feel anxious, don't we?"); old feedback, which is less valid the farther away from the event it is ("Yesterday I felt angry with you when you talked so much."); and nonspecific generalizations ("Some members of the group just don't listen."). Some tests of data include the kinds of data valid for the work in progress and whether the current data flow in the group is valid or invalid.

Projection/Introjection

In projection, people disclose their own ideas, attitudes, feelings, assumptions, values, skills, and styles to the group and to one another. In introjection, people absorb ideas, feedback, data, etc., from other group members. Projection and introjection can be conscious or unconscious. Often the work in a group proceeds in phases of projection followed by introjection. If this occurs, it may be useful periodically to review the group's progress in these terms.

Extent of Closure

The degree of closure for any issue or incident in the learning process may vary from total open-endedness to a high degree of closure. Both approaches have their difficulties. Low closure can be frustrating and can raise more issues and questions than answers. High closure can lead to encapsulation and elimination—allowing fewer possibilities for individuals to internalize learning. Learning is ultimately personal, and the results of the group's work are vested in individual members as they leave the group. Whatever level of closure the facilitator decides to aim for is likely to be a compromise, based on a judgment of the extent to which closure affects learning and resolution.

Group Splitting

As the group process continues, the initial group-structure variable of size shifts to become an emergent variable. One manifestation is lateness or absenteeism, an issue related to the functioning of the group as well as to the particular individuals. A more obvious form of this issue occurs when members or facilitators suggest that the group split into subgroups or when the group splits spontaneously. In some models, it can be considered either as an avoidance mechanism or, if handled as a dichotomy, as a creative polarity. In other models, no such negative interpretation is associated with splitting. Dividing into pairs and subgroups is used as a facilitative structural intervention. This issue is related to the initial essential/instrumental/incidental variable, because splitting is less acceptable if the group itself is essential.

Flow/Blocking

At times the group or some individuals become blocked. They cannot progress, and they learn only how it feels to be frustrated, impotent, or lacking in skills. These can be useful learning issues, particularly if various styles of responding to a block are explored. At other times the work must flow, feelings must be expressed, and there must be movement.

Flow can be facilitated by such devices as exercises, acting-out, physical and nonverbal expression, and games. Although these may appear "phony" to participants, such contrived measures can often activate genuine results.

The facilitator must be able to cope with learning while he or she is blocked and must also know how to facilitate flow. The facilitator can then determine the

implications of these interventions, basing them on the needs of the group and the members, rather than on his or her own skill bias.

EVALUATIVE VARIABLES

Although the facilitator/trainer has to make certain judgments and decisions before and during group work, the extent to which these judgments should be conscious is debatable. However, the assumption is that more skilled trainers will welcome raising rather than lowering their level of consciousness about their judgment. Such an evaluation is not meant, however, to suggest that intuitive skill and spontaneity are unimportant. This discussion does not recommend any particular model for group work. Rather it suggests that whatever conscious or unconscious models a facilitator has should be utilized as effectively as possible.

The following are not issues about which the facilitator must make a decision; instead, they offer criteria useful in making appropriate judgments about initial and emergent variables. Presenting such a list aims at increasing the clarity with which a facilitator confronts a particular issue and at raising possible alternatives.

Presentation of Self

Until people have and use opportunities to reveal how they perceive, feel, and do things, they have little basis for learning about themselves. Often silent members claim they learn by observing and listening to others. In a way this is true, but they are presenting only the "nonincluded" part of themselves. With various results, groups put pressure on silent or nonparticipant members to join in. An effective group climate allows and facilitates self-presentation and does not force conformity to group norms in the method of that presentation.

Feedback

If people learned from experience, older people would clearly be more skilled at relationships and behavior than younger people. How people use their experience is more important than the experience itself. Individuals learn through developing behavior patterns guided by clear and accurate feedback about the effectiveness and appropriateness of their actions. Feedback may come from other participants, the trainer, observers, data-collection instruments, audio- and videotape playback, or task-success elements in a structured experience.

Feedback must be valid data (see emergent variables) and be related to events and actions. Feedback is also more useful if it is relevant to behavior and situations that can be changed or modified. It is easier to change what one does than to change what one is. For example, "You are a hostile person and should change" is less useful than "If you were less hostile to me, I could work better with you." Negative motives, such as to punish the receiver or to establish the giver's superiority, can often reduce the validity of feedback.

Supportive Climate

An atmosphere of trust and nondefensiveness is necessary for people to risk their ideas and feelings, behave openly, and accept feedback. Each person must be able to risk being himself or herself, right or wrong, effective or ineffective, without feeling it as a risk to membership in the group and the acceptance of others. This does not necessarily mean that conflict, anger, or differences should be avoided. Such emotions, indeed, are more acceptable in a supportive climate.

Experimentation

An important possibility in many group training situations is the testing of alternative patterns of behavior and personal relationships. Within a supportive climate and with valid feedback, experimentation can be a key element in changing behavior. Participants may, however, use experimentation defensively: "I did not really feel like that; I only behaved that way to see what you would do." The difference between useful and useless experimentation is that useful experimentation concerns one's personal behavior; experimentation with others' behavior is "playing games."

Practice and Application

To gain confidence in newly acquired behavior, an individual needs to practice it. New behavior needs to be transferred to and retained in situations external to the training situation. This is sometimes referred to as the "reentry" problem. It is possible and profitable to test actual application if group work is set at intervals (e.g., weekly meetings), because the individual may receive valid feedback on his or her behavior. Simulated application can be used to deal with an issue concerning the facilitator, including fantasies about applying a new approach to the issue.

Interdependence and Authority

It is important for the group to confront and understand its relationship with the group's authority figure—usually the facilitator/trainer. When this happens, it is a good indicator of progress in the group. If it never occurs, the quality of interdependence is questionable. Overdependence on the facilitator allows members to avoid taking responsibility for their actions and learning. Changes in behavior are then likely to fade when the authority person is not present or if he or she loses credibility. Interdependence between group members and facilitator is more healthy.

Goal Clarity

It is helpful when participants, groups, and facilitators have some clear goals and purposes. A lack of clear learning goals produces two problems: differences in individual learning needs cannot be handled, and it becomes difficult to determine the extent of progress. Goals are more helpful if related to specific behaviors and actions

and checked against feedback. Although clear goals cannot be expected immediately, goal clarification and review should be a continuing process for individuals and for the group.

Group Growth

A group has development needs beyond the collective needs of its members; it needs time and assistance to become mature, effective, and cohesive. A group will often require more person-hours than the same number of individuals working separately or in small subgroups—achieving different, but valued, results. "One-shot" groups are of limited or specialized significance.

Group Maintenance

The need for group maintenance is closely related to group growth. In many group learning models, members can use group maintenance to develop their skills in group diagnosis and group facilitation. Energy invested in group building and maintenance as a preventive rather than as a repair measure is a positive indicator of group growth.

Communication

Usually only a small proportion of what is said in a group is heard or understood by many of the members. Participants may be thinking about what they want to say next, what they would like to say but will not, what they think the speaker is really saying, or what they are feeling at the moment. Any of these distractions reduce the probability of listening. A positive correction is for group members to slow down the verbal communication rate or make shorter statements that others can check to insure understanding. Checking and nonverbal communication activities are useful in this process.

Structure and Procedure

"Unstructured" groups do not exist. All groups have norms and procedures, and even anarchy is a structure. For example, a T-group is based on certain norms about its form and function.

It is not always sufficiently clear how formal the structure should be and whether it is imposed externally or derived internally. Structures are related to assumptions and values, as well as to participants' abilities to cope with ambiguity. When a group can establish and maintain the degree of structure it needs for effective work and can change the structure as its needs and issues change, group growth is evident.

Cognitive Map

In some group training, theories and conceptual schemes may help participants understand the experience. The behavior of an individual can be seen as based on his or

her interior “maps” or schemata, which are not necessarily conscious. However, great benefit and little danger lie in developing a more conscious understanding of one’s behavior.

Conceptual material can be introduced by readings, films, lecturettes, and short theory interventions. One of the benefits of using theory material is that it may replace “folklore” notions about a group, e.g., “In any group there will always be one person who will emerge as a leader.” One danger in encouraging cognitive development is that some members may use conceptual material inappropriately to defend against or to avoid the experience. Nevertheless it is usually beneficial for people to comprehend their experience and articulate their insights.

CONCLUSION

The issues and variables discussed here are valuable in a number of practical ways. First, they should provide an explicit and systematic guide to help facilitators focus on the issues (initial and evaluative, mainly) that should be considered in designing any experiential group activity. Second, they help the training staff of a particular group become more conscious of issues that might emerge during the life of the group and identify more clearly the situation in which they currently find themselves. This can also provide a laboratory staff team with a source of comparison to facilitate cohesion in the total learning community. Third, many of these variables and issues can help to highlight issues that should be considered in the designing of a trainer/facilitator development program. Also, a careful consideration of these issues can be useful to the individual facilitator in his or her own development by serving as a possible framework for self-appraisal. Finally, many of these variables and issues raise interesting research questions about the processes of group functioning. For example, the differentiated effects of spaced vs. massed training sessions or one structure vs. another structure of design might be considered.

The authors’ intention here is not to suggest a more mechanistic approach to the design and operation of group training. Experience, intuition, and spontaneity are considered valuable elements in a facilitator’s approach. Rather, specific issues have been discussed and clarified to help facilitators consciously analyze some of the significant variables in group training in order to improve their own effectiveness and skill.

FANTASY: THEORY AND TECHNIQUE

Anthony G. Banet, Jr., and John E. Jones

As I sit here staring at a blank yellow legal pad, trying to imagine how this opening sentence will sound, my eyes shift to the rugged hillside outside my office window, and I am suddenly reminded of El Greco's View of Toledo*. For a few minutes I step into that canvas to explore the terrain and then I shift my gaze to the artist himself as he is painting the picture . . . . El Greco is a severe looking, gray-bearded man with an elongated face . . . his image merges with the tall, shaggy palm tree across the street . . . . I start talking to the tree (now El Greco-grandfather-sage) and ask it to tell me about the ocean that it has watched for sixty years. The tree begins to respond . . . . The typewriters in the adjoining room recall me to my task; I begin to write.*

Reveries—silent movies in our minds, constant streams of images and associations, sounds and words—know no boundaries of space, time, or possibility. Our fantasy lives are always present; like the light in a refrigerator, they are there, waiting, ready for us when we open the door by suspending our attention to outside reality. And, like our refrigerators, our fantasy lives can supply us with nourishment and the raw material for creativity and experimentation.

Fantasy (also termed reverie, imagination, or daydreaming), prized by poets and philosophers, has been a phenomenon of human experience since earliest history, but its presence was a source of discomfort and embarrassment for scientific psychologists of the late 1800s, who focused on external behavior and ignored the "black box" inside. In the most benign "scientific" view, fantasy was thought to be useful because it provided diagnostic clues to the secrets of abnormal behavior; more typically, fantasy was seen as a frivolous waste of time, a flirtation with insanity. An idle mind was not only the devil's workshop, it also signaled a possible predisposition to madness. Only in the early 1900s, when some links between fantasy, play, and creativity were discovered in psychoanalytic research, did fantasy activity or "regression in the service of the ego" (as Ernst Kris, 1952, described it) become a respectable subject for psychological inquiry.

Currently, fantasy is alive and well. Some students of human behavior would agree with science fiction writer Ray Bradbury's belief that "the ability to fantasize is the ability to survive" (Hall, 1968, p. 28). As an integral part of Gestalt, encounter, and psychosynthesis theory, fantasy has become a prominent, if not always well-understood, component of change strategies in psychotherapy, personal growth, and group work in general. This paper reviews the development of the diagnostic and therapeutic uses of fantasy in the early work of Freud and Jung and presents a theoretical discussion of

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fantasy as “personal mythology.” Techniques, training considerations, and precautions are described for the group facilitator who wishes to add fantasy to his or her intervention repertoire.

FANTASY AS A DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

For Freud, the fantasy and dream productions of his patients provided therapeutic insights as well as the basic data for psychoanalytic theory. Freud viewed fantasy and dreams as primary process events generated by the id—primitive wishes and fears that were suppressed by cognition and rationality, which were the secondary process events generated by the ego. Fantasy and dreams were “the royal road to the unconscious”; the techniques of free association and dream interpretation provided Freud with a window through which he observed the patient’s travels on that road.

In Freud’s view, fantasies and dreams required interpretation; they were symbolic productions whose obvious, manifest content disguised a hidden, latent level of meaning. The key to interpretation was to regard fantasies as “wish fulfillments”; according to psychoanalytic theory, human beings are motivated by primitive, socially unacceptable wishes and fears. Beneath the veneer of even the most pleasant fantasies lurk the powerful impulses of sex and aggression.

The Projection Hypothesis

The extraordinary discoveries of Freud prompted other investigators to explore the diagnostic potential of fantasy. The projection hypothesis—that people unconsciously externalize their wishes, fears, and goals by projecting them onto external stimuli—led to the development of instruments designed to elicit spontaneous fantasy productions from subjects viewing structured, standardized stimuli.

The prototype of projective techniques is Rorschach’s inkblot test (Rorschach, 1921). Rorschach presented the ambiguous stimulus of an inkblot to subjects and asked them to report what they saw. Responses were collected, categorized, and interpreted. These fantasy productions provided the interpreter with rich diagnostic information regarding the subject’s impulse life, defense system, and strength of emotional controls. The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), developed by Murray (1938), carried the projective situation further. The TAT required subjects to respond to ambiguous pictures by telling a story based on what is perceived. By categorizing the themes prevalent in the fantasies produced, Murray made inferences regarding the subject’s needs, interests, and reality orientation. Today a variety of projective devices is available. These remain the most popular diagnostic tool available to clinicians.

The projection hypothesis has received considerable support from experimental studies. The work of the early Gestalt psychologists (e.g., Kohler, 1925) and later work by the “new school” of perception (e.g., Bruner, 1941) have provided evidence that the internal needs of individuals are directly, if ambiguously, reflected in fantasy life.

FANTASY AS A THERAPEUTIC MODALITY

Jung's Work

Jung regarded fantasy and dreamwork not only as diagnostic tools but also as methods that the patient could use to integrate the layers of self and to advance the work of becoming a person, which he termed the "individuation process." In Jung's view, growth occurs on two levels: the individual level, in which a person integrates motivations and actions into a harmonious, balanced life; and a transpersonal level, in which an individual makes contact with the collective unconscious—an awareness level that individuals share with the entire human race.

Jung employed several procedures to explore the individual's layers of awareness. All of them involve a focus on fantasy productions.

In *amplification*, the individual subject is asked to record his or her dream or fantasy and then to make as many associations as possible to a given symbol. The association may include verbal procedures, such as free association, or finger painting, dance, research on a mythological subject, etc. A related technique is *active imagination*, involving a fantasy of entering the given symbol (getting into it, playing with it) and letting the symbol extend itself. In both of these techniques, the subject works with his or her own idiosyncratic symbols and meanings.

In a technique Progoff (1973) called *correlation*, symbols from dreamwork and fantasy are matched with real-life situations or outside stimuli. The inner and outer worlds are then allowed to influence each other until some focus or connection is discerned.

Jung's belief in the collective unconscious led him to the study of fairy tales, comparative mythology, and religious systems. Information from these sources was brought into the therapeutic session; together, analyst and patient worked with fantasy and myth to pursue the task of personal integration.

Jung's beliefs regarding the healing power of myth and fantasy are discussed by Campbell (1973):

> According to [Jung's] way of thinking, all the organs of our bodies—not only those of sex and aggression—have their purposes and motives, some being subject to conscious control, others, however, not. Our outward-oriented consciousness, addressed to the demands of the day, may lose touch with these inward forces; and the myths, states Jung, when correctly read, are the means to bring us back in touch. They are telling us in picture language of powers of the psyche to be recognized and integrated in our lives, powers that have been common to the human spirit forever, and which represent that wisdom of the species by which man has weathered the millenniums. Thus they have not been, and can never be, displaced by the findings of science, which relate rather to the outside world than to the depths that we enter in sleep. Through a dialogue conducted with these inward forces through our dreams and through a study of myths, we can learn to know and come to terms with the greater horizon of our own deeper and wiser, inward self. And analogously, the society that cherishes and keeps its myths alive will be nourished from the soundest, richest strata of the human spirit.

> However, there is a danger here as well; namely, of being drawn by one's dreams and inherited myths away from the world of modern consciousness, fixed in patterns of archaic feeling and thought inappropriate to contemporary life. What is required, states Jung therefore, is a dialogue, not a fixture at either pole; a dialogue by way of symbolic forms put forth from the unconscious mind and recognized by the conscious in continuous interaction. (p. 13)

Gestalt

Although Jung pioneered the therapeutic use of purposeful fantasy, currently the use of evoked, goal-oriented fantasy as an integrative, healing modality finds its clearest expression in Gestalt practice and psychosynthesis.

Gestalt therapists employ fantasy as a means to promote contact with disowned parts of self, with fears and expectations. Because of the here-and-now time focus, fantasies in Gestalt work are not merely reported; they are experienced and acted out. The subject is asked to be his or her fantasy so that energy is directed toward making contact with the issue.

Polster and Polster (1974) describe four functions served by fantasy work:

1. *Contact with a resisted event, feeling, or personal characteristic.* In this approach, the person is asked to fantasize in a free-association manner. As certain images become figural, the subject begins to interact with his or her fantasy production; frequently an assimilation of feelings, a healing of splits, occurs.
2. *Contact with an unavailable person or unfinished situation.* Here, the person visually imagines the presence of, for instance, a dead parent or vanished spouse and begins a conversation with that person. Or a conflictive situation from the past is conjured up, and the subject is asked to take care of any unfinished business. In this technique, closure is sought. In these first two functions, fantasy is "a way of catching up with the past and compensating for errors brought about by blocked expression or overwhelming circumstances" (Polster & Polster, 1974, p. 261).
3. *Exploring the unknown and preparing for the future.* The person rehearses, in fantasy, what he or she expects to happen in the near future. The rehearsal may be for an upcoming job interview, a confrontation with a feared relative, or other anxiety-laden future events. This type of fantasy seems to develop a repertoire of alertness and preparedness.
4. *Exploring new aspects of the individual.* Here, the person is asked to first imagine and then act out some personal quality that he or she lacks or has doubts about. For example, a timid person might fantasize being aggressive and then role play himself or herself with the new quality.

In Gestalt work, fantasy activity is highly specific and concrete. Other "experiments" used in Gestalt fantasy are discussed by Pfeiffer and Pfeiffer (1975).

Psychosynthesis

The integrated approach of Roberto Assagioli (1971) has as a prime objective the emergence of the self. The overall process is divided into two stages—personal and transpersonal psychosynthesis. On the personal level, the individual "attains a level of functioning in terms of his work and his relationships that would be considered optimally healthy by current standards of mental health" ("What is Psychosynthesis?," 1974, p. WB73). The transpersonal level is concerned with such qualities as a global perspective, altruistic love, and union with others. Psychosynthesis incorporates and modifies approaches from other systems; in many of its techniques, it relies heavily on fantasy production. Fantasy is regarded as a method "to establish two-way communication between the conscious and unconscious aspects of ourselves" ("The Purposeful Imagination," 1975).

In contrast to Gestalt, psychosynthesis employs fantasy in a more playful and expansive manner. Fantasy journeys are designed to awaken hidden potential, promote awareness, resolve conflict situations, and initiate healing processes. Classic and standardized fantasies are also used.

Typifying a standardized fantasy is the technique of symbol projection, in which the person is asked to visualize a standard series of twelve symbolic situations presented verbally by the facilitator. The situations, developed by Leuner (1971), take the subject through a structured fantasy that begins by walking in a meadow. Then the subject, in fantasy, progressively climbs a mountain, follows the course of a stream, visits a house, imagines an ideal person, views animals, walks into a swampy pond, explores a cave, witnesses a volcanic eruption, confronts a lion, and pages through an old picture book. Each fantasy image has specific meanings that are rooted in folklore and mythology; by responding to these images, the person develops awareness of unknown parts of the self.

Psychosynthesis practitioners are devoted to a creative, responsible investigation of fantasy procedures. A regular section of *Synthesis,* the psychosynthesis journal, is focused on fantasy techniques.

Current Research

Many investigators are currently exploring the dimensions of fantasy activity and its relationship to psychological characteristics and body events. Singer (1966) has developed seven categories of daydreaming and has compared the fantasy productions of various age, social-class, and racial groups. Fantasy differences in men and women have been reported by May (1966). Stampfl's implosive therapy employs a highly structured fantasy technique in which persons confront their worst fears (1970). Simonton and Simonton (1975) have reported on the use of fantasy in homeopathic medicine and the management of cancer malignancy.

Recent experimental studies (Lorie & Kryske, 1975) indicate that fantasy production follows a periodic cycle in research subjects. Subjects, wired so that brain waves and eye movement could be recorded, were asked to report their inner thoughts at five-minute intervals over a ten-hour period. The findings showed a ninety- to one-

hundred-minute rhythm for intense fantasy. That is, with no particular provocation or stimulation, normal persons have a continuing inner fantasy production that becomes rather intense every ninety minutes. These intense fantasy periods are associated with a high level of alpha brain wave activity (usually correlated with relaxation) and a low level of eye movement, suggesting attention to internal rather than external stimuli.

It seems likely that future research will continue to explore personality and physiological correlates of fantasy activity. For an overview, see Siegel and West (1975).

FANTASY AS PERSONAL MYTHOLOGY

Fantasy can be seen as the individual's construction of a *personal mythology*, a set of sensory-based symbols that allow us subjectively to interpret our real world and infuse our experience with meaning. Cultural or religious mythologies are the supports of a civilization's cohesion, vitality, and creative powers (Campbell, 1973); analogously, a personal mythology illuminates and strengthens our understanding of our bodies, ourselves, and the world in which we move. More concisely, fantasy tells us the truth about ourselves. Not the literal truth, certainly; not an abstract truth, either, but a metaphoric truth about who we are and where we are psychologically.

Campbell (1968) discusses the emergence of personal mythology as a cultural phenomenon:

> In the past, each civilization was the vehicle of its own longestablished mythology, developing in character as its myth was progressively interpreted and elucidated. Today, the individual is the center of his own mythology . . .the individual has an experience of his own—of order, horror, beauty, or even mere exhilaration—which he seeks to communicate through signs; and if his realization has been of a certain depth and import, his communication will have the value and force of living myth. (p. 4)

Personal mythology tells us about our life, "not as it *will be*, or as it *should be*, as it *was*, or as it *never will be*, but as it *is*, in process, *here and now*, inside and out" (pp. 7-8).

Fantasy is a level of awareness and consciousness, a product of personal history and genetic determinants. It can be regarded as a private, intrapersonal language system. On a functional level, fantasy is an ongoing internal feedback process originating in our several selves, transmitting information relating to our motivations, needs, wants, orientations, and aspirations. Skill in generating, using, and understanding fantasy seems to be inborn, but the skill is suppressed by cognitive learning and attention to the outside world. For many adults, the skill needs to be relearned.

Piaget

Piaget's observation of children produced a theory of cognitive development (Piaget, 1950; Leavitt & Doktor, 1970) that postulates that individuals progressively develop through sensory, imagic, and symbolic phases. A *sensory* phase, in which the meaning

of the world is mediated primarily by sensory-motor processes, is followed by an *imagic* phase, in which the child can perceive and have visual recollection of stimuli no longer present. The child develops agility in manipulating the fantasy symbols and moves away from manually or tactually dealing with the outside environment.

An elaboration of Piaget's imagic phrase and a description of the fantasy formation process are provided by Langer (1942). In her view, raw sensation (William James's "blooming, buzzing world of confusion") seems to exist only for seconds; even newborns begin to give meaning to sensations, to form pictures or visualizations of what has been experienced. We immediately begin to connect images into a story, just as the first thing we do with words is to tell something, to make a statement. These emerging fantasies mix kinesthetic and auditory sensations with the visual to form a fantasy. As we continue to experience, memory becomes part of the mix, so that fantasy begins to be a cumulative record of our experience of the world, a continuing gloss of metaphor and meaning by which we transform and transcend our raw experience.

Following the sensory and imagic phases is a *symbolic* phase, in which the child begins to use words and numbers to abstract still further from outside reality. In fact, words and numbers begin to acquire a greater reality than internal events or the outside environment as the child grows older. Rationality and the ability to manipulate words and symbols are prized, especially in Western cultures, as the highest achievements to which human beings can aspire; sensory and imagic processes are regarded as aspects of our lower, animal nature. Symbol manipulation moves us further and further from elemental experience; to paraphrase Alan Watts, we develop a preference for eating the menu instead of the dinner.

Symbolic cognition does not, however, terminate the sensory and imagic processes; it only suppresses them. Reclaiming these processes, relearning their value, is the motive behind Perls's dictum to "lose your mind and come to your senses." By suspending symbolic cognition, we can attend to our imagic or fantasy process. Far from being an illusion or imagination's figment, fantasy is closer to the real world of our natural experience than are any culturally determined symbols.

From Fantasy to Myth

Out of fantasy, the individual builds both fairy tales and myths. In her *Philosophy in a New Key*, Langer (1942) distinguishes between the varieties of fantasy: personal fairy tales are attempts to gratify wishes in a utopian setting (Freud's notion of wish-fulfillment); personal myths are attempts to gain a serious envisagement of the fundamental truths about ourselves. Fairy tales are communications about imaginary fulfillment and escape from conflict; myths are communications to help us understand and make moral sense out of our actual experience. Langer (1942) says:

> We do not know just where, in the evolution of human thought, myth-making begins, but it begins somewhere with the recognition of realistic significance in a story. In every fantasy, no matter how utopian, there are elements that represent real human relations, real needs and fears which the "happy ending" resolves. Even if the real situation is symbolized rather than stated (a shocking

> condition may be well disguised, or a mysterious one strangely conceived), a certain importance, an emotional interest, attaches to these elements . . .the great step from fairy tale to myth is taken when not only social forces—persons, customs, laws, traditions—but also cosmic forces surrounding mankind are expressed in the story; when not only relationship of an individual to society, but of mankind to nature, are conceived through the spontaneous metaphor of poetic fantasy. (pp. 144-146)

Historically, fantasy has been viewed as having both a diagnostic and a healing function. Fantasy as personal fairy tale provides diagnostic information about our wishes, fears, aspirations, and motivations. Fantasy as personal mythology can foster the

> centering and unfolding of the individual in integrity, in accord with (a) himself (microcosm), (b) his culture (the mesocosm), (c) the universe (macrocosm), and (d) that awesome ultimate mystery which is both beyond and within himself and all things. (Campbell, 1968, p. 6)

The Vision Quest

Figuring prominently in the puberty rites of the Plains Indians (Capps, 1973; Storm, 1972) and other ancient peoples was the vision quest. An adolescent boy was sent into the wilderness for a period of meditation and fasting, during which the spirits spoke to him in visions, fantasies, and dreams. He received a name and a vocation from the spirits, as well as predictions of his future. The young boy was prepared for his vision quest by hearing myths told by his elders; he personalized the tribal mythology during his time of solitude. We see in the vision quest a paradigm for the current use of evoked fantasy in a structured growth situation. Even though the fasting and wilderness are missing, the process seems similar.

FANTASY IN GROUP WORK

Fantasy as a structured intervention into individual or group process represents an effort to transpose that process into another key or language. As an intervention, fantasy is the purposeful evocation of inner imagic productions so that personal and group growth goals can be pursued. Because fantasy interventions produce heightened feelings, the facilitator needs to be knowledgeable regarding the types of fantasy, the techniques of structuring fantasy, training considerations, and precautions for the use of this powerful tool.

Indications for Use

A fantasy intervention is appropriate for these purposes:

To resolve dilemmas or work through an impasse. When verbal transactions are garbled, discussion becomes repetitive, or unvoiced fears stifle process, a fantasy will usually produce fresh data and new solutions.

To tap "deeper" layers or levels. Discussion centering around difficult topics, such as authority, sexuality, or aggression, often stays at a superficial level. Fantasy can move

the discussion to a more meaningful level, as well as sanction the expression of difficult feelings.

To focus or personalize learning. Generalized verbal discussion frequently becomes anonymous. Transposing to fantasy promotes ownership and personalized learning.

To play. Group discussions frequently become unnecessarily serious, especially when group members are highly task oriented. Fantasy provides a respite from "work" and produces new data.

To promote creativity. Fantasy frequently helps group members to uncover their originality and gain freshness of perception.

To promote healing. Disruptions, conflict, and interpersonal wounds can often be transposed to an allegoric or metaphoric level and resolved.

To provide cues for intervention. The facilitator will often find it useful to "check in" with his or her own ongoing fantasy experience to sharpen reading of the group process and to search for cues for appropriate interventions. A brief fantasy focused on "what I would like to see happen" often brings fresh ideas for creative intervention.

Types of Fantasy

Fantasy interventions can be classified in terms of content, focus, and method of structuring.

Content

Fantasy content refers to what the participant is asked to experience. Varieties include the following:

Narrative fantasies. In this type of fantasy, the content is specified by the facilitator through frequent cues and interruptions into the fantasy-formation process. The structure may be a classic form (e.g., a well-known fairy tale or story) or a simple scenario invented by the facilitator. In the narrative fantasy, the facilitator determines the course of the fantasy by suggestions and specific directions.

Free-form fantasies. Here the content is largely determined by the fantasizer. The facilitator may present minimal initial cues (words, pictures, sounds, etc.) but leaves gaps of silence that participants fill with fantasy productions.

Interactive fantasies. These enable the fantasizer to speak or move while engaged in fantasy. Much Gestalt technique involves such interaction. Occasionally the fantasy is interrupted, some verbal interaction occurs, and then the participant returns to the fantasy.

Metaphoric fantasies. These involve fairy-tale characters, supranormal feats and activities, strange and bizarre happenings.

Literal fantasies. These may visualize actual incidents or persons from the past, present, and future. The emphasis is on "real-life" events.

Focus

The facilitator can provide fantasy induction for individuals, pairs, or the entire group. Four major variations of group fantasies are common:

1. Everyone sits in a circle, eyes closed. Someone begins a fantasy involving the entire group. Members contribute to the story as they feel a part of it.
2. One member lies on the floor and begins a fantasy. Other participants join in the fantasy by sitting on the floor and contributing. Individuals may leave the fantasy by getting up from the floor.
3. Group members lie on the floor with their heads together, their bodies forming the spokes of a wheel. Someone begins the fantasy (which may involve only the fantasizer or include other group members), and others contribute as they identify with the story.
4. Members sit in a circle. One member begins a story and then abruptly "passes" the story to the person on his or her left. The story progresses until all members have had an opportunity to contribute.

Method of Structuring

Several methods for structuring fantasy productions are available.

Spontaneous fantasies are induced by asking the fantasizer to stop the reality process and to check in with his or her ongoing fantasy process. The intervention ends with the request; no content is specified. Example: "Just close your eyes for a minute and report what is running through your mind."

Triggered fantasies are initiated by the facilitator with brief fantasy "stems." Example: "You are approaching a high brick wall. You look around for a way to get over or around it."

Guided fantasies involve interaction between the facilitator and the fantasizer. Together they develop a scenario; the facilitator assists by asking questions, helping to overcome obstacles, offering support. This fantasy "trip" may cover any variety of subjects, such as getting inside one's body, becoming another person, becoming involved in a cleansing ritual, etc. Examples of guided fantasies are provided by Schutz (1967) and Stevens (1971).

Techniques for Structuring Fantasies

The steps described here have their fullest application in the guided, individual, narrative fantasy, but they are also applicable to all fantasy interventions.

Introduction. The fantasy activity is introduced with descriptions of what will be done, how it will be done, and for what reasons. Sanction is given for a variety of responses—there are no right or wrong ways to have a fantasy.

Climate setting. A quiet, comfortable environment is provided. Participants are encouraged to lie on the floor and close their eyes. Semi-darkness encourages fantasy production. Relaxation, regression, and sensory-awareness techniques help participants to screen out external stimuli. Music often helps to create a peaceful, relaxed mood.

Guiding. The facilitator offers brief, concise cues and directions. He or she may suggest visualizations, colors, sounds, textures, smells, or activities. The guidance is limited to cues only; responses or feelings are not suggested.

In guiding the fantasy, the facilitator may want to observe participants closely for body reactions, movement, etc. The time focus is kept in the present.

Pacing. Timing and pacing are critical in fantasy production. Allowing too little time truncates the experience for the participant; too much time may distract or blur the focus. Spontaneous fantasies may take only a minute; many triggered fantasies can produce useful material in five minutes or less; and a guided fantasy may last twenty or thirty minutes. It is often helpful to give time cues: "In another minute, I will be asking you to leave this place and . . ."

Terminating. The facilitator "returns" the individual or the group to the group room. He or she calls attention to the real, external situation and gives step-by-step instructions for reentry. A common termination goes as follows: "In a minute, I want you to return to this room . . . . Begin stretching your arms and legs and, with your eyes remaining closed and at your own pace, slowly bring yourself to a sitting position . . . . When you feel ready, slowly open your eyes."

Sharing. Sharing of the fantasy experience is an important final step. The individual participant can first take some time by himself or herself to reflect on the experience; then pairs or trios can be formed for interpersonal sharing. As a final step, the sharing can continue in the large group. Fantasy can be an intensely private experience; sanction should be given for sharing only what the participant wants to share. However, some form of sharing is useful because it brings closure.

Training Considerations

The use of fantasy interventions in human relations training should be influenced by the following considerations:

Goals. The purpose of the fantasy intervention should be clear to the facilitator and to the participants. In general, the use of fantasy interventions should be consistent with the training objectives and participants' expectations.

Voluntariness and privacy. Participants should participate in fantasy activities voluntarily. Some participants may be fearful of fantasy or believe that they are unable

to fantasize. Some participants may want to keep their fantasy productions private. Sanction should be given for nonparticipation and for the privacy of the experience.

Depth and heightened affect. Fantasy frequently serves to develop awareness of difficult issues and suppressed feelings. Care should be taken to offer support and security; the facilitator may need to prepare for expressions of joy, euphoria, sadness, etc. Tears occasionally accompany a moving experience.

Interpretation. Fantasy productions have meaning primarily for the fantasizer. The facilitator may prompt participants to explore or to make associations to ambiguous parts of the fantasy; efforts by the facilitator or other group members to interpret for another should be resisted. Interpretation risks vitiating the fantasy experience. Fantasies do not necessarily *mean* something or *symbolize* something; the fantasy is the experience.

Audience effect. Engaging in fantasy activity with a group has different effects: For some participants, fantasy activity is enhanced; for others, it is suppressed. Adequate processing of the experience requires sensitivity on the part of the facilitator, especially for the person having difficulty.

Trust level. Guided fantasies, in particular, require that some degree of trust be present before they are introduced. It is rarely wise to open a group training event with an elaborate fantasy.

Closure. Closure is usually accomplished by providing time for sharing and discussion. Failure to close down the fantasy activity has the same impact as suddenly waking from an absorbing dream and being unable to recall it. At best, it is frustrating; at worst, it can open areas of awareness for which the participant needs follow-through and guidance.

Focus. Fantasy as an intervention promotes intrapersonal awareness, even when done in a group. It may encourage participants to "get into themselves" and stifle interaction. A repeated series of individual guided fantasies can rapidly become boring for the rest of the group, who are reduced to the status of observers.

Precautions

For the participant, fantasy activity is usually a self-regulating experience; that is, the individual can control his or her level of participation and involvement. However, for some few group members, fantasy may provide sufficient stimulus for strong emotional reactions. As Polster and Polster (1974) remark, fantasy can initiate a vast renewal of energy, which sometimes cannot be immediately assimilated. These instances and some precautions are discussed here.

Abreaction. In the clinical sense, abreaction refers to the affective reliving of a repressed traumatic experience from the past. The person responds fully to the fantasized event and releases the powerful emotional reaction that the original event

prompted. Abreaction is a painful but cathartic experience; it requires close management, privacy, and time to complete the experience. Individuals having an abreaction usually benefit from support and solitude after the experience.

Losing contact boundaries. Occasionally, a group participant will experience a brief, transient psychotic episode during fantasy. The episode may take the form of extended reverie or an unwillingness to leave the fantasy trip. Manifestations of a loss of contact boundaries include disorientation, misperceptions, changes in speech, alterations in visual and auditory perception, and heightened affect. Usually the episode is a pleasant, benign experience. In most instances, it is advisable for a person having this kind of experience to stay in the group. Other participants can provide reality checks, and the presence of others can be supportive and reassuring. In some instances, when the person expresses a desire for solitude, a staff member can stay with him or her until the episode terminates.

Trances. The group fantasy experience can produce many of the characteristics of a hypnotic trance state. The hypnotic trance, while extensively researched, remains difficult to define; for many investigators, a trance is similar to focused attention. Trance-like phenomena pose no special problem for either the group leader or the participant if the previously discussed training considerations are met.

CONCLUSION

Fantasy is a powerful intervention that enriches individual and group experience by acquainting participants with their "personal mythology." That mythology—and its presentation of metaphoric truth—can support and nourish the individual's search for self-awareness and personal growth. The techniques and methods described here require a respect for fantasy's power and a sense of appropriateness and timing. The responsible facilitator who creatively uses fantasy in group work will tap a source of learning that has impact far beyond the life of the group.

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PROCESSING QUESTIONS: AN AID TO COMPLETING THE LEARNING CYCLE

Beverly A. Gaw

Learning is a process in which an individual changes in ways not dictated by his or her heredity (Bigge, 1964). These changes may occur in any or all of the person's sensing, thinking, feeling, wanting, or acting dimensions (Wackman, Miller, & Nunnally, 1975). The experiential learning cycle attempts to have an impact on all these ways of knowing and relating the past and the future in a present, here-and-now experience. As Dewey (1938, p. 41) suggested, "To 'learn from experience' is to make a backward-forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence."

THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

Experiential learning provides activities that have the potential to involve the whole person in the educational process. Each stage of the experiential learning cycle has objectives that move toward the ultimate goal of increasing the options available to a person in the face of new but similar situations. Experiential learning usually occurs within a group; however, the principles can be applied to pairs, such as the therapeutic relationship, or a single individual, such as a person completing a workbook activity.

The objectives of each phase of the cycle (see Pfeiffer & Jones, 1975) are as follows (see Figure 1):

1. *Experiencing:* to generate individual data from one or more of the sensing, thinking, feeling, wanting, or doing modes;
2. *Sharing:* to report the data generated from the experience;
3. *Interpreting:* to make sense of the data generated for both individuals and the group;
4. *Generalizing:* to develop testable hypotheses and abstractions from that data; and
5. *Applying:* to bridge the present and the future by understanding and/or planning how these generalizations can be tested in a new place.

The technique that enables the facilitator to accomplish the objectives of each stage of the learning cycle and promote movement to the subsequent stages is processing. Many educators and facilitators are aware of the importance of processing skills in

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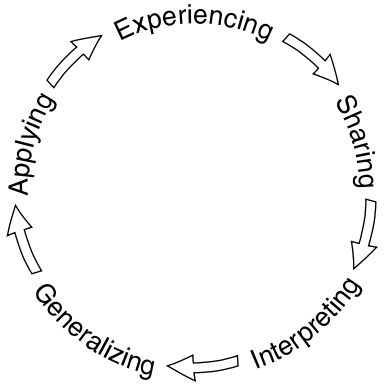

Figure 1. The Experiential Learning Cycle

maximizing participants' learning. The competent facilitator renders the experience more than merely an exciting and involving one; he or she leads the participant through the cycle so that transfer of learning occurs (Benne, 1976). The skilled facilitator is "tuned in" to the participants (Eiben, 1976) and is responsive to "moment to moment" changes in the group (Phillips, 1976). Because the specific route to transferring learning is determined by the data the participants generate, the facilitator must have a large and flexible repertoire of questions to stimulate, maintain, and complete the cycle. It is important to note that although the facilitator does not always assume responsibility for the entire cycle (e.g., process observers can be used), he or she needs to be capable of directing the entire process.

Although educators and group leaders alike stress the necessity of processing, there are, in reality, very few guidelines in the literature for accomplishing that goal. A random survey of over two dozen exercise books, teacher's manuals, and workbooks published from 1970 to 1978 indicates that facilitators wishing to follow the experiential cycle are given little, and in some cases no, instruction about how to do it. These books fall fairly equally into one of three categories:

1. No questions, guidelines, or directions for integrating learning are provided. The facilitator is given the activity and its objective (Brooks, 1990; Egan, 1975; Francis & Woodcock, 1975; Johnson, 1974; McCroskey, Larson, & Knapp, 1971; Myers & Myers, 1973; Stewart & D'Angelo, 1975). For example, in an instructor's guide to *A Systems Approach to Small Group Interaction* (Tubbs, 1978), the "trust walk" is suggested as an experiential activity, and only the following instructions are included:

> Trust Walk: Members are paired on some basis. One member of the pair assumes the role of being "blind" by closing his or her eyes. The other person leads him or her around, maintaining contact with only one hand placed on his or her shoulder (from behind). After five minutes or so, the members reverse roles. The instructions may contain some suggestions about trying to sense whether the "blind" person begins to feel trust for the other person. (p. 10)

2. The facilitator is instructed to lead a discussion, pulling out the important concepts the experience was to generate (Pfeiffer & Jones, 19721978; Wackman, Miller, & Nunnally, 1975). For example, in "Admissions Committee: A Consensus-Seeking Activity" (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1978), the facilitator is instructed to draw out the following concepts:

a. The consensus process within each group: assets and difficulties, whether the rules were followed, and the dynamics behind the posted scores.
b. Ways in each performance could be improved in future consensus-seeking activities.
c. Work situations to which the principles of achieving consensus could be applied. (p. 16)

3. The facilitator is given some specific discussion questions that tap only certain phases of the learning cycle (Frank & Jandt, 1976; Hall et al., 1975; Jongeward & James, 1973; Krupar, 1973; Napier & Gershenfeld, 1973; Stevens, 1971; Thayer, 1976). For example, in *A Handbook of Verbal Group Exercises* (Morris & Cinnamon, 1975), the questions suggested for a "Coping with Confrontation" experience focus mainly on what happened (sharing) and what it meant (interpreting):

a. How did you feel about going into the inside chair? Why? Did your feelings change once you were in the chair?
b. How did you react to the feedback? In most instances, did you tend to agree or disagree? Why? Did the feedback surprise you? Did you feel it was honest?
c. Were you hesitant about giving feedback? Why? Was your feedback primarily negative or positive? Why?
d. What did you learn from the people you felt were most complimentary and critical? Have your feelings changed about these people? Has your self concept changed? In what way? (p. 71)

An example that indicates primary focus on the abstracting phase is found in an exercise on paraphrasing (Weaver, 1978):

> Do you find paraphrasing difficult? Why?
> Does paraphrasing serve to clarify conversation?
> Are there weaknesses in paraphrasing? Are there certain situations where it might not be appropriate?
> Is it realistic to expect people to paraphrase in normal conversation? (p. 28)

Although there should be no excuse for omitting general guidelines aimed at eliciting the conceptual purpose of the exercise, it is understandable that only the most abstract sort of directions can be given. If, in fact, it is true that the greatest learning is generated in the particular participant's here-and-now experience, then questions covering all the possible learnings are impossible to predict. It may even be that the longer the list of specific questions the facilitator brings to the experience, the less likely participant-based and participant-directed learning is to occur.

The effective facilitator is situationally responsive. He or she guides any particular group of participants to find learning that is meaningful and testable for them, regardless of whether it fits with the author's or facilitator's conceptual scheme. In other words, the process is trusted to unfold and evolve. The ideal facilitator does not lead the participants to conclusions but rather stimulates insights and then follows what emerges from the participants.

One of the books surveyed, *Reality Games* (Sax & Hollander, 1972), does provide some general guidelines to encourage the participants to direct their own learning experience. When they falter or reach the end of a particular theme or train of thought, another question can be asked to help them move on. For example, some suggested questions are "How do you feel about that?"; "Have you considered any other alternatives?"; "Are those all the necessary facts?" Sax and Hollander (pp. 43, 67-69) further provide questions that clarify feelings ("If you felt sad, what about the problem would make you feel that way?"), needs ("What did you wish would happen?"), thinking ("How do you see the problem as a whole?"), point of view ("What led you to expect that?"), consistency ("Are the needs compatible?"), and completeness ("Are there some reservations that have not been expressed?").

PROCESSING QUESTIONS FOR EACH STAGE OF THE CYCLE

Although the questions suggested by Sax and Hollander are a welcome addition to the facilitator's repertoire, not all of them fit clearly into the progressive stages of the experiential learning cycle. Following is a series of questions designed for each stage of the experiential cycle.

Experiencing

Usually in stage one, *the experiencing phase,* participants are engaged in an activity to generate data, and processing the data does not in actuality begin until the second stage, sharing. However, because every facilitator has had the experience of meeting participants' resistance to beginning and/or completing an activity, questions are provided for this stage. These questions are usually "no-fail" questions for three reasons: (1) they tend to break down reluctance by allowing the participants' resistance to getting involved in the activity; (2) if resistance cannot be overcome, processing the blocking itself becomes the learning; and (3) they can be used at any stage of the experiential cycle. They are key questions that, when combined with the facilitator's summarizing and reflecting, aid the group in moving either more deeply into the stage at hand or on to another stage.

- What is going on?
- How do you feel about that?
- What do you need to know to . . . ?

- Would you be willing to try?
- Could you be more specific?
- Could you offer a suggestion?
- What would you prefer?
- What are your suspicions?
- What is your objection?
- If you could guess at the answer, what would it be?
- Can you say that in another way?
- What is the worst/best that could happen?
- What else?
- And?
- Would you say more about that?

Sharing

In stage two, *the sharing phase,* participants have completed the experience. Questions are directed toward generating data.

- Who would volunteer to share? Who else?
- What went on/happened?
- How did you feel about that?
- Who else had the same experience?
- Who reacted differently?
- Were there any surprises/puzzlements?
- How many felt the same?
- How many felt differently?
- What did you observe?
- What were you aware of?

Interpreting

In stage three, *the interpreting phase,* participants now have data. Questions are directed toward making sense of these data for the individual and the group.

- How did you account for that?
- What does that mean to you?

- How was that significant?
- How was that good/bad?
- What struck you about that?
- How do those fit together?
- How might it have been different?
- Do you see something operating there?
- What does that suggest to you about yourself/your group?
- What do you understand better about yourself/your group?

Generalizing

In stage four, *the generalizing phase,* participants work toward abstracting from the specific knowledge they have gained about themselves and their group to superordinate principles. Questions are directed toward promoting generalizations.

- What might we draw/pull from that?
- Is that tying in to anything?
- What did you learn/relearn?
- What does that suggest to you about (blank) in general?
- Does that remind you of anything?
- What principle/law do you see operating?
- Does that remind you of anything? What does that help explain?
- How does this relate to other experiences?
- What do you associate with that?
- So what?

Applying

In stage five, *the applying phase,* participants are concerned with utilizing learning in their real-world situation. Questions are directed toward applying the general knowledge they have gained to their personal and/or professional lives.

- How could you apply/transfer that?
- What would you like to do with that?
- How could you repeat this again?
- What could you do to hold on to that?
- What are the options?

- What might you do to help/hinder yourself?
- How could you make it better?
- What would be the consequences of doing/not doing that?
- What modifications can you make work for you?
- What could you imagine/fantasize about that?

Overall Processing

A final stage can be added here, that of processing the entire experience as a learning experience. Questions are aimed at soliciting feedback.

- How was this for you?
- What were the pluses/minuses?
- How might it have been more meaningful?
- What's the good/bad news?
- What changes would you make?
- What would you continue?
- What are the costs/benefits?
- If you had it to do over again, what would you do?
- What additions/deletions would help?
- Any suggestions?

It is obvious that many of these questions focus on and will elicit similar responses; i.e., they overlap in content and meaning. However, for the skillful facilitator variations on the same theme offer more than one road to arrive at the same place.

Advantages/Disadvantages

There are potential disadvantages in any technique, but the disadvantages of possessing a series of processing questions in one's facilitative repertoire seem to be outweighed by the advantages. One disadvantage is that the facilitator may come to rely solely on these questions without becoming knowledgeable about the concept, issue, or theory to be illuminated by the experience. The second disadvantage is a more philosophical one: questions are actually indirect statements that serve to hide one's own reactions to the experience (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1974). This disadvantage can be overcome in two ways: (1) the facilitator can turn each of the questions into statements ("I'd like to know what you're feeling"), and (2) the facilitator can share his or her own experiences during the processing of the learning cycle ("What happened for me was . . ." "What I learned was . . ."). Neither of these objections negates the value of a repertoire of processing questions. To the contrary, both emphasize the fact that questions in themselves are

neither good nor bad; it is how the facilitator uses them that is the object of evaluation. If the facilitator is a developing person, chances are that he or she will not misuse this technique (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1977).

On the other hand, the advantages are several: (1) if the experience is going as planned, the facilitator has a tool for guiding the experiential learning cycle at the pace, depth, breadth, and intensity that he or she deems appropriate; (2) if the experience is not going as planned, the facilitator has a tool for deriving learning from what is occurring, so that something beneficial is gained, regardless of participants' attitudes and reactions; and, finally, (3) the greatest advantage is that these questions can be used with virtually any experience in nearly any situation with the vast majority of participants. They are generalizable, transferable, and guaranteed to evoke learning. The nature of the facilitator and the skills of sharing, empathizing, and listening are most important to the appropriate use of this technique. However, armed with these questions, the consciously competent facilitator can be assured (and make sure) that "nothing never happens" (Johnson, 1974) when the learning process is trusted.

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ROLE PLAYING

John E. Jones and J. William Pfeiffer

CONTEXT

Human relations training technology now offers a number of different ways of changing people's attitudes and of developing individuals' behavioral skills. In Figure 1 we have depicted the various major training interventions along a continuum from didactic to experiential (based in part on Hall, 1971, and Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1973). We also show the relationship between learner involvement and the source of meaning of the material being learned. With experiential approaches—those that primarily stress active participant involvement in contrast to passive receptivity—the learning is presumably internalized and, therefore, more effective.

Across the bottom of Figure 1 (which is extracted and adapted from Pfeiffer and Jones, 1979), there is a classification of human relations training approaches and techniques, ordered according to the extent to which they incorporate learner involvement. The least involving intervention is reading, in which the learner is in a *reactive* mode, passively receiving and vicariously experiencing. The most involving intervention is the intensive growth group, in which the learner is encouraged to be *proactive*, to take responsibility for his or her own learning. In between these two extremes are activities that range from lectures to structured experiences.

The experiential lecture is more involving than the traditional lecture approach because it incorporates activities on the part of the "audience." Interspersed among the sections of content are brief interactions among participants. These interruptions are designed either to personalize the points of the lecture and/or to generate readiness for the next topic.

Discussion is a time-honored teaching intervention, which has been extended and refined in participation training, particularly by adult educators at Indiana University. The case-study method, developed and popularized in business education by professors at Harvard Business School, is closely related to role playing, in which a "case" is acted out in a semistructured format.

The use of paper-and-pencil instruments involves learners in self-assessment. The didactic component comes from the theory underlying the items of the scale. Structured experiences stress high participation and "processing" of data generated during interactive activities.

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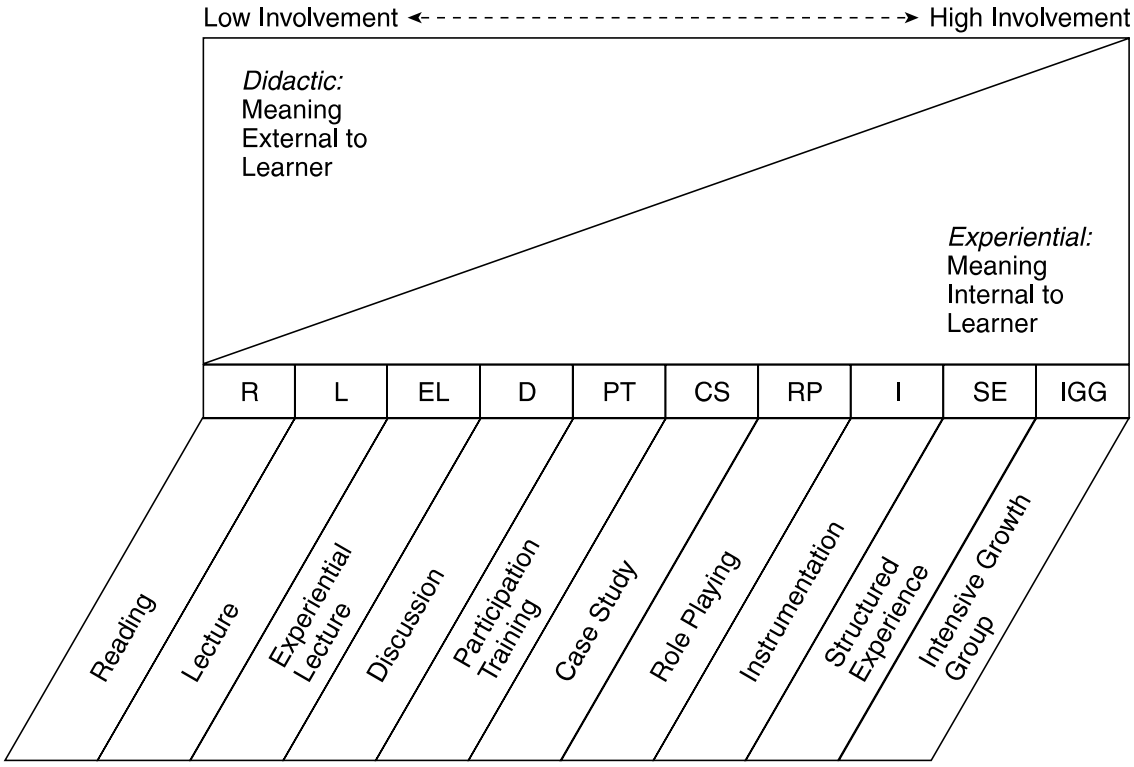
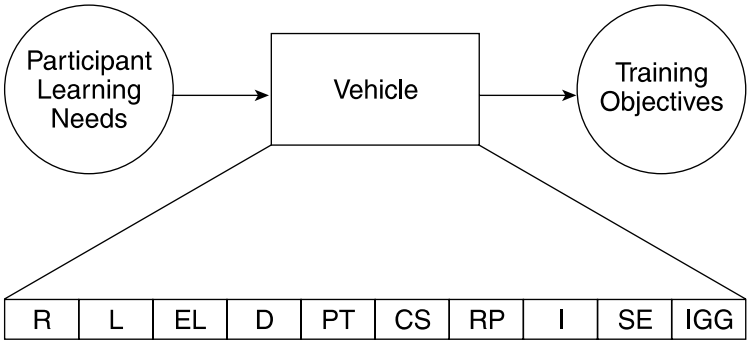


Figure 1. The Technology of Human Relations Training

Intensive growth groups exist in many forms, such as counseling, T-groups, encounter, and therapy. They are characterized by high learner involvement and interaction. The data for learning come from the life experiences and here-and-now reactions of the group members. Participants are expected to integrate their learning into new self-concepts on their own terms.

The involvement dimension in Figure 1 could be replaced with any of several other dimensions that would vary similarly. For example, at the highly didactic end of the scale (reading) would go low risk, low self-disclosure, and low interaction with others. The other end, highly experiential (intensive growth group), is associated with high values on these same three dimensions (risk, self-disclosure, and interaction). Each of the training approaches and techniques is, of course, useful for certain purposes, and there are various training situations most appropriate for one or another.

Facilitators are continually faced with the task of planning activities to meet the learning needs of participants. The design problem can be graphically represented as follows:



The choice of an effective intervention is made after an assessment of the learning needs of participants and a statement of training objectives. The maturity of the group, the skill and experience of the facilitator, and the environment in which the training takes place determine which approach is used.

ROLE PLAYING IN HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING

Role playing has a wide utility in leadership and management development, training in communication skills, improvement of interpersonal relationships, and team development. A practical strategy for the effective use of this intervention in experiential training designs and a clear sense of its advantages and potential disadvantages in human relations work are needed. Our suggestions for designing and conducting such structured activities in a group situation are intended to clarify the practical uses of role playing.

Corsini, Blake, and Shaw (1980) identify four types of role playing: theatrical, sociological, dissimulative, and educational. In the context of this paper we will limit ourselves to educational role playing. Role playing, as discussed here, is an educational activity for training participants that focuses on learning human relations skills and concepts. As an educational tool it is, for example, used widely by the military in war games; by assessment centers to determine the optimum career path of participants; and in assertion training to develop the skills and concepts needed for individuals to stand up for their rights in the face of potential conflict. Perhaps the most widespread use of role playing in training and development has been in courses and workshops in communication skills and leadership development. Role playing lends itself particularly well to the exploration of ideas and theories in interpersonal communication and leadership roles.

Role playing is distinguished from another major educational approach, the case study, primarily in terms of focus and impact. The case study is more likely to be centered primarily on cognitive learning, whereas the role play typically emphasizes both cognitive and affective development on the part of learners. The case study's there-and-then content emphasis is a feature that often reduces its impact. It has considerably

less learner involvement than the role play, and its potential for promoting transferable learning that is "owned" by participants is decidedly less.

Role-Playing Objectives

A number of objectives in human relations training can be realized through role playing. The approach can be used to demonstrate various skills and concepts in interpersonal relations and communications. Problems being focused on by a participant group can be "staged" to achieve a different perspective. Role playing can be applied to personnel selection, as in assessment centers. It can provide a meaningful way to experience different behaviors in order to evaluate their effects. It can also be used to create a data base for interpersonal feedback within a human relations laboratory learning situation. Inasmuch as many experiential learning concepts are often difficult for participants to apply to their everyday work, role playing offers a vehicle for delivering theory input in an engrossing and stimulating way that is relevant to real-world problem situations. Theoretical concepts can be incorporated into role descriptions and into the role-play problem. Role playing also has the additional potential of generating affective content for purposes of exploring relationships between feelings and behavior in human interactions. Role plays can be selected or devised to study the probable effects of different behaviors on the participants in a problem situation, thereby providing a potential learning opportunity for individuals to develop an increased sensitivity both to their own and to others' feelings.

ADVANTAGES AND POTENTIAL DISADVANTAGES

Role playing has a number of obviously desirable applications; however, there are also some potential disadvantages. The facilitator needs to be aware of both the advantages and disadvantages in order to be able to optimize the benefits and minimize the potentially negative aspects.

Advantages

Participants typically experience role playing as an engaging activity. Because almost everyone knows how to play someone else's role, participants tend to enjoy role plays, and it is unnecessary for them to learn new skills in order to benefit from the process. Also, role playing is often fun, although overplaying a part can detract from the learning. When role playing is conducted skillfully, the situations have a high credibility for participants, thereby reducing resistance to learning relevant skills and theory.

The technique is highly flexible. The facilitator can change the role play as it is being conducted, and the materials can be edited to fit particular situations. Role playing can be engaged in for brief or long periods. The technique often minimizes the threat of interpersonal interaction in human relations training: It is sometimes easier to explore oneself by projecting oneself into a role than to expose oneself directly. Participants are allowed to carry out decisions without the danger of embarrassing or incriminating

themselves in "real" situations. Role playing can increase participants' awareness about the effects of feelings on social behavior.

Perhaps the most decided advantage of role playing in a training context is that it uses the experiences of participants in ways that increase their ownership of learning. As it provides a vehicle for focused feedback to individual participants, it can assist in developing the expression of feelings. Human problems in systems can be studied through the medium of role playing in a humanizing way that brings the "human factor" of organizational situations into sharper focus. Because it has the potential to develop skills in self-expression, listening, communicating points of view, and interpersonal interaction, role playing can raise participants' consciousness about the need for skills in human relations training. It can also permit the simulation of problem issues that arise infrequently in personal or work situations but are very important when they do arise. Thus, role playing offers participants the opportunity for hard-to-obtain experience in dealing with such situations.

Potential Disadvantages

Several potential disadvantages are inherent in the role-play technique. One obvious one is that the artificiality or superficiality of situations depicted in role-play situations can allow participants to discount the value of their learning because of the apparent oversimplification of the situation. A second problem is that sometimes participants lose themselves in a role and engage in inadvertent self disclosure, exposure, and ventilation. It is important that the facilitator point out this possibility to participants. The facilitator should be particularly aware of this disadvantage in order to avoid the ethical breach of allowing people unknowingly to make themselves vulnerable. Role playing can be a threatening experience for a significant minority of participants, and the facilitator needs to be sensitive to the pressures faced by participants.

A third disadvantage is that roles sometimes reinforce stereotypes and caricature people's behavior. This unfortunate side effect can be avoided if the trainer ensures that role descriptions are credible and nonstereotypical and that role players are instructed not to caricature their roles. Fourth, role playing can deteriorate into play, and the serious learning potential that is inherent in the process can thereby be jeopardized. A fifth problem arises when role plays are staged in front of an audience: The passivity of the audience can lessen the impact of the learning. In such a case, it is important that members of the audience have active roles as observers or coaches.

Sixth, role-playing situations can overpersonalize problem situations; for example, in team building, problems facing organizational work units are sometimes aggravated by a tendency to perceive feedback personally and to see issues in terms of individuals. Role playing can, through such overinvolvement, generate excess affect, and the facilitator should be aware of the need to keep the learning focus sharply delineated.

DESIGNING ROLE PLAYS

In designing role plays, the potential disadvantages of the technique can be avoided through certain design considerations, choice of role-play problems, dimensions of role-play structure, careful development of materials, and detailed preparation,

Design Considerations

In creating role-play situations there are a number of useful design considerations. Within the situation itself and the descriptions of the roles of individual players, it is often important that there be a broad range of human problems. Unless the role play is intended to demonstrate ineffective behavior, participants should be given an opportunity to behave effectively. This is particularly true if the major objective of the role play is to develop skills, in which case the emphasis should be on acknowledging and reinforcing the desired results.

In the role-play situation it is ideal to have conflict and variety. Generally it is desirable to avoid getting too close to actual current organizational situations. Using actual problem situations as the content of role-play activities can have a number of negative consequences, including the following:

1. Defensive behavior on the part of participants may be evoked.
2. Participants may concentrate on solutions rather than focus on aspects of the problem.
3. Basic disagreement on issues may be generated, leading to polarization within the participant group.
4. The organizational situations commonly addressed in OD often have many causes, and the human dimensions within them are obscured. Role playing may oversimplify such situations and lead to misleading generalizations.

In setting up role-play situations it is, therefore, best to use simulated problems before attempting to use real organizational problems. If, however, real problems are being used, it is better to focus on existing problems rather than ones that have been "solved," in order to minimize blaming.

Choice of Role-Play Problems

There are many types of problems that can be suggested for creating role-play situations. It is possible to focus on personal problem behaviors such as being unable to say no or being shy. Problems indigenous to leadership situations can easily be set up for role playing: Boss-subordinate interactions lend themselves well to exploration, and performance appraisal, a special type of boss-subordinate behavior, can be studied effectively. It is easy to establish role-play situations that simulate various aspects of staff meetings, such as the influence of hidden agendas on the conduct of the meeting. Integration problems, such as a "we-they" attitude, can be studied effectively. Peer relationships between colleagues can be role played also. It is perhaps more ambitious

but entirely possible to design role plays that explore any aspect of a functioning organization.

Some Dimensions of Role-Play Structure

We can identify at least four common dimensions of role-play structure.

Extent of Active Involvement

A role play may be acted out by several groups at once or by only one group. Obviously the total number of participants will affect the facilitator's decision; one could not have four role-play groups of five persons each if the total number of participants were ten. However, the facilitator typically does have a choice regarding the extent of active involvement.

The *multiple role play,* in which several groups act out the same role play at once, often in the same room, is probably most common, and it does have the following advantages:

- It gives maximum opportunity for everyone to participate;
- It enables comparisons to be made of the several outcomes to the same situation produced by different groups; and
- It often helps shy or reticent participants to overcome these feelings and become involved.

The *single-group role play,* however, in which one group carries out the role play "on stage" in front of an audience, also has the following advantages:

- It aids in diagnosing others' feelings through observation of their behavior;
- It is highly appropriate for small groups (fewer than ten people);
- It is particularly useful for advanced or intensive training;
- It permits audience members to develop observational skills and to serve as external consultants to the role players; and
- It makes it possible to stop the action at critical points and start again, giving the facilitator much more control over the role-play process and allowing him or her to capitalize on what happens in the role play without losing sight of the learning goals. Because only one set of behaviors occurs, the details that have been observed by everyone can be discussed and individual role players can get highly focused feedback on their behavior.

Degree of Situational Structure

A second dimension centers on the degree to which the role-play situation is structured. At one extreme a scripted skit calls for role players to act out their roles from a line-by-line script. This has the advantage of producing a highly focused demonstration, but the

impact of the participants' spontaneous involvement in their roles is minimal. Skit completion begins with a highly structured reading of lines but, at some point, the script ends and participants continue spontaneously. Perhaps the most common degree of structure is represented by the dramatized case, which is read silently and individually by each role player. The case may be in the form of a script but more often is simply a page or so of background material. Role players pick up on the action in a spontaneous way, at the point at which the case leaves off. The higher the degree of structure, the more certain it is that specifically defined learning points will be made, but the lower the participants' personal experiential involvement will be.

Amount of Role Multiplicity

The third dimension is the degree of role multiplicity. That is, it is often desirable to have one or more persons act as backups or "alter egos" to a particular role player. At one extreme, an audience can be divided up so that each segment identifies with one of the actors in a single-group role play. A kind of minimum condition, at the other extreme, would be assigning observers to be limited alter egos for a multiple role play. The alter ego can coach the actor to help the role player analyze a situation more objectively, can help keep the actor in role, can provide support for the role player in difficult situations, and can step in and change places with the role player, if desirable. Using one or more alter egos actively involves more participants in the role play and is advantageous from that viewpoint.

Degree of Nonverbal Emphasis

Finally, an often-neglected dimension concerns the degree of nonverbal emphasis in the role-play situation. Role plays can be used to focus exclusively on nonverbal behavior, through the use of pantomime for all communication, for example. Although this would generate awareness of nonverbal factors in interpersonal behavior, a more realistic approach might involve explicit role instructions that include directions about nonverbal behavior. Observers' instructions, too, can be designed to focus on this dimension.

The four dimensions described here are independent, and they could be combined in almost any imaginable way. That is, a multiple role play could be designed with an incomplete (open-ended) script, using two alter egos and concerning scripted nonverbal behaviors. Equally possible is a single-group on-stage design using a dramatized case with everyone but the role players being observers and with nonverbal behavior left unexamined. Specific designs depend on the learning goals, the specific content issues, the nature of the population, and the facilitator's preferences, along with other factors. Awareness of these dimensions, and the range of choices they imply, should help the facilitator in the design process.

Development of Materials

It is important to develop clear, concise, and highly focused materials for use in a role play; they should be readable and not too lengthy or too complicated for a participant to remember. Ordinarily a role play requires some case background data to set the scene for participants. Occasionally, further information ("bulletins," "telegrams," "letters," notes, etc.) is used to affect the role play as it progresses. The role descriptions should be written in uncomplicated language for the individual players and should include some hints on how to play the role. Observer background sheets need to be provided for persons in the "audience." It is highly desirable for observers to have paper-and-pencil instruments to focus their reactions, or else there may be a tendency to overpersonalize the observation and fail to focus on the specific learnings intended.

Instead of using prepared written role materials, participants can create their own roles. This approach minimizes the need for printed materials, but it is often more difficult to handle on the part of the facilitator in that the outcome is less predictable and may not be consistent with the expressed learning goals.

Preparations for Role Playing

It is important for the facilitator to prepare for the role play by establishing a proper set, keeping the objectives continuously clear, and making certain that the entire experience has an obvious logic to it.

The importance of establishing a proper set early cannot be overemphasized. Because the term "role playing" can connote "fun and games" to some people, it is up to the facilitator to establish that the activity is intended to promote learning. The objectives should be specified beforehand, except in a situation intended to explore covert interpersonal processes, for example, the use and impact of hidden agendas. Even in such a case, however, the facilitator needs to be constantly aware of the objectives.

In setting up the situation it is important to give an overview to establish who is going to be involved and how. Participants can be selected by one of four basic models: using volunteers, type-casting participants on the basis of their personalities, making assignments on the basis of some other knowledge of participants, and utilizing role reversals. The latter might, for example, involve having someone with high status play a low-status position and vice versa. In briefing role players, the facilitator should not make the mistake of assuming that people know how to get into their roles; a bit of coaching on role taking may be necessary. One way of briefing role players is to designate support groups that can function as coaches during caucusing sessions. These groups can be established either randomly or through volunteering, and they can provide each role player with a support base for getting into and staying in role. A variation on the support group is the reference group, consisting of participants with similar jobs. For example, secretaries in a workshop could be the reference group for an individual who is going to role play a secretary.

In briefing observers it is important to clarify their tasks: Are they simply observers or are they permitted to talk with one another? Are they expected to make a report? Are

they going to meet with individuals? Any forms that they are to use in recording their observations should be explained. If the observers are to be permitted to intervene in the role play with process observations, this procedure should be made explicit. If the observers are to function as alter egos, this role should probably be demonstrated by the facilitator.

In staging a role play, several arrangements suggest themselves. The "group-on-group" role play, conducted in the center of the room with observers circled around it, increases the sense of involvement. Alternatively, the role play can be staged with the observers in a semicircular arrangement so that the role players can be seen from the front. In multiple-group role plays each group should be arranged in such a way that it can interact with minimal interruption from the other groups. If there are several groups, or if the role play is likely to be fairly noisy, the role plays can be conducted in separate rooms.

ROLE PLAYING IN THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

The role-playing activity is the beginning of a five-step experiential model (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1979, pp. 35)

> which is based on a cyclical learning process of five separate but interlocking procedures. As implied by the name of the model, the emphasis is on the *direct* experiences of the participant or learner—as opposed to the *vicarious* experiences garnered through didactic approaches.
>
> The experiential model is also an *inductive* rather than a *deductive* process: the participant *discovers* for himself the learnings offered by the experiential process. His discovery may be facilitated by a leader, but in the end the participant finds and validates his own experience.
>
> This is the "laboratory" . . . approach to learning. It is based on the premise that experience precedes learning and that the learning, or meaning, to be derived from any experience comes from the learner himself. Any individual's experience is unique to himself; no one can tell him what he is to learn, or gain, from any activity. Probable learnings can, of course, be devised, but it is up to the participant to validate these for himself.

Five revolving steps are included in the experiential model:

Experiencing

The process usually starts with experiencing. The participant becomes involved in an activity; he *acts* or *behaves* in some way or he *does, performs, observes, sees, says* something. This initial experience is the basis for the entire process.

Publishing

Following the experience itself, it becomes important for the participant to share or "publish" his reactions and observations with others who have either experienced or observed the same activity.

Processing

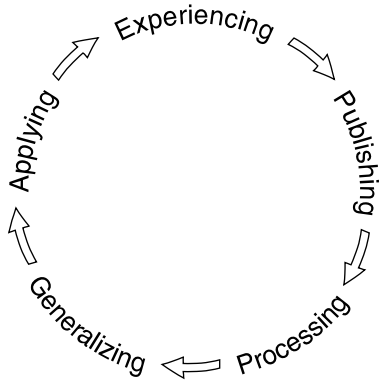
Sharing one's reactions is only the first step. An essential—and often neglected—part of the cycle is the necessary integration of this sharing. The dynamics that emerged in the activity are explored, discussed, and evaluated (processed) with other participants.

Generalizing

Flowing logically from the processing step is the need to develop principles or extract generalizations from the experience. Stating learnings in this way can help participants further define, clarify, and elaborate them.

Applying

The final step in the cycle is to plan applications of the principles derived from the experience. The experiential process is not complete until a new learning or discovery is used and tested behaviorally. This is the "experimental" part of the experiential model. Applying, of course, becomes an experience in itself, and, with new experience, the cycle begins again.



Each step of the experiential learning cycle can be related to role playing. In the *experiencing* phase, the focus is on the role play itself. Here it is important to recognize that this phase creates the data base of human interaction for later discussion. Thus, much of the emphasis in preparing a role play has to be on later phases, i.e., what happens after the role play is completed. In the *publishing* phase, the observers' reports and the role players' expression of feelings, attitudes, and experiences are the significant aspects. Here the emphasis is on sharing reactions experienced in the role play.

The publishing phase of the role play experience flows into the next phase—*processing*. Observers can report the patterns of behavior that they observed. At this point role players often are still emotionally in their roles, and it is important to make an intervention that will help to "de-role" them and make them more receptive to cognitive integration of the experience. Often a simple announcement is adequate (e.g., "All role players may now resume being and acting themselves"). Sometimes, however, a meeting may be required with support or reference groups for the purpose of finishing

the unfinished business of the role play. The use of videotape replay in the processing phase can be highly advantageous for focusing the study of the dynamics of the role-play situation—the patterns of behavior that spontaneously emerge in the interaction of the role players.

The next phase is *generalizing* from the role-play experience to "real-world" situations. There are a variety of techniques for developing generalizations: Individuals and/or groups can be instructed to write declarative statements based on their experiences outside the training situation; and participants can be encouraged to develop cause-and-effect hypotheses about the dynamics that emerge in the role-play experience.

The final phase of the role-play process is the most important one: *applying.* In this part of the design participants are led to explore two crucial questions: "So what?" and "Now what?" These discussions can take place between goal-setting partners, within natural subgroups of the training group, between participant observer pairs, and by repeating the role play and applying the generalizations that came out of the first round. It is important that the facilitator, in devising a role play, think very carefully about how participants are to be led from playing a role to integrating their learning into practical, everyday, significant changes in behavior.

CONDUCTING ROLE PLAYS

In order to maximize the learning potential of the role-play technique, the facilitator should be aware of some special considerations in conducting the activity. Perhaps the most important is to keep the objectives of the role play and the facilitator's role clear throughout the entire process. The facilitator needs to be confident that the objectives are being met and that the activities can be focused adequately within a narrow range of learning goals.

In instructing participants on how to role play, Maier's (1975) seven directions, as outlined on the following page, are useful.

1. Accept and adopt the facts of the role.
2. *Be* the role.
3. You may change your attitude(s) during the action.
4. Let yourself become emotionally aroused.
5. Make up data, if necessary, but do not alter the spirit of the case.
6. Avoid consulting your role notes during the role play.
7. Do not overact; it may detract from the learning goals.

These instructions can also be reproduced on the role-description sheets that are handed out to role players prior to the activity.

While the role play is being conducted, the facilitator must be able to modulate the intensity of the event. This can be effected in a number of ways. Humor can be used to lighten a heavy interaction; the role play can be put "on hold"; participants can be

assigned different roles during the role play; the interaction can be stimulated through intervention on the part of the facilitator; role players can be instructed to remain in role. The facilitator can tell participants to reread their role descriptions and coach one another on roles, and then there can be interim caucuses between observers and support or reference groups and/or the role players. The role play should be ended before it either becomes boring or loses its focus on the learning goals.

It is important for the facilitator to be thorough in working all the way through the experiential cycle explained previously. Forms and guided procedures can be extremely helpful for publishing experiential data, but the facilitator must assist in using the forms and in explaining and tracking the procedures. Getting participants out of the content of the roles is crucial for effective processing. While de-roling the role players after the role play, the facilitator may invite them to "ventilate" or to explore in an expressive way the feelings that they experienced during the activity. They can also be invited to finish unfinished business by making statements such as "If I had been the boss . . . ." Role players often can separate themselves from the role through a written analysis of the role-play situation afterwards. Sometimes this process can be stimulated by having individual consultants work with role players in order to "finish" the experience. Role players often can give one another interpersonal feedback in role as a means of ending the activity and getting themselves beyond it in order to explore its generalizable learning. To encourage participants, both role players and observers, to focus their learning, the facilitator can instruct them to concentrate on comparing feelings with observable behavior and to develop generalizations about the worlds that they ordinarily work in, while avoiding any discussion about personalities within the role-play situation. The facilitator should also reiterate the objectives of the activity. Often it is useful if the objectives are posted on newsprint in the training room. The facilitator needs to be particularly careful to encourage the generalizing and applying aspects of the experiential learning cycle, as these are often omitted, leaving practical, transferable learning to chance.

SUMMARY

Role playing is one of the most exciting techniques available to the group facilitator in training and development activities. Because role playing is active learning, it requires detailed planning for both content and logistics; because it is not a "show," it necessitates care in processing, or talking through, the experience before crystallizing its learning. Finally, role playing creates practical, transferable learning that participants own and are likely to apply in their everyday lives.

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ORGANIZING AND CONDUCTING MICROLABS FOR TRAINING

T. Venkateswara Rao and Udai Pareek

The technique of the "microlab" emerged historically as an introductory exercise for the sensitivity training laboratory. In place of verbal statements to introduce the training program, a microlab enables participants to live through an epitome of a laboratory program by being exposed to a variety of experiences in a brief period. The T-group culture is based on experiential learning, self-presentation, interpersonal feedback, experimentation, identification of feelings, etc., in a climate of trust and openness, using the method of learning by discovery.

A microlab represents the nature and the variety of the experiences and processes the participants are going to have. If it is designed and used properly, the microlab technique is a very useful activity in many training programs.

For a training program to be effective, it is necessary that participants be prepared for the changes that are to occur. To use the terminology of Lewin (1958), this may be called "unfreezing." Without such an initial input, the benefit from the various training inputs may not be maximized. The microlab technique, with its emphasis on unfreezing the participants and enhancing their motivation to benefit from the training program, is one way of approaching this problem. A microlab can be compared to an abstract preceding an article in a journal: It gives a preview of what is to follow.

CONDUCTING A MICROLAB

In a typical microlab situation the participants and the trainers assemble in a large room with enough open space to move about freely. The trainer makes no attempt to introduce the training program; instead the microlab begins. The trainer states that the first session will start with one trainer announcing an event, to which the participants may respond in any way they like. The trainer then requests the group to mill around the room. The participants may show surprise and hesitancy. The trainer repeats the request to "move around." After a minute or so, the trainer may instruct the participants to form pairs, trios, or small groups. The trainer then announces the task and indicates the time limit. At the end of the period allotted (often only a few minutes), the trainer requests that the participants move away from their partners and mill again. He or she then restructures the group, announces the next event, and the microlab continues.

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Different tasks are given for brief periods of time, between which there are short periods of physical activity. These physical activities start with milling about and include things like blind walking, slow walking, fast walking, silent walking, crawling, walking while greeting others nonverbally, paired walking, or back walking. Other innovative physical activities of short duration (usually about a minute or less) can also be used.

The structure of the group generally changes with each change in activity. Sometimes the activities may be in pairs, sometimes in trios or foursomes, and sometimes small subgroups.

PURPOSES OF A MICROLAB

A microlab serves as a mechanism to *unfreeze* or *open up* the participants. It is an excellent and quick warm-up mechanism that puts participants immediately into the program. Generally, participants come with certain expectations or fears. They may be expecting some lectures, they may be thinking that the program will be another routine set of activities, they may be feeling anxious and uncertain and afraid to ask questions. By going through several quickly changing activities, their preconceived notions and inhibitions are broken down. They begin to ask questions and get an opportunity to talk and to explore freely, which helps them unfreeze and sets the stage for learning.

Another purpose served by the microlab is to *introduce the participants to the experience* that they are going to have in the total program. In the microlab, the various items used or questions shared deal with the different dimensions, concepts, or aspects that are likely to be discussed during the program. For example, in a microlab used to start a motivation program, several questions dealing with motivation are utilized. However, the particular methodology that is going to be used in the program need not be simulated in the microlab. For example, if some psychological tests are being used to provide feedback to the participants, it may not be feasible to use a micro-instrument in a microlab. Instead, the dimension of feedback could be simulated by asking participants to point out good or bad points in one another.

A microlab serves as *an instrument* to tune the participants to the program by arousing their curiosity about what is happening. It also helps to communicate to the participant that the program is unconventional and different, requires active participation, and gives participants freedom to discuss their ideas.

One of the usual expectations that participants have about a training program—that it involves passively receiving instructions—can be broken by the microlab technique. A microlab helps to *raise new expectations* and establish new norms of behavior, such as expressing feelings to one another, feeling free to seek help, and experimenting in behavior.

A microlab also helps to *maximize interaction* among participants and allow them to know one another on levels at which they usually do not get acquainted or interact.

DESIGNING A MICROLAB

A microlab is generally introduced only at the beginning of a laboratory program. However, it can be used in various other situations and forms. For example, a microlab can be used to begin a lecture-based program in which no methodology is used. Here the microlab may not communicate the unconventionality of the program, but it may prepare the participants for free transactions. On such occasions it is advisable to announce that the microlab is being used only to provide an opportunity for multiple interactions among participants in a short period and for generating a free atmosphere.

A microlab can be used for various lengths of time. In short-term programs the microlab may be for an hour, while in longer programs it may take a full day. In such cases it could appropriately be called "microprogram," "microcourse," "microlecture," "microsession," etc., rather than microlab. However, as long as the micro-event offers people opportunities to experiment, it is still a microlab.

The following points may be kept in mind when planning a microlab:

1. It is not intended that the items introduced in a microlab be completely discussed in that time frame. A microlab should function as a stimulation for participants.
2. There should be a high level of activity in the microlab. The success of the microlab depends on the pace with which the various activities are done.
3. There should be a variety of items in the microlab.
4. The microlab should be designed well in advance, including sequencing of the various items. For example, one microlab could move from items relating to the self to those relating to individual roles and then to the total organization. Items should be well prepared and written down in detail.
5. There should be some unconventional ways of stimulating people, such as fantasies, drawings, skits, blind walking, group-on-group, crawling, role plays, etc.
6. If more than one trainer is involved in the microlab, it may be useful to take turns in conducting the items. Those who are not directing a particular activity may participate.

MICROLABS IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

This section presents some sample activities that could be included in microlabs for different groups. These activities could be carried out in pairs, trios, or small groups. Generally it is useful to start with pairs and go on to groups as people become acquainted with one another.

Cross-Cultural Groups

A microlab can be a very valuable tool to warm up and bring closer together cross-cultural groups that are meeting for a brief period of time in a conference or a training

program. The following activities are suggested for such groups (not necessarily in this sequence):

- Explain the significance your name has in your country.
- Share one significant aspect of the role you perform in your organization.
- Mention a significant role your organization has played in the past in your country.
- Use three adjectives to describe some positive aspects of your culture.
- Use three adjectives to describe some aspects of your culture that you do not like or that you think need improvement.
- Share the image you have of your partner's culture by using three adjectives.
- Tell your partner three things you like about his or her country.
- Share with the others in your group the image you have of the host country.
- Share with your partner the places of interest you are planning to visit in this country during your stay here.
- Share with your partner one problem you have recognized about yourself in programs of this kind in the past and how you plan to overcome it.
- Share with your partner one of your strong points and one of your weak points.
- Tell your partner something you like in him or her.
- Tell your partner something about yourself that you are proud of and something you would like to change.
- Mill around and greet the other members of the group nonverbally or through symbols.
- Form pairs and tell each other (nonverbally) something about the place at which you are working.
- Share with each other something that has particularly struck you in this country since the time of your arrival here.
- State what impresses you most about people in this place.
- Use three adjectives to describe the people with whom you work.
- Share in your trio your image of the people who perform similar roles in those countries represented by the other two members.
- Share one thing your country can give to other countries.
- Tell the other people in your trio one thing that you need in order to be effective in your work.

- Share with the others a saying or a proverb you like. You may recite it in your own language and then explain.
- Share with others how you feel about being in this country and in this group.
- Divide into groups of four and suggest different ways of overcoming the language barrier during the time of the conference. Share your thoughts in the total group.
- Break into trios representing different countries. Share with the others a pressing problem in your country. One person makes a statement, a listener repeats the statement, and the third person comments on how well the first individual narrated and how well the second one understood and communicated back. This activity allows every member of the trio an opportunity to comment on the statements of the other two.

Because in cross-cultural groups there are likely to be communication barriers, the use of nonverbal activities is suggested. If self-oriented sessions are not a part of the program, self-oriented items should be kept to a minimum in the microlab. If language is a barrier, it is necessary to give participants enough time after every item. Abrupt interruptions in such cases may cause frustration. It is also necessary to ensure that the instructions are understood properly.

Motivation Laboratories

Motivation development laboratories, particularly those dealing with achievement and power motivation, have grown rapidly. These are becoming popular for developing entrepreneurs, builders of institutions, and managers. The following are some items that could be used in such motivation laboratories. Additional items could be devised, depending on whether the participants are drawn from the same organization or different organizations.

- Describe one thing that you like most in your job and one thing that you like least in your job.
- Share with your partner a driving force prompting you to do your job in your organization.
- Think of a successful person you know and describe his or her behavior anonymously to your partner.
- Share with your partner his or her weak points.
- Describe the climate of your organization nonverbally to your partner.
- Think of a significant incident in your life and describe it to your partner, telling how you felt and why it was significant to you.
- Use three adjectives to describe the strong points of your subordinates and three to describe their weak points.

- Use three adjectives each to describe the strengths and weaknesses of your superiors.
- Recall a situation in which you felt very powerful and describe it to others in your trio or group.
- Share with your partner an important goal of your life.
- Share with your partner a strength that you think helps you achieve your goal.
- Share with your partner a weak point that you fear might block you from achieving your goal.
- Ask your partner about what outside help you can get to overcome something that prevents you from achieving an important goal.
- Share with your partner something you consider significant about your role.
- Share with your partner one of your strong points and one of your weak points.
- Share with your partner one of your dreams.
- Imagine yourself ten years from now and describe yourself to your partner.
- Tell a story you like.
- Share with your partner your ideas about how children should be treated in school.
- Share with others in your group your motivation for attending this event and describe how you feel being here.
- Share with others something about this place that has struck you.
- Tell your partner something you like about him or her and something you do not like.
- Think of a situation in your life or your work when you failed and share with your partner how you reacted and felt in that situation.
- Describe your style of reacting to strangers and ask your partner to do the same.
- Share with your partner one complaint/criticism from your spouse, one from your children, one from a teacher when you were young, one from your subordinates, and one from your superiors.
- Share, similarly, one compliment from your spouse, one from your children, one from your teachers, one from your subordinates and superiors.

Programs for Change Agents

Laboratory and other experiential programs are held for developing change agents in different areas, e.g., health, education, population, or community development.

Depending on the nature of the program planned, microlabs could be designed. Some examples are presented here.

Change Agents in Population Control and Family Planning

In such programs, motivating the participant and providing him or her the necessary skills to be a change agent are integral. A sample of items useful for developing such change agents are as follows:

- Share with your partner how you spend your leisure time and the hobbies you have.
- Describe to your partner some things about which you are happy and some things about which you are unhappy.
- Imagine that you have achieved everything you want. Share with your partner what your life would be like.
- Share with your partner your future ambitions and dreams about your own career or the careers of your children.
- Tell your partner about some of the comforts you have at present about which you are happy.
- Imagine that your country has developed very well economically twenty years from now. Technology, industry, education, and health have progressed. Discuss what your home, its surroundings, and this city would look like. Present a tourist's description of this city and a foreign visitor's description of your home. Take fifteen minutes to write these descriptions as imaginatively as you can.
- Imagine now that in twenty years the population has grown at its predicted rate. Unemployment has increased, resources are depleted, and there are many other problems because population growth could not be controlled. Write an essay describing how your city looks, what your home is like, what educational facilities are available, the comforts that are possible. Share your description in the total group.
- Think of three adjectives to describe family planning methods and share them in your group.
- Share with your partner two of your views about family planning: one positive and one negative.
- Describe to your partner a couple you know who has a small family and another couple who has a large family and contrast their lives.
- Imagine your group to be a group of workers in a mill. Give them a two-minute lecture on family planning.
- Share with your partner any family planning practices in which you engage.

- Identify one thing that you can do in your role to contribute to the cause of family planning and discuss it with your partner. Invite your partner to raise questions.
- Think of a situation in which you influenced another person or group of people because of your abilities rather than because of your role. Describe that situation to your partner and tell him or her how effective that influence has been.
- Narrate one of your success experiences in life and one of your failure experiences and the lessons you have learned from each of them.

This microlab focused mainly on inducing participants' ideas about family planning and also attempted to cover some dimensions likely to be faced in the following training program.

Internal Change Agents in Education and Health

The following items could be used for programs to develop change agents in education and health:

- Introduce yourself by telling the other person something about you other than your name, age, role, and title.
- Describe to the other person, through the use of adjectives, the organizational climate in your institution.
- Share with your partner one thing that you like most in your job and one thing that you like least in your job. Think of your own personal strengths and the weak points that could block your efforts as a change agent and share these with your partner.
- Think of a situation in which you were instrumental in bringing about a change in any place you worked. Share it with your partner.
- Describe to your partner the image you have of your style as a change agent.
- Identify one thing in your institution that you find difficult to change.
- Share with your partner something about yourself that you would like to improve.
- Share with your partner something of which you are proud.
- Think of a person whom you consider a good change agent in your area of work. Describe his or her qualities and how he or she manages change.
- Find an issue on which your opinions or beliefs are different from those of your partner. Work out a strategy to change your partner's views and try to implement it.
- Identify three different resources you see in the place where your organization is located.

- Identify one area in which improvement can be made in the curriculum you teach to your students. Share with your partner your thoughts on how such improvements could be made.

Creativity Labs

Following are some items that could be used to introduce a program in creativity and problem solving. These items deal with various dimensions of creativity and serve the purpose of introducing the laboratory and its methodology.

- Introduce yourself nonverbally to your partner.
- Select one object in the room and describe the various uses of that object in two minutes. Your partner will time you and count the number of uses you cite. Then your partner will repeat the activity.
- List (in three minutes) ten more uses of the object your partner has chosen.
- List the various attributes of a pen in your pocket.
- Share your image of and attitudes about modern art with your partner.
- Think of a creative person you know and describe that person (without naming him or her) to your partner. Your partner may ask you several questions.
- Choose an animal that best describes your role in your organization and tell your partner why you chose that particular animal.
- Share with your partner your reactions about the fact that, thus far, the program schedule has not been circulated to you.
- Imagine that plants and animals have been crossbred to produce planimals. Describe to your trio what life in this world looks like.
- Coin four new words using English and one other language you know. Give each a meaning and share with your partner.
- Decide how you would plant four rose plants so that the distance between any two is the same as that between any other two. Take three minutes to think about it and then share with your partner what processes went on in your mind.
- Describe the various associations the word arm arouses in you.
- Use anything in this room to prepare something you would like to give as a present to someone you like. You have ten minutes.
- Assemble in small groups and prepare a nonverbal skit to present your feelings and reactions to this lab.

USES OF A MICROLAB

A microlab can be used in different situations and in different ways. A practitioner can frame his or her own items depending on the kind of program being conducted. There are no rigid rules in using a microlab.

Some innovative trainers use microlabs not only in the beginning of a training program but also in the middle whenever they find the group to be frozen or inhibited, with no movement taking place. It is also possible to use the microlab technique continuously. For example, every day's program could begin and end with a short microlab. If used on a daily basis, the microlab could include items dealing with the previous day's concepts. Thus it could serve the purpose of recapitulating as well as of introducing.

Microlabs can also be used as closing mechanisms for training programs. A variation of the microlab is very commonly used at the end of achievement motivation training programs as a goal-setting exercise. This works as a good closing device and also sets a good climate for postprogram activity. Besides presenting a summary of the concepts and skills learned during the program, the items should be aimed at helping participants to transfer their learning to their job settings. The items could help participants to reflect on opportunities for using what they learned, problems they are likely to confront, strategies they could use to overcome these, review mechanisms they would like to try out, external help they might need, and other such dimensions.

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A STRATEGY FOR MANAGING "CULTURAL" TRANSITIONS: REENTRY FROM TRAINING

Art Freedman

Each person is a member of and lives in a number of very different social "worlds" or "cultures." People are members of their respective family worlds, community worlds, work worlds, and religious worlds. In the work world, people may be members of some special "subculture" like the hourly workers' union, first-line supervisors, middle management, or the executive group. Some may belong to several work subcultures at once; for example, a manager may also be a member of a professional association.

Usually people live in only one of these social worlds at a time. That is, at work they tend not to be conscious of the fact that they are, simultaneously, citizens of their respective communities and also members of their respective families. Occasionally, however, people do live in two or more worlds simultaneously. For example, this might occur in the following situations:

- when an employee asks the boss for a raise in order to maintain the family's standard of living in the face of spiraling inflation
- when work for the employer begins to conflict with the union contract or with the ethical standards of a professional organization
- when the disposable by-products of the company's manufacturing processes are found to be contaminating the community.

At times like these, people become uncomfortably aware of real conflicts among their own various vested interests. It becomes apparent that what is acceptable to believe and say and do in one world is often quite different from (and can be in direct conflict with) the values, attitudes, and standards of other worlds. We become conscious that what is O.K in one setting definitely is not O.K. in another. However, most of the time, people do not spend much time thinking about this paradox, probably because many people have been trained from early childhood to expect (without being consciously aware of it) that life is different in the different social settings among which individuals have to move as they engage in the process of living. Because such differences are expected, they are not surprising. When experience in life corresponds to expectations, there is usually the reason consciously to think about the paradox.

However, there are times when an unexpected conflict between what is expected and what is actually experienced is jolting. For example, new recruits in the military are

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often surprised by just how much they are expected to allow their thinking, behavior, and style of life to be controlled by superiors. A person put into prison or a mental hospital is shocked by the unusual, strange, and unexpected way in which the staff responds to his or her behavior—usually disconcertingly different from the way any other person has ever responded to that individual. Similarly, the tourist is often shocked by the enormous differences in expectations of behavior between citizens of a foreign culture and the citizens of his or her native culture.

Participants of a residential workshop often experience "culture shock" when they pass from their predictable, "real-life" worlds of family, work, social relationships, and religion into the temporary, artificial "foreign" workshop world and then back. Because most people who participate in such an experience do so voluntarily, presumably they hope to derive some personal learning from the event that they can use in their respective "back-home" worlds. However, the extent to which such learning is effectively and appropriately applied and maintained in participants' back-home environments is not clear. It has been demonstrated that, although participants derive a great many personal learnings from their workshop experiences, these learnings do not always hold up over time (Freedman, 1963).

APPLICATIONS

The concept and its related procedure discussed here may enable internal and external consultants, trainers, organizational managers, personnel specialists, and human-service providers to facilitate people's negotiation of a number of different types of life transitions. These could include temporary migrations into and out of such institutions as, for example, mental and general medical-surgical hospitals, prisons, residential rehabilitation centers, companies, foreign assignments, and residential communities, in addition to intense, experiential "cultural island" training experiences or the military.

Some examples of functional work groups might be (a) offshore oil/gas drilling crews; (b) crews for long-distance ocean-going vessels; or (c) engineering/construction crews working in a developing nation. Other application possibilities could include such situations as (a) taking a first job with a company after having completed college or a training program (e.g., for the hard-core unemployed); (b) being promoted within the organization; and (c) being transferred from one geographical-cultural location to another (e.g., the headquarters of a multinational company moves from New York City to Houston). Modifications could also be developed for one-time-only migrations such as permanent moves to a foreign country, a nursing home, or a hospice for the terminally ill.

ENTRY: MIGRATION FROM "NATIVE" TO "FOREIGN" CULTURE

Most often, when people find themselves in a "foreign" culture with which they have very little past experience, they generally—quite naturally—behave in ways that are

familiar to them. They do what they are already skilled in doing. When they discover that their behaviors—the things they say and do—and their expectations are not acceptable to the residents of the foreign culture, they first experience a sense of disconfirmation of their expectations or hopes. Then they are faced with a complex decision that cannot be avoided. They must decide whether to (a) continue to behave in the same ways they are used to, comfortable with, and skilled in (regardless of whether or not these ways are acceptable or tolerated in the foreign culture); (b) leave the uncomfortable foreign culture (either by returning to their native culture or by becoming "psychotic"); or (c) discover and adapt to the expectations of the citizens of the foreign culture—even if that means giving up, suspending, or modifying previous attitudes, values, and behaviors. If they choose the third option, they place themselves in the awkward and uncomfortable position of knowing little, if anything, about the new culture and having to learn everything about what it takes to get along there.

Many inexperienced participants in intensive workshops expect that their trainers will function like the leaders of the traditional, goal-oriented work groups with which they are familiar. When they realize that these expectations are not going to be fulfilled and that the trainers will not set agendas or tell them what to do or how to do it, participants tend to become extremely uncomfortable. In an attempt to allay their discomfort, participants frequently attempt to cajole, threaten, or implore the trainers to act according to their expectations. When these attempts fail, participants must assume responsibility for themselves in order to make sense of their experiences.

The "Pioneer" Experience

Those who choose to explore the foreign culture and adapt or accommodate themselves to it soon learn that their experience is analogous to that of the pioneer or explorer. What is not known about the new environment (the "foreign" culture) is much greater than what is known. And most of what is known consists of the individual's increasing awareness of his or her own restlessness, uncertainties, fears, hyperactivity, social errors, or misunderstandings.

Nontypical Behaviors

An increasing sense of tension develops, and out of this tension certain nontypical behaviors evolve. Attention narrows. Whereas in their familiar and comfortable native culture people may allow themselves to be open to all the sights and sounds and events that occur constantly around them, in the foreign culture their vision becomes selectively constricted (a sort of "tunnel" vision) and focused on only those events that correspond most closely with whatever their preoccupation is. For example, a person may feel unattached to and isolated from the foreign culture and may experience the need for a home base (a safe place to live) from which to venture forth and explore the new environment and to which he or she can withdraw when feeling overwhelmed or overextended. For this person such places as hotels, motels, rooming houses, apartment

houses, YWCA's, hostels, etc., will be most prominent, while other aspects of the environment will blend into the background.

Having established a "safe" home base, a person may now get in touch with the tensions that relate to being (or feeling) socially isolated, unattached, and alienated. In response to these feelings, the individual may initiate a search, perhaps by trial-and-error or in a frantic or calculating manner, for candidates who might be able and willing to serve as companions, escorts, guides, behavior models, and/or interpreters. Such people might be friendly citizens of the foreign culture, other caring migrants who are more familiar with the host culture, or simply other uncertain and searching migrants who seem to have similar needs. Schutz (1971) refers to this phase in the natural evolution of personal-growth groups as the "inclusion phase." This might also be called a search for a "mentor."

Decrease of Tension

Once one or more supportive persons have been found, the tensions and inner turmoil of the "pioneer" will probably decrease. This release will probably be experienced as joyous and freeing, enabling the individual to expand the limits of his or her vision enough to begin to see the way life in the foreign culture unfolds for its natives. This less-restricted vision will, in turn, assist the immigrant to identify and then modify or eliminate those aspects of his or her behavior that conflict with the host culture's norms and standards of acceptable behavior.

At first, attempts to experiment and practice with behaviors that are new will feel (and appear to others to be) awkward. People will probably feel visible, vulnerable, ungainly, and embarrassed. However, with practice, they will become rather proficient at the new behaviors and the new language. Even the new style of thinking will become natural, and they will almost automatically think, feel, and act in a way that is at least acceptable to the host culture's citizens. When this plateau—virtual automatic proficiency—has been achieved, people have adapted or become socialized to the foreign culture to which they have migrated.

REENTRY: MIGRATION FROM "FOREIGN" TO "NATIVE" CULTURE

If the migration is permanent, a major cross-cultural hurdle will have been successfully negotiated. However, when people have been temporary, transient residents (more than just tourists) and return from the foreign culture to their native culture, they will soon discover that their cross-cultural problems are far from over.

Conflict

On reentering their native culture without adequate preparation, people are likely to discover, much to their surprise, that they cannot simply pick up where they left off. Their friends, family members, and work associates did not go into hibernation when they were away. Not only that, those who stayed behind have no way of knowing what

the migrants went through or how they were affected by their experiences. Friends remember them more or less as they were when they left. In all likelihood, they are expected to be very much the same. However, to the extent that they really did allow themselves to become immersed in the foreign culture, they will not be the same people they used to be. They will walk, talk, think, and feel in ways that are strange and perhaps unheard-of to the citizens of their native culture. Thus, a situation with a surprisingly high potential for conflict between "foreigner" and "native" is created.

The conflict results from common human needs: People strive to create their worlds in ways that are comfortable to them. Comfort—relatively speaking—is what we feel when the world and the people in it behave in ways that correspond with our expectations: Our world is predictable, and we feel comfortable. When a discrepancy occurs and people act in an unpredictable manner, we become uncomfortable. Thus, as people try to put potential solutions for some of their back-home problems into operation, they are actually creating new problems for other people. The returnees are no longer predictable, and the citizens of the native culture become uncomfortable and attribute the cause of their discomfort to the migrant.

Disconfirmation

Very much like the feelings of the pioneer entering the foreign culture, the hopeful expectations of family, friends, and associates may be disconfirmed. However, the citizens of a person's native culture—to a much greater extent than those of a foreign culture—can be expected to exert a considerable amount of pressure on the returning culture-crossing traveler to give up his or her strange and unpredictable behaviors and to return to the comfortably predictable person they once knew.

It is a simple fact that our family, friends, and coworkers can have power to influence us only if and when we give them this "power" to determine our choices. We care about them, and we are concerned that our behavior might be displeasing to them and that they might withdraw from us. Our own human desires for acceptance and affiliation set us up to be perfect targets for subtle forms of blackmail and bribery. People who are important to us inform us that unless we return to our culture's traditional norms and standards, we risk being excluded and isolated. We may be asked to feel bad or guilty about what our behavior is "doing to" people about whom we care. But if and when (but not until) we "shape up," all kinds of nice things will happen for us.

During this reentry process, individuals' levels of comfort, effectiveness, and satisfaction dip down almost as far as when they first migrated to the foreign culture. However, after going through the same cycle of cultural-shock impact, recoil, and accommodation, their equilibrium becomes somewhat restored, low levels of effectiveness and satisfaction "bottom-out," and new but increasingly secure relationships begin to be established with the citizens of the native culture.

Renegotiation

To be enduring and meaningful, new relationships have to be based on the creation of new and mutually acceptable expectations: What can both sides legitimately expect of each other? This process becomes an explicit renegotiation of what used to be an implicit contract between people who want or need to live with one another in home, community, or work settings.

It becomes clear that the reentering, culture-crossing travelers will have to be prepared to modify their recently acquired "foreign" behavior. Most people would prefer that citizens of their native culture not reject, isolate, or expel them. However, in order not to give up the benefits derived from their travels, they will attempt to model their newly acquired behavior for their fellow natives—inviting their native culture's citizens to tolerate, then accept, and then, maybe, experiment with the new behavior themselves. This is the process by which transcendental meditation, t'ai chi ch'uan, the martial arts, Zen, acupuncture, and other aspects of Eastern cultures were probably introduced to the Western world.

THE W-CURVE HYPOTHESIS

In order to prepare people to leave a foreign culture and return to their native, back-home cultures of family, community, and work, it is helpful to explain the concept of transitions by presenting it in the form of a diagram (see Figure 1).

There are two points that the diagram illustrates that have not been discussed. One is hope: Without that, few people would bother to try anything new. They might be terribly dissatisfied with the current conditions of their lives, but without the hope that life does not have to be that way, people would tend to say something like "Better to live with the devil I know than the devil I don't." And they would sit dead still and endure chronic dissatisfaction or suffering.

The second point is that, in terms of levels of comfort, satisfaction, and effectiveness, the dips tend to be shallower and the peaks higher as people move from their foreign culture back to their native culture. It is this curvature that lends its name to this concept.

This model is especially helpful in providing workshop participants with some conceptual handles that they can use in reentering their "native" culture. This concept helps absorb a great deal of the tension and anxiety that participants tend to experience toward the end of a workshop when they begin to anticipate the reentry process. They begin to ask themselves, "How are my people back there ever going to understand me now? How can I let them know what I've been through here?" This model allows participants to anticipate the reentry "dip" and develop a plan that will reduce its depth.

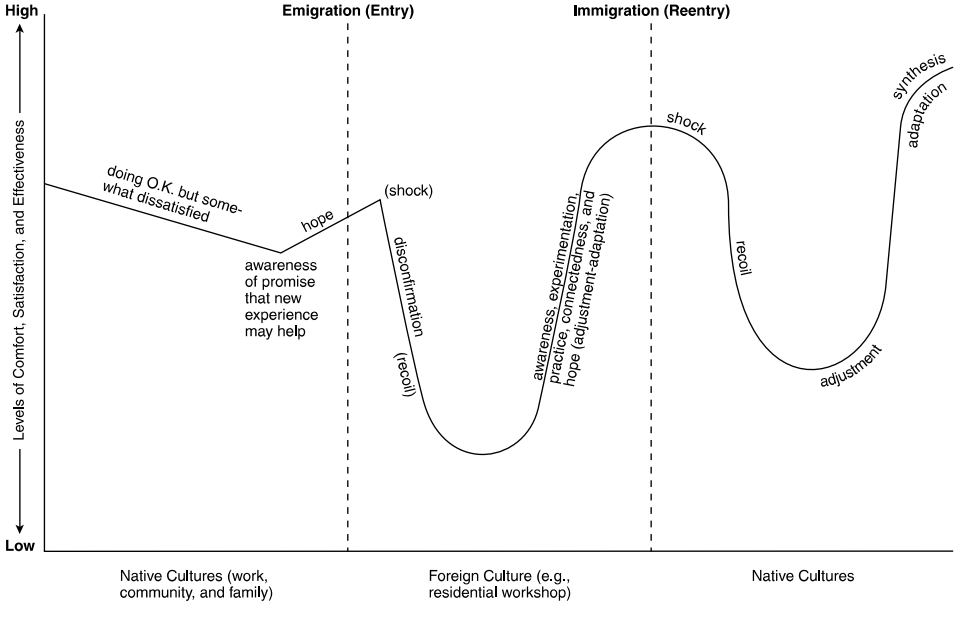


Figure 1. The W-Curve Hypothesis Model

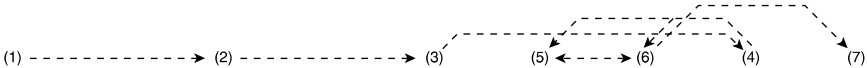
FACILITATING CROSS-CULTURAL MIGRATION: A SKILL-PRACTICE ACTIVITY

The following activity deals with both terminating a workshop experience and planning explicitly for reentry to participants' native cultures. It is best if participants have been given a thorough understanding of the W-Curve Hypothesis before they are guided through the following procedures.

1. Each participant takes several copies of the sheet "Preparation for Cross-Cultural Migration" (Figure 2). The facilitator works from an enlarged copy drawn on newsprint. In the total group, participants are asked to identify those normative behaviors within their "foreign" workshop community that they observe as (a) acceptable, encouraged, rewarded, or at least tolerated, or (b) discouraged, punished, confronted, or avoided. Those behaviors identified as acceptable and appropriate are listed by the facilitator on the newsprint under the heading of "Foreign Culture—O.K." Some examples might be: "to express my real feelings"; "to ask for feedback about behavior about which I am concerned"; "to accept responsibility for the consequences of my own acts"; "to experiment with new ways of trying to get what I want." Those behaviors that the group agrees are unacceptable and inappropriate are listed under the heading "Foreign Culture—Not O.K." Examples might be: "to say 'we' or 'you' when I really mean 'me'; to interpret other people's behavior"; "to ask a question when I'm actually trying to make a statement"; "to blame others for the consequences of my own actions." Participants then copy these norms and standards on their own personal forms. (A modification of the "Do's and Don'ts" norms questionnaire by Miles, reported in Schmuck et al., 1977, may be helpful to the facilitator in order to quantify comparisons.)

2. Working as individuals, participants next explicate the similarities and differences between the workshop culture's norms and those that exist in their own, personal, native cultures. They list these under the heading "Native Cultures," working on "family," "work," and/or "community" subcultures—whichever ones seem most meaningful to them. Participants are to indicate on their sheets whether the identified workshop culture's norms are (a) "the same" as those of the native cultures, (b) "different in some specific way, or (c) "not O.K." in one or more of their native cultures. For example, it might be O.K. to tell another workshop participant and one's spouse (in the native family culture) exactly what one is feeling, but in one's native "community" or "work" subculture this behavior may be thought to be definitely not O.K.

3. Still working as individuals, participants next specify in writing (in column 3) only those differences or discrepancies between the norms of the foreign workshop and the native cultures that they believe are really important obstacles likely to interfere with their trying out some new behaviors learned in the workshop and that they would like to eliminate or reduce in power. These should represent the native culture as it currently exists. For example, a participant may see the native norm that it is O.K. to express thoughts but not O.K. to express feelings as being a great obstacle that will interfere with his or her desire to become more personally expressive.



Foreign Culture	Native Cultures			Important Identified Discrepancies	Driving Forces	Restraining Forces	Change Objectives	Action Plans
	(A) *Family*	(B) *Work*	(C) *Community*					
O.K.	Not O.K.	Not O.K.	Not O.K.					
Not O.K.	O.K.	O.K.	O.K.					

Figure 2. Preperation for Cross-Cultural Migration

4. At this point, the participants are asked to join one or two other participants from whom they would like some consultation or to whom they would like to provide some consultation. The task for these consultation pairs or trios is to assist each person to formulate (in column 4) in very explicit and descriptive terms exactly how he or she would like the norms of a selected native culture or cultures changed. For example, a participant might say that the native subculture's norms should be that "it is not O.K. for people to impose their beliefs and desires on others"; "it is O.K. for people to strive to achieve their own potential in their own chosen style even if that style is different from the culture's traditions."

5. The next step is to begin to get some answers to the question "How can we get from 'here' (the present nonsatisfying condition) to 'there' (the way we would like it to be)?" Participants (in their consultation groups) are asked to specify in column 5 all those forces operating within the native culture that are driving or pushing the existing norms to change in the direction of the "Change Objectives." For example: "my own desire for the norms to be changed"; "my own dissatisfaction with current conditions in this native culture"; "my own and my family members' (friends', companions', associates') frustration and impatience with our culture's restrictive traditions."

6. At the same time that they are working on the driving forces, participants are also to specify in column 6 all those forces operating within the native subculture that interfere with or restrain movement in the direction of the change objectives. For example: "my own and my family members' (friends', companions', associates') fears that a change in our traditional norms will somehow destroy our culture entirely"; "reluctance to risk investing time and energy in a 'social engineering' project that does not have a guaranteed payoff"; "unwillingness of one or more key people to go along with the idea."

7. When all major driving and restraining forces have been identified, participants consider what they, personally, have the will and resources to do that might be likely to help eliminate or reduce the strength of one or more of the restraining forces identified in column 6. Specific actions are written in column 7, in sequence and with a date next to each action step indicating the deadline by which the specific action must be taken. For example: "On my return to my native culture (June 21), I will begin to model what I have learned about expressing my emotions, and I will express those feelings in the form of words. I will observe my family members (friends, companions, associates) closely to determine their response to my unusual self-disclosure. If they accept or even tolerate it, I shall express my feelings more frequently and intensively. I shall continue to watch their responses to my behavior, and when I observe someone experimenting with expressing feelings I shall make it a point to be obviously approving and accepting."

The writing and consulting phase of the model might be followed and supplemented by role playing or a psychodrama based on specific situations that the participants are anticipating. Situations to be role played should be selected on the basis of their reflection of common group concerns.

A shorter version of this design would consist of working only with columns 1 and 2 and then asking participants to discuss the similarities and differences between the norms of the foreign (workshop) culture and those of their own native (back-home) culture; to identify those differences that are likely to be real obstacles; and to consider what individuals can realistically do in order to eliminate those obstacles to the application of their workshop learnings.

CONCLUSION

In presenting this material, the facilitator might wish to point out that these concepts relate to all of us who find ourselves moving, with increasing frequency and rapidity, from one temporary social system to another (Toffler, 1970; Bennis & Slater, 1968). The unprepared individual can be expected to experience chronic migrational shock. However, through the use of the concepts and procedures presented here, people can learn to cope with and then overcome the impact of constant cultural migration so that the dips flatten out and a rising slope of satisfaction, effectiveness, and comfort gradually replaces the temporary peaks.

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FACILITATING SIMULATION GAMES

Myron R. Chartier

Experiential-learning methods are widely used as major training interventions by human relations facilitators. According to Gaw (1979, p. 147), "experiential learning provides activities that have the potential to involve the whole person in the educational process." As experiential communication devices, simulations potentially have the ability to convey a gestaltic awareness of a referent reality. Social-simulation games, which involve participants interactively in a simulated environment and create within them an awareness and understanding of social systems, are dynamic, operating models of human realities.

The purpose of this article is to provide the human relations facilitator with an overview of this highly involving technology. Three aspects are explored: viewing simulation games as simulated social systems, facilitating simulation games, and designing such games. The primary emphasis is on facilitation.

GAMES AS SIMULATED SOCIAL SYSTEMS

Simulations are attempts to simulate social realities (e.g., marital pairs, decision-making groups, organizations, neighborhoods, cities, nations, or groups of nations). Many behavioral scientists view such entities from a social-systems perspective (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Olsen, 1968). Any scientific attempt to understand a social organism as a system involves the observer in theoretical model building. Because of the complexity of social reality, critical variables must be identified and extracted from the whole. Such processes, however, tend to oversimplify social reality in order to make it comprehensible.

Definition of a Social System

A system is a bounded set of components standing in transactive relationship to each other. In a social system the whole is more than the sum of its parts. A simulation seeks to operationalize the transactive relationships of a social system so that its functions and processes may be observed and experienced. For example, "The Marriage Game" has to be comprehended in terms of two sets of elements: those in the society at large and those in the individuals making marital decisions. This game posits that marital interactions take place between persons who live in a world of external social facts, many of which have been internalized, affecting conceptions and values (Greenblat, 1975).

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Primary Components of Social Systems

Simulations seek to place the following primary components of social systems into an actual transactive relationship:

1. *People.* People make a system "social" rather than "mechanical." The ways people or groups of people interact with respect to the other basic components define the nature of a system with respect to kind (e.g., a family, a classroom, or a decision-making group) and quality (i.e., salubrious or pathogenic).

2. *Goals.* Because goals draw people together for interaction, social systems are purposeful. People develop social systems to accomplish their purposes, but goals vary in different social systems.

3. *Tasks.* To accomplish their goals, people have to perform certain tasks. Each social system has its task requirements, and they vary widely among social organisms.

4. *Structure.* In order to perform task requirements, social structure is necessary. This component is intermeshed with the other six. For example, the nature of the goals, the demands of the tasks, and the characteristics of people have a fundamental influence on structure.

5. *Resources.* Resources are needed to perform tasks and accomplish goals. These include people and their varied abilities, finances, time, space, and facilities.

6. *Values.* This component varies with the type of social system (e.g., loyalty in families, profit in businesses).

7. *Constraints.* The limits of a social system are defined by its firm (but alterable) constraints. These tenacious forces provide an ordered consistency in social systems.

THE NATURE OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS

Any one component by itself would fail to create a social unit, and changing any one component would redefine the system. The various elements acting on one another create a social system.

Social systems are open systems—that is, they receive inputs from the environment, process them, and send outputs back to the environment. However, they are also bounded systems, because they have boundaries that filter the inputs and outputs. Social units are in constant transactive relationships with their environments. In that sense they are adaptive; "they possess the ability to react to their environments in a way that is favorable to the continued operation of the system" (Hall & Fagen, 1975, p. 61).

Figure 1 is a verbal-graphic model of a social system. It portrays the various components and their transactive processes in relationship to one another and to the environment.

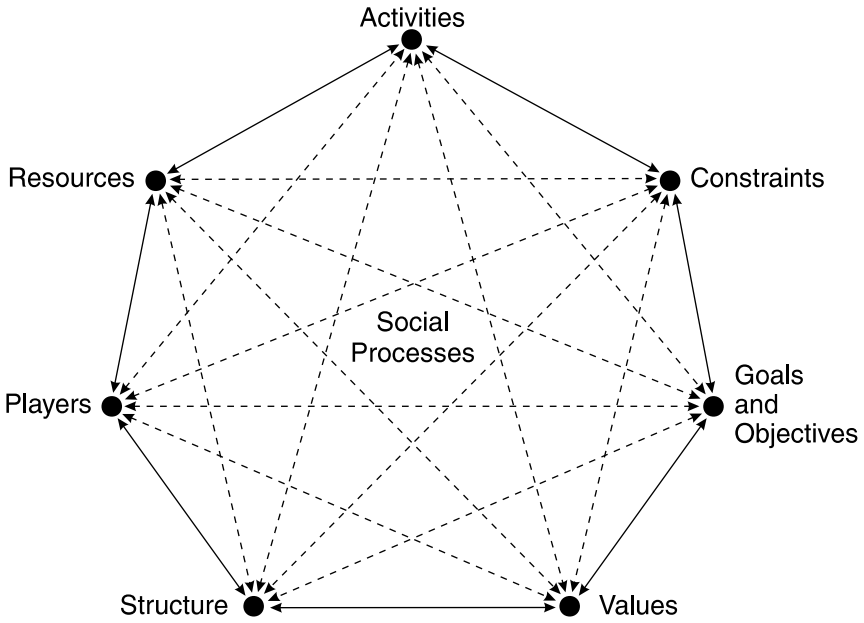

Figure 1. The Social-Systems Model

FACILITATING SIMULATION GAMES

Human relations facilitators who want participants to experience the complexity of a social system with its constant interplay of variables will find simulations a suitable technology. The games are available for the four major areas of activity in human relations—individual, group, organization, and community (Jones & Pfeiffer, 1975)—with a focus on personal growth as well as leadership, organization, and community development (Horn & Cleaves, 1980).

Evaluating Simulation Games

Most of the game manuals explain the theoretical model and state the principal objectives. After reading the rules and actually playing the game, the facilitator may discover other training values or conclude that the stated objectives have been exaggerated or that important concepts are oversimplified or neglected. The evaluation should also consider the abilities and interests of the potential participants, because simulations vary in subject matter, complexity, and sophistication.

The novice facilitator should use simple games to prevent frustration or disenchantment with games. However, the game must be difficult enough to challenge the participants. The room space and physical equipment required must also be considered. Some evaluation questions are provided in the appendix to this article to help in making decisions about the worth and suitability of a game in relation to training objectives, the abilities of the participants, and needed facilities.

Preparing the Facilitator

The key to a successful game experience is thorough preparation. The facilitator must discover what is being simulated and how the designer is attempting to bring these processes into operation through game play. This information is often included in the instructional materials that accompany the games.

As the facilitator studies the prepared materials, he or she should try to understand the interrelationships among the game components, which parallel the elements within a social-systems model (see Figure 1).

Players

The first component consists of the *players.* Answers to the following questions will provide needed information: Are individuals or teams used? Do the players assume a role as in role-playing games? How should roles be assigned? What is the optimum/minimum number of people who can play the game? Can the game be played by an odd number of players or must the number be even?

Goals and Objectives

The next component includes both *goals* and *objectives* and should provide answers to the following questions: What are the goals of the simulated processes? What educational/training objectives does the game provide for the players? Is the game structured to communicate concepts and their utilization, or is it structured to involve people in new feelings, attitudes, and/or behaviors? The goals and objectives may be the same or quite distinct. Goals may relate to the simulated processes, whereas objectives may be related to training.

Activities

Activities in a simulation game are related to the task requirements of a social system. Relevant questions include the following: In what specific tasks does the game involve players? Is there a sequence of activities? If so, what? Is the game played in cycles? How are the game activities related to the educational training objectives? What is required from the players? How much time is needed?

Structure

Simulation games and social systems require *structure,* which raises the following questions: What space and furniture arrangements are needed to create the simulated social dynamics? Is more than one room required? If players must move around, how much space is needed? Does the game require individuals or teams in special locations? Will the room accommodate the noise level of the activities?

Resources

The *resources* component consists of the game materials, which can range from sheets of paper (explaining profiles or scenarios for role playing) to game boards, poker chips, chance cards, score sheets, etc. The facilitator needs to know what these materials are and should find answers to the following questions: How are they related to each other? With which rules do they function? How are they related to the game activities? How much time is needed to set up materials for game play? Are there enough materials for the present purposes? What other resources and equipment are needed?

Values

Simulations—like social systems—have *values.* Some game instructions specify values, but others require the facilitator to discern the values by examining the other game components. The values may become apparent after the game is in progress.

Constraints

The *constraints* in a simulation game are its rules and procedures. A detailed study of the game rules will reveal how the game will function as a social system. Failure to understand the game rules and procedures can short-circuit the social dynamics of the entire experience, or even cause them to fail.

After the rules and procedures are understood, the facilitator needs to decide how these will be communicated to the players. Manuals for participants, which are sometimes included with the game, are usually quite brief, because participants are rarely told all the details in advance; they learn the details as they participate. Some games are marketed with sound filmstrips that give a general overview and brief explanation of the game rules, and others require the facilitator to instruct the players orally or to provide a summary of the rules in print.

Facilitator's Role

The facilitator must understand his or her role in the game, because he or she is responsible for the enactment of a simulated social system through game play. The primary functions of the facilitator are understanding and interpreting game rules, answering players' questions, encouraging participation and experimentation, helping players cope with uncertainty, and helping the participants to discuss and evaluate their experience.

After the game components and the facilitator's role are understood, defects and errors should be removed before the simulation is formally introduced in a training event. Several options are available:

1. Without actually playing a simulation game, a person can acquire a feel for it by playing the various roles and performing the activities.

2. Some simulation games need to be played in advance with several participants. These same participants could be assigned to major roles in the actual simulation or scattered among the teams so that they could help the slower participants.
3. A select number of people could be assigned the task of learning the rules, introducing the game to a group, and supervising the play. The facilitator would then be free to help participants integrate the game experience with selected training objectives by planning a postgame discussion and related activities.

Any of these options will decrease confusion and increase the positive training experience.

Preparing the Players

After the facilitator is thoroughly prepared, he or she must prepare the players by assigning roles, deciding on the number of players, and introducing the simulation.

Assigning Roles

In simulations with a role-playing component, there maybe little differentiation between roles (for instance, all may play the role of managers) or roles may vary in the degree of activity and aggressiveness required (for example, a small number may play management roles while the rest play workers). In the latter case the problem of casting arises. Casting practices vary from choosing numbers out of a hat to asking for volunteers, assigning roles arbitrarily, or deliberately assigning leadership roles to those who are natural leaders in the group.

Teams for a simulation should be heterogeneously grouped rather than homogeneously (Chartier, 1973). Participants' satisfaction with and performance in the game are maximized when competing teams have similar potential in game competition. Team role playing may be useful with slow or easily discouraged participants. Allowing a couple to play a single role decreases frustration at setbacks and provides the security of a teammate for decisions. Team efforts also accommodate more participants and may be especially advantageous with large groups.

Some games can be played more than once so that participants have an opportunity to play different roles and gain a better understanding of the simulated process. When multiple role playing is possible, it needs to be planned and encouraged.

Deciding Number of Players

The facilitator's manual usually indicates an optimum number of players. When groups become too large, participants lose interest, and training effectiveness is decreased because participants learn rules less efficiently, interact less, participate less actively, and make fewer moves (Chartier, 1973). With some games a large group can be divided into several subgroups. each playing separately and using a set of game materials.

Introducing the Game

The introduction will depend partly on the intended use of the game and on the training objectives. The facilitator must communicate two points: First, the participants need to understand the purpose of the game. If they have never played a simulation, the briefing could include a definition of "simulation," a comparison of simulation games with other games (such as charades), and an overview of the content and value of the game. Second, the briefing should include a clear, concise statement of how the game operates. The physical layout and game materials should be discussed. Rules need to be explained and, in some cases, demonstrated. A broad overview of the roles is useful. Knowledge of these factors helps to eliminate uncertainty. Overexplaining, however, will dampen the trainees' enthusiasm. Specific questions can be handled as they arise in the course of play.

The quality of this pregame briefing is likely to affect the participants' predisposition toward the game experience, their enjoyment of the game, and their acquisition of knowledge during the game. The facilitator needs to display enthusiasm and confidence in order to present the learning experience as attractively as possible.

Facilitating the Game

The primary task of the facilitator is to help the simulation function smoothly. He or she should circulate in the room to answer those questions related to the rules of the game. The participants should discover for themselves the points of game strategy, the values of game play, and the things to be learned from participation. The facilitator may ask the participants questions unrelated to the game in order to help them arrive at their own solutions. If the facilitator forgets a rule or if a rule is not discussed in the facilitator's manual, one can be created on the spot. If materials become misplaced, the facilitator's improvisation can save the game. Active participation on the part of players should be encouraged. The extent of participation by players is directly related to the degree of learning from and satisfaction with the game experience (Chartier, 1973). The facilitator can be many things—a referee, an enabler, a coordinator, a scorekeeper, a timekeeper, and/or an observer—depending on the game; in general, he or she must be imaginative and flexible.

Generally, it is unwise for someone to facilitate a game and participate in it at the same time, because facilitators who keep changing their own roles are likely to play the roles partially and poorly. If there is little to do but watch the action of the game, a facilitator may choose to participate as a player. If this is done, however, this person has relinquished the role of facilitator and has turned the control of game flow and the post-game discussion over to the group. There is nothing wrong with this, but one must be clear about what has been done and act accordingly. A person either facilitates the game or participates, but not both.

Discussing the Game Experience

People find the learning experience associated with games more satisfying if play is stopped periodically for group discussions (Chartier, 1972). After each discussion, participants can resume play and try alternate strategies or reinforce concepts learned during the game or in the group discussion. Although the facilitator's manual may suggest how a discussion needs to be handled, the questions depend on the facilitator's purpose.

Although there is no universal way to structure the group discussion, some suggestions may prove helpful. Because simulation games tend to generate a high level of interaction, participants need to discuss what happened during the game and how they feel about it. The facilitator is the key to the quality of the discussion. Participants often like to talk about a game in personal terms—"Who did what to whom?"—before going on to more substantive matters. This aspect of the discussion can be an important experience in gaining insights into interpersonal relationships. Because the interaction among participants is obviously genuine, it gives individuals an opportunity to express how they feel about how they were treated by others during the experience. This discussion should be cordial, and the basic worth of participants should never be questioned.

The facilitator should also lead the group in a discussion of the game model. This discussion gives the participants an opportunity to verbalize their understanding of the general principles underlying the simulation and to question or elaborate on the understanding of the others. During this phase the facilitator may—if appropriate—identify the winning teams or individuals and discuss the winning strategies.

A facilitator can use the participants' experiences in the game as a takeoff point for discussing the reality that has been simulated. This discussion process has at least two training payoffs: (1) It prompts participants to explicate their beliefs about the social reality being simulated, and (2) it provides an opportunity for the facilitator to confront participants with alternative ways of viewing the referent reality.

The facilitator should encourage participants to be explicit about their experience with and in the game and to examine this experience in relation to their views of real social systems. A leading question could be "How do you think the game (or some aspect of it) compares with the real world?" If the participants claim the real world is different, then the next logical questions are "How do you think reality is different?" and "Why is reality different?" Other ideas for discussing insights from simulation games can be found in Gaw (1979).

Possible Postgame Activities

One of the fundamental values of games is their ability to stimulate interest and conversation. The creative facilitator will take advantage of this and link it to other training experiences. The opportunities for interlinkage are limited only by a person's own perceptions. Following are a few suggestions:

1. After a group has played and discussed a simulation game, it may be motivated to pursue other activities related to the theme. For example, after playing "Dignity" a group may want to visit a ghetto and discuss life in a ghetto with the people who live there.
2. After playing a game the participants may want to change some of the game components or construct a new game. In "Generation Gap," for example, participants may like to change the issues for discussion between the parent and the teenager. They may include issues from their daily conversation or religious values and ideas. The teenagers may want to play it with their own parents.
3. Someone might be assigned to observe and report on the participants' behavior during a game. After playing "Starpower," which tends to bring out unjust, fascistic, or racist behavior in the squares, a group may become interested in a study of human nature.

DESIGNING SIMULATION GAMES

If a game that fits the training objectives cannot be located, a facilitator may design one. The designing process includes identifying training objectives, describing the social system, structuring the game, and writing the rules.

Identifying training objectives. Knowing what needs to be accomplished with a training event is the first step in designing a simulation. The most difficult task is to decide what aspects of a given social system to leave out and which to include. The game will be easier to design if the training objectives are clear, precise, and specific.

Describing the social system. The social system needs to be selected, carefully analyzed, and described with respect to its systemic components (players, goals and objectives, activities, structure, resources, values, and constraints). The analysis should define the social system by identifying the characteristics of the components, the interlinkages of the elements and their properties, and the operational processes of the diverse units with respect to the whole system.

Structuring the game. After the conceptual model of a social system has been explicated, the facilitator is ready to develop a simulation game based on these elements. The structuring process involves designing, testing, redesigning, retesting, etc., until the product is satisfactory. The designer should remember that "game design is not only not a science, it is hardly a craft, but rather an 'art' in the sense that we have no explicit rules to transmit" (Boocock & Schild, 1968, p. 266).

The designer begins by creating a rough game format that seeks correspondence between the simulation and a given social reality. Decisions are necessary on the ways that the primary components will interact with each other. As each component is placed in the game, its interface with other components needs careful consideration; the matching of each component with the others will determine the success or failure of the game. The degree of likeness in form between the game components and the social-

system components will determine whether or not the participants experience the simulated reality intended.

Writing the rules. Easily understood game rules are as important as the game structure. According to Livingston and Stoll (1973, p. 30), answers to the following questions will help the participants to understand the rules:

1. What social reality does the game simulate?
2. What is the purpose of the game?
3. What does each of the game materials represent?
4. How is the game set up for playing?
5. What is the order of game play?
6. What do the participants do during each step?
7. How might a participant play a typical round of the game?
8. How does the simulation end?

As the game is put into play, problems will appear that could not be anticipated. It is important to note the successful features of the game design as well as those that failed. In observing the game play, the designer should check for both *playability* and *realism.*

A simulation game is playable if it functions well as a game. Participants must desire to play it, and they must be able to engage themselves in it. It must be interesting, enjoyable, and easily learned. The game must also be manageable.

Realism involves three questions: (1) Does the game accurately represent those aspects of the real-life social system that it is intended to simulate? (2) Does it include the most critical aspects of the real situation and simulate them in sufficient detail? and (3) Does it provide a feeling of being in a real social situation? After the prototype has been tested for playability and realism, the necessary adjustments should be made. Each component needs to be examined to determine whether or not changes are required. Then careful attention should be given to rewriting the rules before testing the game again. Although further revisions may be necessary, participants can learn from an unfinished version of a game. Indeed, they may learn as much from suggesting revisions as from playing it in its final form.

CONCLUSION

Simulations are one of the most involving technologies available to the human relations facilitator. Social simulations are based on social systems and potentially can communicate holistic awareness and understandings. Facilitating such games requires careful preparation, skillful administration, and effective discussion. Designing simulation games requires theoretical model building of a social system, constructing a game based on the model, and a process of testing and redesigning.

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APPENDIX

Questions for Evaluating Simulation Games

A facilitator may find the following questions helpful in selecting a simulation game:

1. What is the name of the game?
2. What social system and processes does the game simulate?
3. What are the instructional training objectives of the game?
4. For what age group(s) is this game best suited?
5. How many players can this game accommodate? Is there a minimum or maximum?
6. What abilities do the players need?
7. Are mathematical skills required? How difficult are these procedures?
8. How complicated are the player activities? How difficult are the rules and procedures?
9. How clear are the instructions? Can everyone follow them?
10. Does the game provide a summary of the rules for the players? Would players need a copy of them?
11. How much space is needed? Will a room that accommodates noise be needed?
12. What equipment is needed?
13. How much time (minimum/maximum) is needed to play and discuss the game?
14. How much preparation time will a facilitator need?
15. In what educational/training context(s) could a facilitator use this simulation game?
16. Can the game be modified? How easily?
17. What is the cost of the game?
18. Do the game experience and the possible learnings justify the cost, the facilitator's preparation time, and the participants' learning time?
19. To what degree does the game adequately simulate a real social situation?
20. In what sense would the simulation game provide a valuable learning/training experience?

USING HUMOR IN WORKSHOPS

Joel Goodman

> There are three things which are real: God, human folly, and laughter. The first two are beyond our comprehension. So we must do what we can with the third.
> (John F. Kennedy)

> Humor is essential to any smoothly functioning system of interaction, to any healthy person, and to any viable group. Humor is, in the last analysis, no joke.
> (Dr. Gary Alan Fine, University of Minnesota)

Humor is serious business. It can serve as a powerful tool for leaders at all levels to prevent the build-up of stress, to improve communication, to enhance motivation and morale, to build relationships, to encourage creative problem solving, to smooth the way for organizational change, and to make workshops fun (Goodman, 1982).

WHY WE NEED HUMOR

In a workshop (or in consulting, teaching, or meetings), the participants are trying to learn new skills or to deal with important issues or to develop teamwork. If the workshop participants enjoy the experience, they will want to be there, they will be motivated to learn. Obviously, the leader or facilitator will enjoy the experience more, too, if humor is involved; and if the humor puts the participants into more receptive moods, the work of the leader will be made easier. Humor also conveys the message that the facilitator is a human being. If the facilitator can laugh with the participants and at herself or himself, it is much easier for the participants to relate to the facilitator. The use of humor decreases problems in discipline, increases listening and attention on the part of the participants, decreases the pressure on people to be perfect, increases retention (by freeing attention through laughter), and increases the comfort level in the workshop setting (by building interest and energy through laughter). The resulting positive attitude can greatly contribute to achievement and productivity.

Humor also is a powerful tool for enhancing self-confidence and for building empathy among people. In helping workshop participants to tap their own senses of humor, one helps them to develop an important skill for leadership and for dealing with challenges and problems. U.S. President Reagan's ability to use humor after the attempt on his life certainly is an illustration of this.

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Humor also makes it easier to hear feedback and new information. Humor gives us perspective on problems; it helps us to get away from a problem situation in order to see the situation and possible solutions in perspective. This is a very important skill for leaders and problem solvers of any type to have.

EIGHT BASIC TECHNIQUES

Education and enjoyment are not mutually exclusive. In fact, the synergy between learning and laughing will produce more learning and more laughter—a great formula for a successful workshop! The eight basic techniques that follow will help to introduce humor successfully into a workshop.

Environment

The first step is to create a positive context by creating a humor-filled environment. This could be as simple as setting up a bulletin board that contains cartoons, funny photographs, or humorous quotations related to the topic of the workshop. The participants can check this bulletin board before the workshop begins as well as during any breaks as a way to socialize and to recharge their batteries. The use of the bulletin board allows the facilitator to avoid being a stand-up comedian. (In fact, there are hundreds of ways to build humor into an atmosphere without having to tell jokes.) For example, participants who are addressing very serious issues might enjoy reading some tongue-in-cheek words from Woody Allen (1979).

> More than any other time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction. Let us pray we have the wisdom to choose correctly.

Enter

It often is helpful to begin the workshop by sharing a humorous personal anecdote and/or a humorous example that illustrates the theme of the workshop. For instance, if the goal of the workshop is to help the participants to improve their communication and conflict-resolution skills, the following anecdote would be pertinent:

> Lieutenant Tomb was invited to be interviewed by an admiral for a particular job. “Sit down, Toom,” said the admiral. “My name is pronounced ‘Tom,’ Sir,” said Tomb. “I didn’t ask you to speak,” said the admiral. “Now, Toom, when did you first become interested in nuclear power?” The Lieutenant replied, “Well, sir, I first became interested in nuclear power on the day that the United States dropped the first atomic boom.”

When people have opened their mouths to laugh, they are more ready to open their minds to learn.

Ear Ye, Ear Ye!

Listening is the key to hearty laughter. After the facilitator has set up a positive environment and modeled the sharing of humor, it often is helpful for the participants to share their own humor. This could be in the form of a "whip," in which each person would have a chance, in turn, to share briefly a humorous quotation, joke, or perspective on the topic at hand. For example, at a recent workshop on leadership, these little gems were contributed by the participants:

> If all the politicians in the world were laid end to end, they wouldn't reach a conclusion.
> Congress is so strange. A man gets up to speak and says nothing, nobody listens, and then everybody disagrees.
> (Will Rogers)
>
> An optimist and a pessimist are right about the same number of times, but an optimist has more fun.
> A committee is a group that keeps minutes and wastes hours.
> Procrastination is the art of keeping up with yesterday.
> To do a superior job, a good leader needs a plan and not quite enough time.
> Everyone talks about the weather, but no one ever does anything about it.
> (Mark Twain)

Bringing a humorous item to share could be an enjoyable "ticket of admission" to a session of the workshop.

Exercise

Humor is an invitation to mental, emotional, and physical exercise. There are hundreds of activities that simultaneously evoke thinking, imagination, and hearty laughter. If used in a well-conceived sequence (fun with a purpose, not just "playing a game"), humorous exercises can be excellent ways in which to help workshop participants to develop the skills related to their goals. For instance, in workshops that focus on creative problem solving, brainstorming often is taught as a specific skill. In order to help the participants to internalize this skill, it can be extremely helpful to have them use it first on problems that are not "close to home" (so that they can focus on the skill without concerning themselves about the problems). The following problems can be explored in introductions to the technique of brainstorming:

> What would happen if the human body were rearranged so that our mouths were located on the tops of our heads?
> What would happen if our eyes were located on the tips of our thumbs?
> What would happen if a popcorn popper didn't stop popping?
> What would happen if orchestras played colors, not sounds?
> What are all the ways you can think of to send love long distance?
> What are all the different uses you can think of for a rubber band (an "Exit" sign, old tennis balls, unmatched socks)?

Such exercises are wonderful for building creativity and for making it easy to learn new skills. It also can be fun for the facilitator and participants to create the exercises.

Exaggerate

This is a most important technique. Exaggeration can help to maintain perspective in a challenging situation or to illustrate a point in a humorous way. Exaggeration can involve the use of metaphors—for example, describing the group's difficulty in making consensus decisions as similar to trying to nail Jello to a tree or comparing the consequences of a negative interpersonal conflict to what garlic has done for the good-night kiss.

One effective way to utilize exaggeration is in teaching workshop participants a new skill. Sometimes it is most helpful to see in an exaggerated way how not to do something. For instance, in a session on "motivation," the facilitator might begin by role playing in an obviously exaggerated fashion the most unmotivating, boring speaker imaginable. One well-known activity on listening requires one participant to attempt to communicate something while the other participant engages in exaggerated nonlistening behaviors, ranging from obvious boredom to outright rudeness. In such cases, the exaggeration brings both behaviors and feelings into perspective without threatening the participants.

Energize

Humor is contagious. It provides a "shot in the arm" and is effective for warming up a group. It also provides a refreshing break (remember, the head cannot take any more than the seat can). A good example of an energizing activity is found in Weinstein and Goodman (1980); it is called Four Up. The directions to the participants are as follows: *"This is a game with very simple rules. We'll start sitting down. Anyone can stand up whenever she or he wants to, but you cannot remain standing for more than five seconds at a time before you sit down again. Then you can get right up again if you want to. Our objective as a group is to have exactly four people standing at all times."*

Enhance

Humor is a powerful tool; it can be used for constructive purposes or it can be used destructively. A few guidelines can be employed to help to determine if humor is being used to enhance the workshop. If the humor (either spontaneous or planned) is related to the theme of the workshop—as opposed to jokes for the sake of telling jokes—it is most likely to serve a constructive purpose. If the humor is used to encourage the participants' readiness to learn, it probably will make a positive contribution to the program. If the humor is in the form of laughing with people, rather than laughing at people, it probably will enhance the experience.

The checklist that follows can help to distinguish between laughing *with* others and laughing *at* others.

Laughing with Others	*Laughing at Others*
1. Going for the jocular vein	1. Going for the jugular vein
2. Based on caring and empathy	2. Based on contempt and insensitivity
3. Building confidence	3. Destroying confidence through put-downs
4. Involving people in the fun	4. Excluding some people
5. Letting a person make the choice to be the object of a joke (laughing at yourself)	5. Not letting a person make the choice to be the object of a joke
6. Amusing and inviting people (to laugh)	6. Abusing and offending people
7. Supporting people	7. Putting people down
8. Bringing people closer together	8. Dividing people
9. Leading to positive repartee	9. Leading to a "one*downs*manship" cycle
10. Poking fun at universal human foibles	10. Reinforcing stereotype by singling out a particular group

The workshop atmosphere and the participants' self-esteem can be enhanced by laughing with people and can be destroyed by laughing at people. As a famous man did not say: You can make fools of some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you will pay for it. Negative humor is costly. It probably also is unethical.

Extend

The goal of most workshops is to help people to extend their workshop learnings to their roles in their private lives or organizations. The use of humor in the workshop setting can help participants to realize the benefits of incorporating more humor and more laughter into their personal and professional lives. This realization can be enhanced if the facilitator initiates some of the following.

1. *A Humor Chain Letter.* Make up a roster of workshop participants. After the workshop, send something humorous (a cartoon, joke, or quotation related to some topic or theme that was raised during the workshop) to the first person on the roster. That person would then add something humorous and send both items to the next person on the list, and so on.

2. *A Jargon Dictionary.* This is one way for professionals to take themselves with a grain of salt. Individuals could make lists of common words or phrases used in their organizations, along with humorous definitions. Here are some examples from one group:

"Negotiate" = argue.
"I'm comfortable with that" = "I'm tired" or "I trust you to do the work."
"Brainstorm" = "No one knows the answer, but if we all talk at once . . ."
"Under consideration" = "The issue is dead."
"I'll have to think about it" = "I'll have to figure out how to get you to agree with me."

3. *Adding Some Magic—Literally.* Many magic tricks are excellent vehicles for illustrating ideas as well as for evoking laughter and a sense of wonder. Goodman and Furman (1981) suggest dozens of easy-to-do but impressive tricks along with hundreds of ways to use them in a workshop setting.

4. *The Court Jester.* On a rotating basis, have different people assume the role of court jester during the workshop sessions. The jester is responsible for providing an energizer or for injecting humor during a break (e.g., by doing a skit, by playing a funny excerpt from a comedy album, by sharing some of his or her definitions from the jargon dictionary). This helps to enable people to take themselves less seriously while continuing to take their jobs and responsibilities seriously.

5. *A Humor First-Aid Kit.* Laughter really is the best medicine! A humor first-aid kit should consist of guaranteed stimuli, e.g., favorite humorous sayings, a comedy record, cartoons, ridiculous photographs, or riddles. He (or she) who laughs, lasts!

CONCLUSION

The guidelines in this article (eight is enough) are some of the ingredients that can turn workshops into really enjoyable experiences, both for the participants and for the facilitator. Yes, it is possible to make sense of humor.

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THE USE OF THE TRAINING CONTRACT

H.B. Karp

Most trainers—whether they are working in house or in public, whether or not they are experienced, and regardless of program content or design—share a common concern: how to deal with participant resistance. Each participant in any program has unique reasons for wanting to be there or for not wanting to be there.

Participants' reasons for wanting to attend a training program generally are consistent. Primary goals are personal growth, wanting to learn, wanting to advance in the organization, or wanting feedback on one's progress. There also are more prosaic, but no less important reasons, e.g., a few days off the job, a break in routine, a chance to meet new people, or an opportunity to enjoy yourself on the company's expense account. Because such participants want to attend, the trainer has a relatively easy time accommodating their wants and usually can maintain a stress-free climate.

People's reasons for not wanting to attend a training program, on the other hand, are almost infinite. They may have been forced to attend, feel that they do not need the training, would prefer to be somewhere else, dislike the training environment, or have had negative training experiences in the past. These attitudes cause resistance, and it is quite difficult to eliminate them. However, there is a process for working with and reducing some of the participant resistance that most trainers face every time they work with a new group.

There are two types of participant resistance. The first is resistance to *training,* i.e., not wanting to attend the session. The second is resistance to *the program,* i.e., not wanting to stay. The first type of resistance stems from the fact that the participant does not want to be there in the first place; it has nothing to do with the trainer or the specific program. The second type focuses on what is occurring in the training program itself, the specific content, the trainer's style or personality, and similar variables. Until a trainer can deal with the first type of resistance, resistance to training, it is very difficult to deal effectively with the second type.

One of the most effective means of dealing with participant resistance to training is the use of the training contract (also known as a "psychological contract"). A training contract is an agreement between the trainer and the participants, freely negotiated and entered into, that defines the scope and purpose of the program as well as expectations of how people will deal with one another. The intent of the training contract is to provide a means of starting and proceeding together. The trainer should negotiate the training contract as soon as he or she has been introduced to the group.

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THE PURPOSE OF THE TRAINING CONTRACT

The training contract provides the trainer with more control over certain aspects of the program if the elements of the contract are negotiated before the program begins. (It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to change established patterns after the fact.)

1. *The training contract forces the trainer to be clear about what he or she wants from the program.* Trainers often become so concerned with the content of the program that they lose sight of the fact that the purpose of the program is not merely to present material but to present material so that the participants will learn it! Negotiating a training contract helps the trainer to obtain a perspective on the elements that will make the training a positive experience for both the participants and the trainer.

2. *The training contract allows the participants the opportunity to experience the trainer in a safe environment prior to the actual training.* Participants often attend training programs with preconceived ideas about what the trainer will be like. The sources of these stereotypes include past training experiences, the advertising brochure for the training event, and awareness of the trainer's background, degree, or education. These expectations rarely reflect the unique personal style of the trainer. The participants need to have the opportunity to let go of their preconceived notions so that they can experience the trainer as he or she really is.

3. *The training contract surfaces relevant information about the design.* The best that any trainer or training-needs assessment can do is to anticipate the needs of the participants. Negotiating the training contract allows the participants to tell the trainer what is relevant to them right now, which allows the trainer to modify the design if that is appropriate. If the original design is the most responsive, the contracting discussion will serve the purpose of allowing the participants to review it themselves.

4. *The training contract allows the trainer and the participants to set realistic expectations.* Participants who are eager to attend the training may have expectations that are so high, it is almost impossible to meet them. When this happens, the participant is disappointed, regardless of how good the training actually was. Contracting allows the trainer to help the participants to understand what is or is not available from the particular program and to establish mutual, realistic expectations.

5. *The training contract promotes contact and involvement.* Working on the contract as the first thing in the program allows more reticent participants to interact and become involved. It also allows the trainer to "unwind" and to identify participants who are silent or appear to be resistant. The contracting process allows the trainer to experience the participants as individuals, and this can help to make the situation less threatening and more relaxed for everyone.

ELEMENTS IN THE TRAINING CONTRACT

Each training contract is unique. The elements of the contract reflect the trainer's style, the goals of the training, and the program content. Although each situation is unique, there are seven areas to be addressed, regardless of the specific content, design, or characteristics of the program.

1. What Are the Objectives of the Program?

This consideration includes the learning objectives, subject matter, preferred theory base, specific skills to be gained by the participants, and format of the program.

Whether the program is conducted publicly or in house, most participants have some idea of the general topic to be dealt with in the program. The problem is that neither an advertising brochure nor a verbal description really tells the participants whether the material is relevant for them, what approach will be presented, what the trainer will stress, or whether they will be able to use the information presented.

A consideration of the program objectives not only gives the trainer an opportunity to answer such questions, it also allows the trainer to present the subject matter *before* engaging the participants in it. The trainer can listen to the participant's reactions and make any modifications in the design that are called for to tailor the program to the needs of the specific group.

2. What Does the Trainer Want from the Event? For the Participants? From Them?

These considerations deal with the interpersonal aspects of the program, for instance, how formal or relaxed the personal interactions will be, when and how feedback will be given to the trainer, to what extent active participation will be expected, and other expectations.

Because most trainers are in the field for some reasons other than the salary, it is important for the trainer to be clear about what he or she wants out of each training experience. Negotiating these elements with the group allows the group to become used to the trainer's style and personality. It also allows the trainer to structure the learning situation in response to the group, but in ways that are comfortable for the trainer, and to do so through negotiation rather than by imposition. For instance, if the trainer wants feedback throughout the program rather than just at the end, this can be stated early. Compliance then is anticipated. Concerns about equal participation on the part of group members also can be addressed before any patterns are set. One key to effective training is: "No surprises."

3. What Are Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviors?

The third consideration is the definition of what will be acceptable or unacceptable behaviors for the duration of the program. This element, above all, may not be imposed.

Some issues that frequently are addressed are: smoking, use of profanity, leaving and reentering the workshop, personal breaks, receiving phone messages, and lateness.

Each participant, as well as the trainer, has his or her own set of values and preferences. Imposing a "no-smoking" rule by edict can generate just as much resistance as can making the assumption that all enlightened people in this day and age are acclimated to the use of profanity.

The trainer who ignores these concerns before working with the group takes two risks. If the trainer does not address these issues because he or she assumes that nothing offends anybody anymore, the risk is that a number of participants will end up being offended. If, however, the trainer decides to make sure that nothing offensive or controversial has even a chance of occurring, the risk is of a very dull, low-key program. The paradox is that this is probably the most offensive thing that could occur.

The best way for the trainer to deal with this issue is to present his or her preferences openly and then *encourage* the participants to react to them just as openly. For example, the issue of smoking recently has become a rather "hot" topic. There are strong feelings on both sides. When this issue surfaces, rather than debating it, the trainer can stop the action and ask, "How many smokers are there?" Then the trainer can say, "I am willing not to smoke as long as two other people are smoking; how about it?" If the smokers agree, the trainer can ask the nonsmokers, "Is this all right with you for a start, provided that if it does not work, we will try something else?" Of course, this solution may not be to everyone's satisfaction, but the approach respects everyone's views and needs. Even more importantly, it indicates that people can find ways to work together.

4. How Will Conflict/Questions/Differences Be Handled?

The fourth consideration is of how disagreements will be handled during the program. The relevance of this element will vary with the content of the program; for example, few disagreements are likely to arise during a program on basic nonparametric statistics, but the issue could be critical in a program on clarifying values in the organization.

Some concerns that need to be addressed are: whether disagreement is relevant in this format, whether all questions are welcome, how differences will be confronted, guidelines for handling conflict, and what issues are or are not open for argument. Negotiating and clearly defining these factors will provide the trainer with more control in situations in which debate is wanted as well as in situations in which it is not wanted.

The material that the trainer is presenting initially may be perceived as controversial but often will become clear once the trainer has had time to explain the concept. One way to deal with this is to tape a sheet of newsprint to the wall, with the heading "Problems." The agreement to be negotiated is that if a participant has a problem with anything that is being said, he or she will state it and the trainer will list it on the paper and then continue with the presentation. All problems on the sheet will be discussed thoroughly once the presentation has been completed.

The greatest benefit of this consideration to the trainer is that the participants usually feel less inclined to play "get the trainer."

5. Who Is Responsible for What?

Unless the trainer is very specific about this at the beginning of the program, there is a high probability that some participants will be unnecessarily confused or disappointed. The issues here deal specifically with what the participants can expect from the trainer and what the trainer can expect from the participants.

Some clear areas of trainer responsibility are: knowing the subject matter, being responsive to participants, upholding the contract, and maintaining established time frames. Participant responsibilities include: learning, making their needs known, participating, and returning from meals and breaks on time. Many participants enter a training program with unrealistic expectations about what the trainer will provide; they sit back, dump all responsibility for their learning on the trainer, and assume the role of "judge." The trainer can clarify this issue by saying something such as "My job is to keep the trough full; your job is to drink when you are thirsty" or "My job is to present the material, and your job is to absorb it; if you finish your job before I finish mine, please let me know!"

Clear distinctions must be made between the trainer's areas of responsibility and those of the participants. There can be no overlap. The participants will assume whatever they wish to; it is up to the trainer to provide the needed clarity.

6. What Will Be Negotiable and Nonnegotiable?

This includes consideration of content and design matters, testing (if relevant), the training contract itself, individual learning needs, starting and ending times, and group and individual participation.

This trainer has primary responsibility for the content and design of the program. Only the trainer is fully aware of the content and thrust of the program and only the trainer knows which elements of the design are critical to the success of the program and which can be modified or eliminated, should the need arise. The issue of what is and what is not negotiable is extremely important in this regard.

Negotiability also is of importance in the process areas. Individual willingness to participate will sometimes change during the course of the program, new interests may emerge, or interpersonal issues that were not anticipated may arise. The trainer has more control over the process if he or she is clear at the beginning of the program about what is to be negotiable. In some areas, this gives the participants more responsibility, which is a desirable factor in the learning process.

Although, in theory, some parts of the design are not negotiable because of their critical impact on the objectives of the program—e.g., a communication module in a leadership development program—most trainers know that, in reality, everything is negotiable. An example of this occurred in a three-day, team-building program for supervisors and managers of a large chemical plant. The trainer had established a good

working relationship with the group. The last part of the design—and the most critical—was a tower-building activity that was designed to integrate all the learnings that had taken place. The instructions were given, and both subgroups began the activity. The trainer stayed with one group for about twenty minutes and then went to check the progress of the second group, only to find that the participants had rejected the task. When asked what had happened, their response was, "We are adult managers and we do not play with Tinkertoys® !" (The first group was enjoying the activity.) The trainer's response to the second group was: "I understand your objection, and it is O.K. Perhaps you could use this time to good advantage by discussing your resistance to the activity and what, if any, implications there are to the work setting." When the trainer checked back with the group about fifteen minutes later, the members had *chosen* to return to the task that they had rejected. In fact, they accomplished the task rather well.

7. Nuts and Bolts Issues

The last set of considerations includes: meals, breaks, physical arrangements, and environmental concerns such as air conditioning and open or closed doors.

The environment in which the training takes place impacts the overall satisfaction of the participants. The effectiveness of the training can be diminished if the surroundings are not comfortable and supportive. Participants usually have preferences about when breaks should occur and how long they should be. Some participants prefer to start early and end early. Clarity about the trainer's preferences and an opportunity for the participants to respond allow the trainer to make changes that result in the participants being more comfortable while indicating to the participants that the trainer also respects—and is responsive to—their preferences.

The Best/Worst Option

For a program of less than two days, the type of contract suggested here is sufficient to provide the trainer with the needed control. If the program is two days or longer, an additional contracting procedure can be beneficial. This procedure is the "best/worst option"; it takes thirty to forty-five minutes. In this procedure, the specific format of the program is not disclosed in the context of the contract. Once the contract is made, the participants are asked to write a very brief, very specific answer to each of the following questions:

1. Between now and the close of this program, what is the best possible outcome that could occur for you, here, in these (three) days?
2. Between now and the close of this program, what is the worst possible outcome that could occur for you, here, in these (three) days?

These questions can be modified, e.g., "What would you like to happen/not happen?" or "What would you like to obtain/avoid?" Each participant is then asked to disclose his or her answers to each question, and the trainer posts all answers on a sheet

of newsprint. After all participants have responded, the trainer discusses the format of the training program.

One advantage of the best/worst option is that it allows the trainer to make any needed modifications to the program format before it is disclosed. Secondly, in eliciting the "worst" expectations from each participant, the trainer can ask, "What will *you* do to make sure that your worst expectation does not become reality?" This forces each group member to take responsibility for his or her own outcome. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, this option allows the trainer to make one-to-one contact with each participant before the program starts. This helps to "humanize" the relations between the trainer and the group members. Finally, the best/worst option provides a springboard for feedback during the program. At any point in the program, the trainer can say, "Get in touch with your 'best' and your 'worst.' Are you moving toward your 'best?'; if not, how are you stopping yourself?" Or, "In terms of moving toward your 'best,' what are you getting or not getting, so far, that you need?"

A SAMPLE CONTRACT

The following is a generic contract that can be used for training in most areas of human resource development, e.g., leadership, conflict and resistance, and team building. It is offered as an illustration of the process and would be modified for each particular situation.

CONTRACT

1. **My function.**
   a. To present you with a set of alternatives.
   b. To provide you with a safe opportunity to test these alternatives.
2. **Everybody has a right to support his or her own views and values.**
   I value your disagreement as much as I value your agreement.
3. **We share responsibility for the outcome of this program.**
   a. Me: to be competent and to be responsive to your stated needs.
   b. You: for what you learn here.
4. **The bugging rule.**
   a. If I say or do anything that puzzles or offends you, tell me when it happens.
   b. I will do the same for you.
5. **The bored rule.**
   If you really are bored, yell, "BORED." I will ask, "Who else?" If 20 percent or more of the total group responds, I will take five minutes to finish what I am doing. If less than 20 percent respond, you will wait five minutes before trying again.
6. **The design of this program is flexible.**
   I am here to be a resource to you. Stay in touch with your needs and let me know if they are being met.
7. **Somber versus serious.**
   I am here to have fun. Do not confuse my lack of somberness with not taking what I am doing seriously. I just do not take myself too seriously.
8. **Take care of your own physical needs as they occur.**
   We will break formally when it suits our work.
9. **This contract is always negotiable.**

Figure 1. Sample Contract

CONCLUSION

Contracting is an essential element in reducing participant resistance to training. Although it probably is impossible to eliminate all the resistance a participant brings to a training session, the training contract provides a means by which much of it can be reduced to a workable level.

There are a few guidelines that will help to make the contracting process relatively easy to manage. First, in an ongoing program, the contract must be negotiated only at

the beginning. During subsequent sessions, it merely is put back up on the wall with the reminder that it is still operative. Second, the trainer must be clear about what he or she wants from the contract. The clearer these preferences are, the easier it will be to negotiate with the group. Third, negotiating the contract is the first thing that the trainer should do after saying "Hello" to the participants. Finally, the contract must be negotiated, never imposed. The participants must be able to contribute their ideas, as well as responding to the trainer's.

VIDEOTAPES AND VICARIOUS LEARNING: A TECHNOLOGY FOR EFFECTIVE TRAINING

Dennis A. Gioia and Henry P. Sims, Jr.

Stand-up lectures and other training techniques that worked in the past are not always effective now. Members of modern organizations are more sophisticated and demanding; they know more and they expect more from their instruction. In particular, they expect more mental and visual stimulation from the training process.

Most trainers know that experiential activities are the basis of many modern training methods. When participants become actively involved in learning-by-doing experiences, the potential for transfer of learning is enhanced. However, retention of learning depends to a critical degree on the cognitive debriefing that follows the experiential activity. If the debriefing is not effective, training participants may not retain much learning past the end of the program. Techniques that strengthen the debriefing process certainly can enhance learning and development. Therefore, the approach presented in this article combines theoretical knowledge with learning through experience as well as learning through example by means of "modeling" videotapes.

AN INTEGRATED TRAINING TECHNIQUE

This integrated approach to effective learning is based on several fundamental assumptions. One is that people in training programs learn better if they can see progressive interconnections among: (a) the concepts they are trying to learn, (b) the practical experience of trying to apply those concepts, and (c) the vicarious experience of watching others apply those concepts.

A process of continuous refinement of this new, integrative technique—in university classes at all levels as well as in numerous organizational training and executive-development programs—indicates several conclusions about effective ways to teach specific concepts. First, the best way to introduce concepts is to deliver a brief "lecturette"—a tightly packaged, fifteen- to thirty-minute presentation of a particular idea. Second, the use of a role-play simulation is a very effective technique for experiential learning. Third, a most effective means of learning by example is the demonstrative videotape. The rationale behind this integrated lecturette/role play/video approach to training can be summarized as follows:

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1. Most working adults find value in a theoretical framework with which to understand concepts (hence, the need for the lecturette).
2. People learn most effectively when they can experience the concepts first hand (hence, the need for the role play or other experiential activity).
3. People retain learning most effectively when they can vicariously watch a model enact appropriate behaviors (hence, the need for the videotape).

This third point is based firmly in social learning theory (Davis & Luthans, 1980; Manz & Sims, 1981; Sims & Manz, 1982a, 1982b, 1984). The practical essence of social learning theory is the use of vicarious learning or "modeling" as a basis for permanent learning. The efficacy of modeling as a teaching and learning technique has been demonstrated widely (Bandura, 1977; Gioia, Brass, & Sims, 1981; Gioia & Sims, 1982; Latham & Saari, 1979; Sims & Manz, 1982a). We believe that these benefits of modeling can be transferred effectively to the training forum.

Most trainers, facilitators, and consultants are competent lecturers; many are effective role-play facilitators; but only a few are expert in using and interacting with modeling videotapes. To complicate matters further, it is one thing to argue for the use of models in training, it is quite another to find appropriate examples to use. Finding them in movies is time consuming and a logistical mess. Directing participants to *think* about specific characters on television lacks teaching control and depends on everyone being familiar with the characters used as examples. A very effective way to demonstrate concepts using modeling is to create the examples (write scripts) and videotape people using the behaviors. In this way, the modeled behavior can be associated with specific concepts.

Presenting the Theoretical Concepts

Although modeling videotapes can be created to demonstrate almost any concept pertaining to management or organizational behavior, we will use two topics as examples in describing the steps in producing modeling tapes for training:

- The effective use of contingent positive and punitive verbal behavior by a manager (Sims, 1977, 1980);
- The effective use of goal setting by managers and subordinates (Latham & Locke, 1979).

When teaching these concepts, we ask several training participants to role play an MBO performance-appraisal interview between a manager and a subordinate. (It is expected that the use of contingent verbal behavior and the setting of goals will be less than optimal.) A critique then is provided by observers of the role play (the other members of the training group) who have been asked to focus on several analytical questions: (a) What is the manager doing effectively in terms of verbal behavior toward the subordinate?; (b) What is the manager doing ineffectively with the subordinate?; (c) What do you predict will be the effect of the manager's behavior on the subordinate's

performance and job satisfaction?; and (d) How would you feel about working for this manager? It sometimes is helpful to use a portable videotape camera in order to be able to replay the role play so that participants can concentrate on pertinent behaviors. The group members then discuss the points raised in response to the role play and/or videotape replay.

After the participants have been exposed to the experience and a lecturette, we show a series of four short (three- to eight-minute) videotapes that demonstrate "right" and "wrong" ways for managers to make positive, punitive, and goal-setting statements. Respectively, these four tapes focus on:

1. Noncontingent, positive reward behavior;
2. Noncontingent, punitive behavior;
3. Goal-setting behavior (without positive or punitive feedback behaviors); and
4. A combination of the effective use of contingent verbal behavior and goal setting.

After showing each tape, we ask the trainees to critique it. We also provide theoretical lecturettes on contingent verbal behavior and the use of goal setting. In discussing contingent verbal behavior, we stress that employees are rewarded only when they do something well and reprimanded only when they do something poorly. We also emphasize that rewarding and reprimanding are past-oriented, backward-looking activities. In discussing goal setting, we emphasize the setting of specific, challenging goals that will be accepted by the employee and can be measured by the manager. We also stress the use of participative goal setting whenever possible. Finally, we emphasize that goal setting is a future-oriented, forward-looking activity.

CREATING TRAINING TAPES

There are at least two approaches to producing training tapes: the studio method (using professional production services and/or techniques) and the shoestring method (using participants from training programs and home video equipment).

The Studio Method

Videotapes produced by the studio method have high technical quality and a "slick" professional appearance, in part because they benefit from the use of trained actors and video technicians. The main drawbacks of the studio approach are the increased cost of production and the need for coordination of the activities involved in producing the tape.

There are several major steps in making professional-looking tapes in the studio; these are summarized as follows:

1. Decide what concepts you want to demonstrate with the modeling tape (e.g., contingent verbal behavior and goal-setting techniques).

2. Think of a scenario that depicts the points you want to make, then write a simple, skeletal script for the scenario. It is not necessary to make the script detailed; in fact, good actors often can do a better job with only a minimal script. (An example of one scenario is presented in Figure 1.)
3. Arrange for access to a sound stage/studio. This is not as difficult as one might assume. Many universities have television production facilities that can be used for relatively minimal cost. (Often, the cost of tape production can be covered by normal teaching-expense budgets, and the tapes can do double duty if used to teach management classes). If you are not affiliated with a university, you may be able to make the tapes available for university use in exchange for permission to use the university's studio. If these options are not available, you will need to rent a studio (and its technical personnel). This is expensive, but is worth the cost if it results in tapes that you can use repeatedly. You also can minimize the cost with some advance planning and rehearsal.
4. Hire actors to perform the role-play scenarios that you have written. A simple notice posted in a university theater department or at a local theater will result in a quick response, and the cost of hiring competent, amateur actors usually is very reasonable.
5. Arrange a rehearsal session with the actors to go over the scripts that will be videotaped. With trained actors, this usually can be done in a few hours or an evening. This is an important cost-saving step: the more rehearsal done at this time, the less time (and money) will be required in the studio.

   Give the actors an idea of what you want to portray. Be specific about the things you want to be said or done exactly as written, but also let the actors know where they have freedom to ad lib. Some of the most realistic elements of the videotaped presentation often emerge when the actors add their own nuances to the script.

   In our example, only one script was written, but the actors were coached to behave differently within the four variations of this script. In every variation, the level of performance on each objective was the same, the actors were the same, and the setting was the same. The only major variation was in the verbal behavior of the "manager" toward the "subordinate." For the noncontingent, positive tape, the manager actor was coached to reward the subordinate verbally no matter what the subordinate's level of performance on the objectives was. For the noncontingent, punitive tape, the manager was coached to find something wrong with the subordinate's performance on each objective. For the goal-setting tape, the actor was directed to be goal oriented and to avoid giving either positive or punitive feedback. Finally, for the combination tape, the actor was directed to reward or punish the subordinate verbally, contingent on the subordinate's level of performance, and then to follow this evaluative behavior with goal-setting behaviors.

Role Sheet for Stacy Wagner

Setting

The scene takes place in your office. You are vice president and general merchandise manager of Hanaces Department Store Company. Hanaces is an independently operated division of Universal Department Stores, Inc., one of the largest full-line department-store corporations in the country.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the job objectives of Kim Singer, the divisional merchandise manager, whom you supervise.

Stacy Wagner (Your Role)

You are vice president and general merchandise manager of Hanaces Department Store Company and report directly to Lee Grane, the president of the company. You have a bachelor's degree in business from the state university and have participated in numerous executive-training programs during your career. After graduating, you worked for another department-store company for several years. You also worked for several years for a furniture manufacturer that supplied department stores across the country.

You came to Hanaces five years ago and have been instrumental in the growth of the home-goods part of the business. A key element in this growth is the operation of the furniture division, which currently is headed by Kim Singer.

Information About Kim Singer

Kim Singer is the divisional merchandise manager of the furniture division. Kim has a bachelor's degree in marketing from the neighboring state university and spent a few years working after graduation—primarily as a buyer—for another department-store company. Kim came to Hanaces one and one-half years ago to assume the position of divisional merchandise manager.

Scenario for Stacy Wagner

The date is July 12.

Kim Singer, divisional merchandise manager of the furniture division, enters your office.

You establish the purpose of the meeting: to review the objectives for Kim's division. These objectives were established last January. The objectives are:

1. *Prepare an advertising plan for the second half of the year and submit a report with budget, timing, and themes by June 1.*
   This plan was completed on time. Overall, you approved and agreed with the plan. However, you have had some complaints from the advertising staff regarding their work with Kim on the January-to-June advertising. Kim seemed to disagree with many of the specific ads, which caused problems in regard to their timely release.
2. *Increase the markup on merchandise from 43 percent to 44.5 percent for the first six months.*
   ("Markup" is the percent of the final retail price that is above the direct cost of the item.) The final figures were 44.1 percent for the six-month period.
3. *Complete an analysis of merchandise in-stock and on the floor by March 15.*
   This analysis was completed on April 10.
4. *Increase sales for the division by 3 percent over last year (for the first six months).*
   The actual increase was 3.3 percent.

You bring the meeting to a close. Kim leaves the office.

Figure 1. Sample Role Sheets and Scenarios for Modeling Videotape

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Role Sheet for Kim Singer

Setting

The scene takes place in the office of Stacy Wagner, vice president and general merchandise manager of the Hanaces Department Store Company. Hanaces is an independently operated division of Universal Department Stores, Inc., one of the largest full-line department-store corporations in the country.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the objectives of your division.

Kim Singer (Your Role)

You are the divisional merchandise manager of the furniture division of Hanaces Department Store Company. After graduating from a neighboring university with a degree in marketing, you spent a few years with another department-store company, most of that time as a buyer. You came to Hanaces one and one-half years ago to assume the position you now hold.

Information About Stacy Wagner

Stacy Wagner is your immediate boss. Stacy reports directly to Lee Grane, the president of the company. Stacy has a bachelor's degree in business from the state university and has participated in numerous executive-training programs. After graduation, Stacy worked for several years for another department-store company in the state, and also worked for a furniture manufacturer that supplied department stores across the country.

Since coming to Hanaces five years ago, Stacy has been instrumental in the growth of the home-goods part of the business. A key element in this growth has been the operation of the furniture division, which you now manage.

Scenario for Kim Singer

The date is July 12.

You enter the office of your boss, Stacy Wagner, general merchandise manager for home goods.

Stacy establishes the purpose of the meeting: to review the objectives for your division. These objectives were established last January. The objectives are as follows:

1. *Prepare an advertising plan for the second half of the year and submit a report with budget, timing, and themes by June 1.*
   The plan actually was submitted on May 21, about a week ahead of schedule. You believe that the report was done well and contained the necessary information. Overall, you believe that the advertising program has gone well despite an occasional lack of cooperation by the advertising staff.
2. *Increase the markup on merchandise from 43 percent to 44.5 percent for the first six months.* ("Markup" is the percent of the final retail price that is above the direct cost of the item.) The final figures for the first six months were 44.1 percent. Although you believed that this objective was realistic when you defined it six months ago, the economic situation was not quite as strong as you had anticipated.
3. *Complete an analysis of merchandise in-stock and on the floor by March 15.*
   This analysis was not completed until April 10. Your time had been consumed by the day-to-day problems of the division, and you let this slip beyond the target date.
4. *Increase sales for the division by 3 percent over last year (for the first six months).*
   You exceeded the target and achieved an increase of 3.3 percent. You believe that the achievement of this objective resulted from better buying and the improvement in the advertising program for your division.

Stacy brings the meeting to a close. You leave the office.

Figure 1 (continued). Sample Role Sheets and Scenarios for a Modeling Videotape

6. After rehearsal, spend some time with the director or production manager who will supervise the technical aspects of producing the videotapes. Tell this person what you want to achieve and what you would like to depict, and listen to his or her recommendations about staging, props, lighting, and camera angles. With good rehearsals and advance consultation with the technical director, you probably can shoot all your scenarios in two or three "takes" in a few hours.
7. After the shooting, look at the takes, select the best ones, and make note of any editing you want to do to the scenarios. The studio then can electronically edit your choices onto a training master and produce a final tape for your next training program.

Although this process does take time, video production is a very exciting and rewarding process.

The Shoestring Method

In most ways, the shoestring method is similar to the studio method, but there are two significant exceptions:

1. The actors are not professionals, but are colleagues who have volunteered to play the roles in the scenarios. Once you have written the preliminary scripts for the scenario(s), it is a good idea to try them out in a training program, even to the point of directing multiple trial runs and having the training group critique the interactions. After a few such trial runs, the best role-play actors in the group can be identified and enlisted. The sequence of steps in producing the training tapes is essentially the same as in the studio method.
2. The other difference is that you will use home video equipment to film and record the role plays, rather than using a professional studio and cameras. All the modern video systems are easy to operate, and the simplest strategy is to set the camera on a tripod, choose one angle that captures all the actors in the scenarios, and just turn the camera on. Variety can be added to the presentation by using the zoom-in option, taking close-up shots of the actors as they are speaking, changing the subject of the shot, and using wide angles for the beginning and end of the scenes.

Obviously, a portable videocassette recorder (VCR) is preferable for showing the tapes because it can be transported to any training location. Special features such as forward and reverse search and a pause mode facilitate training because they allow the facilitator to interact with the tape, to find and replay particular bits of action, and to stop the tape at critical places in order to emphasize points. In addition to a camera and a portable VCR, a light bar and a tripod are necessary pieces of equipment.

Regardless of the method used to produce training tapes, if well planned, they can significantly enhance the effectiveness of the learning experience.

THE TRAINING PROTOCOL

The following is a summary of the three steps in this integrated approach to training, using the topical examples presented earlier.

The Experiential Activity

1. Members of the group are chosen to engage in a role play based on a scenario before any lecture is presented on the topic of effective verbal behavior. The role play is enacted.
2. The nonacting participants serve as observers and make notes about the verbal behaviors of the "manager" and the "subordinate."
3. A discussion of the verbal behaviors is conducted.

The Lecturette

A fifteen- to thirty-minute lecturette is presented on contingent positive and punitive behavior and on the research findings concerning goal setting. Often, the lecturette is broken into smaller components that are presented between tapes.

The Modeling Videotapes

To emphasize the points made during the activity and the lecturette, the modeling videotapes are shown. Although the tapes can be shown in any order, the following has been found to be effective, with a discussion conducted after each tape.

1. The noncontingent, punitive tape—to demonstrate behavior that generally is detrimental to employee satisfaction and performance (i.e., a "least effective" verbal behavior).
2. The noncontingent, positive reward tape—to demonstrate verbal behavior that has a generally positive effect on satisfaction but a somewhat detrimental effect on performance (i.e., a "less than optimal" verbal behavior).
3. The goal-setting tape—to demonstrate verbal behavior that has a generally positive effect on performance but which, when used alone, can have a detrimental effect on satisfaction (i.e., a "good but still less than optimal" verbal behavior).
4. The combined tape—to demonstrate the effective combination of contingent positive, punitive, and goal-setting behaviors (i.e., an effective verbal-behavior strategy).

Together, the experiential activity, lecturette, and modeling videotapes lead to a better understanding of the concepts presented and, most importantly, to long-term learning. The process of constructing modeling videotapes is personally involving, rewarding, and demonstrably effective in accomplishing transfer of learning and more effective behavior on the part of the training participants.

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FORECASTING THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF TRAINING

Richard A. Swanson and Gary D. Geroy

Although the concept of cost-benefit analysis has been around for decades, it is a concept that management continues to use selectively. When making capital outlays, one may find it relatively easy to forecast costs and benefits by using traditional methods. Furthermore, depreciation schedules and return-on-investment expectations are locked into the capital-investment perspective. Unfortunately, equivalent forecasting tools are not available when decision makers are faced with investments in employee training and development—or the human capital—of the organization. As a result, managers typically turn to a simple cost-based analysis when budgeting for employee training. They ask, "How much will it cost? How much did we spend last year? How much do we want to spend this year?"

With these simple cost questions, managers—in effect—avoid the realities of cost-benefit analysis and thus fail to realize the potential of large financial benefits to the organization. It is not surprising to find organizations of all sizes in almost all economic sectors making training decisions with no investment-forecasting information, as evidenced by the following examples.

- A medium-sized manufacturing company that produces electronic circuit boards has had a steady and profitable life. Even with high employee turnover and an unacceptable product rejection rate, they have been making money. The idea of investing in training had never entered management's mind. Consciously spending any money on training was a departure from normal practice. The $20,000 proposed by an outside consultant for training ten assembly workers seemed extravagant. The company was not aware that in just forty days over $200,000 could be gained from the training.
- A Fortune-100 manufacturing firm—which had a stable and experienced work force that had been trained by trial-and-error job experience—recently learned a lesson. A closer look through a cost-benefit analysis revealed that there could be significant benefits from training. The actual results from four separate training efforts supported the forecasted benefits. As a result, the corporation is

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considering an orchestrated human-and-capital investment program throughout the organization,

- A manager of training in a corporation in a large metropolitan area found himself confronted with more training options than he expected. The engineering content could have been handled in-house by his staff, by three training vendors, or by two public institutions. The questions he faced included "Will any or all of the training options yield a benefit? Of those predicting a benefit, are there differences? How does a manager choose between rival training options?"

SQUARE PEGS AND ROUND HOLES

Managers face a major problem: Their knowledge of the economics of training, a major tool for increasing the value of the human capital, is typically limited. Beyond a few studies (Cullen, Sawzin, Sisson, & Swanson, 1976; Rosentreter, 1979; Thomas, Moxham, & Jones, 1969), attention to the microeconomic analysis of training has been minimal. Searches through the literature on the costs and benefits of training uncover large voids in the areas of economic descriptions of training efforts, forecasting of training costs and benefits, and experimental assessment of the economic factors of training. With few exceptions, cost-benefit analysis tools for capital investments continue to be applied to employee training. Because the idea of applying depreciation schedules to human learning is inappropriate, this practice is analogous to fitting square pegs in round holes.

FORECASTING TRAINING COSTS AND BENEFITS

Organizations exist to make gains. Decision makers establish goals to determine what gains will be pursued. They then allocate resources (financial or human) to attain the goals. In attempting to improve organizational performance, decision makers at the strategic planning level may choose to support training or nontraining performance improvement options. The training option includes both unstructured on-the-job training and structured training programs. Either incurs costs.

There are many alternative ways to view costs. Accountants perceive costs as the outlays necessary to achieve a given set of outcomes. Financial managers see costs as the value of the alternatives foregone in order to pursue a particular course of action. For example, by taking a worker off the job to receive training, the organization forgoes the worth of that worker's potential productivity had the worker remained on the job. Conversely, to retain an inadequately trained worker on the job eliminates expenditures for structured training while bearing the costs of less-than-acceptable productivity until the employee finally reaches competence.

Cost Considerations

The true costs of training—and, therefore, training budgets—are often inaccurately estimated by managers and trainers. All the costs that an organization can identify and associate with its structured or unstructured training must be counted. Employees who are performing at the level of their performance goals are not incurring training costs. Training costs do appear when any of the following situations exist:

1. A new employee arrives on the job.
2. An experienced employee is transferred or promoted to a job that requires the acquisition of additional skills or knowledge or a change in attitude.
3. The job of an experienced employee is modified and requires new skills and knowledge or different applications of expertise.
4. An experienced employee has a loss of knowledge or skill.

An accurate and complete analysis of training costs will include the measure of the value of production units not produced or performance *not* accomplished during the period of training. The costs of alternative training options may be measured by including comparisons of production lost during the time of training. Training costs also include expenses directly and indirectly associated with developing and delivering the structured training. The salaries and benefits paid to trainees and others involved with the training during the training period must also be considered in estimates of costs.

Measuring Training Costs

The managers, trainers, and accountants in a firm may not always agree on which specific items should be considered training costs. What is important is that they use identical criteria in costing each option under consideration. Furthermore, the period for measuring costs should be held constant in order to make valid comparisons among a set of training options.

The minimum measurable costs of on-the-job unstructured training is the value of employees' performance that remains below the performance goal during the training period. A Johns-Manville study (Cullen et al., 1976) provides evidence to support the position that the average performance per employee during the period of unstructured training is 50 percent of the performance goal.

The forecasting model proposed in this paper calls out generic categories of training costs for use in identifying those costs that are unique to the reader's organization. Categories have been included for costs incurred through losses of time, material, and production/performance. Examples of training cost categories are shown in Table 1.

Benefits Profiles

Positive returns on investments are called benefits. Investments are in the form of time, money, or material, and the benefits derived may be in the form of quality (effectiveness) or quantity (efficiency) of a product or service. Organizational or

Table 1. Categories of Training Costs

Cost Categories	Guidelines
Staff	Wages of clerical/secretarial, hourly or salaried subject matter experts, trainers, or other employees involved in the training effort.
External Consultants	Fees and associated expenditures for externally hired subject-matter and training-design experts involved in the specific training effort.
Materials	Items that will either become a permanent part of the specific training effort or that will be consumed in the trining-related effort.
External Support Costs	Professional, skilled, or semi-skilled labor or services required to support any or all aspects of the training effort.
Trainees	Wages, mileage, lodging, and meal expenses associated with trainee attendance of training effort.
Facilities	Expenses associated with room or equipment rental utilities, or facility modification directly related to the specific training effort.
Tuition/fees	Expenses directly related to school tuition, fees, books and materials, and laboratory costs associated with a given training effort.

individual performance gains are benefits to which value may be assigned. For example, an increase in the quantity of production per unit of time has a measurable value when it is viewed as time gained and available for producing additional products or services at a given performance level. Likewise, when higher quality is achieved without decreasing the rate of production, it can be measured as a gain in the value of units produced (e.g., fewer rejects or lower warranty costs would be measured as a gain). The value of performance is an important part of the training benefit forecasting method. Determining the value of performance requires that the total performance, or performance units that make up the performance, be identified. Identifying these factors is not always as easy as one might think, and it remains the critical task of each analysis effort.

Performance value is the financial worth of all performance units produced in an organization. Performance units can be expressed in any manner specific to the

organization, All performance units should be judged within a common time frame when training options are compared.

TRAINING BENEFIT FORECASTING METHOD

In its simplest form, the benefit forecasting method requires that all increases in performance values (minus the training costs) and the resulting benefits be determined for each training alternative under consideration. When the performance value exceeds the costs, the training yields a benefit. If the costs exceed the performance value, no benefit results. The highest projected benefit among training alternatives indicates the most desirable option from a financial perspective (see Figure 1).

Analysis of Costs

When costs are analyzed, care must be taken to include all the costs attributable to the specific training option being considered. Costs must be calculated for staff time, trainee time, consultants, materials, space, et cetera, needed to complete each step in the training process. Costs will be incurred for needs analysis, work-behavior analysis, designing the training, implementation, and evaluation. The final accounting for costs may be expressed as total dollar costs per training option or as costs per trainee in each option. Table 2 is a work sheet for recording the cost for each step of the training process.

Table 2 also contains actual data used in the case study that appears later. When determining the appropriate figures to enter, the analyst should consult the comptroller and others who have financial-analysis responsibilities in the organization. The primary purpose of such consultation is to identify the costs that the organization considers relevant to the training programs being considered. The following list shows the items that are typically considered in costing each phase of the cost-analysis work sheet:

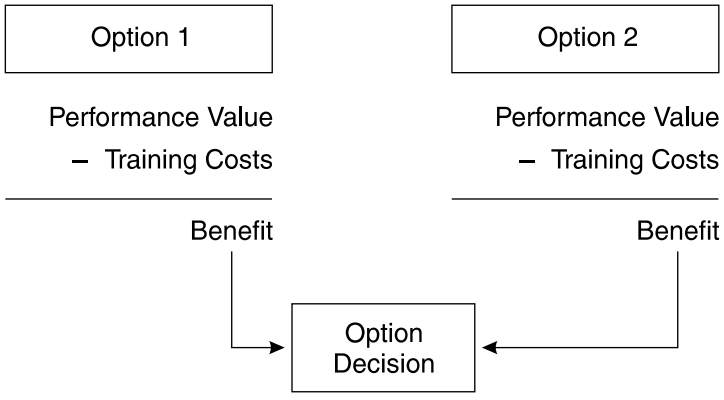

Figure 1. Benefit Forecasting Model

Table 2. Work Sheet for Analyzing Training Costs

Training Phases	Training Options	
	Commercial	*In-House*
Analysis		
Needs Assessment	$ 0	$ 3,224
Work Analysis	0	510
Design		
Program	0	2,440
Instructional Aids	0	1,100
Development		
Pilot Testing	0	600
Formative Evaluation	0	100
Instructional Aides	0	1,020
Implementation		
Delivery	22,200	5,760
Management	0	2,294
Evaluation		
Summation Evaluation	0	208
Training Revision	0	600
Maintenance of Trainee Behavior	0	0
Total (A)	$ 22,200	17,856
Number of Trainees (B)	10	10
Cost Per Trainee $\frac{(A)}{(B)}$	$ 2,220	1,785

1. Salaries
   a. Participants
   b. Administrative support
   c. Training-staff professional
   d. Subject-matter experts
   e. Miscellaneous organizational support personnel
2. Fringe and Overhead

3. Logistics
    a. Travel
    b. Per diem
    c. Lodging
4. Facilities
5. Maintenance
6. Equipment
    a. Purchases
    b. Rentals
7. Materials
    a. Consumables
    b. Nonconsumables
8. Outside Services
    a. Fees
    b. Travel
    c. Direct costs

Analysis of Performance Value

Performance value is defined as the worth of performance units produced in dollars. In analyzing performance values, one should identify those specific performance units that will result from the training options being considered and assess their dollar value to the organization. Several pieces of information are needed to carry out this step: the number of trainees, the desired performance level expressed in units, training time needed to reach the desired performance level, the performance accomplished during the period under consideration, the value of the units of performance, and the current level of the trainee's performance.

Some of this information, such as number of trainees and training time, is relatively easy to obtain. However, making valid comparisons among training options requires the analyst to determine a base period of time to be used in calculating performance values for each training option. This base period is the longest period of time required by any of the training options to bring the trainees' performance up to the desired level (see Figure 2).

On-the-job unstructured training, if this is one of the options, usually requires the longest period. Performance information may be obtained from a variety of sources; for example, the current level of worker performance and the desired level may be determined from the performance discrepancies cited in the original needs assessment, the performance standards set by production, or the stated training objectives for the particular training option. Information that aids in identifying the desired units of

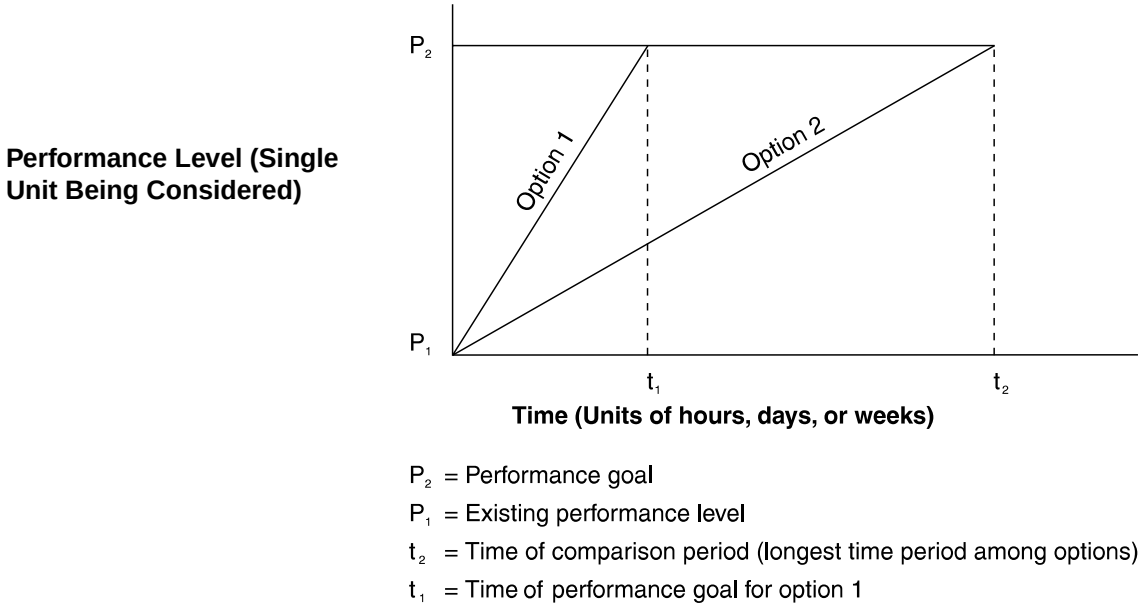

Figure 2. Performance Level Over Time: A Comparison of Training Options

performance can be obtained from individual performance-review standards, production standards, and other records of productivity. Information needed to assess the value of the units of performance may be gathered by interviewing those responsible for budget development, production-cost analysis, or financial analysis.

The Work Sheet

Once the information is obtained, a net-performance-value calculation work sheet can be used to organize it. Table 3 illustrates such a work sheet and contains data from the case study that appears later in this paper. When items g through m on the work sheet are completed, they provide specific figures to use in determining the value of the trainees' performance that results from the training.

A separate performance-value calculation is carried out for each training option. Frequently employees produce items or perform activities during the training that are valuable to the organization. This value is determined and calculated on the work sheet (items g through i) and is taken into consideration in the total performance value per individual (item j). Item j includes the employee performance during training plus the performance from the end of the training period for the option to the end of the period used for comparison. Determining the value of this total performance per option becomes a simple calculation in item k. In this value calculation, the option being considered should not be given credit for the value of the performance level at which the employee entered training. To insure that this value is subtracted from the calculation, item l accounts for the level of employee performance and its associated value prior to the training experience and subtracts it from the total performance value for the

Table 3. Performance-Value Calculation Work Sheet for Circuit-Board Training

Data Required for Calculations	Option 1 Unstructured	Option 1 Commercial	Option 3 In-House
a. What is the desired performance goal as a result of worker training?	1.5/day	1.5/day	1.5/day
b. What unit(s) of measure will be used to describe the performance?	Number of Boards	Number of Boards	Number of Boards
c. What is the dollar value that will be assigned to each unit of measure?	$600	$600	$600
d. What is the estimated training time to reach the goal?	40 days	10 days	8 days
e. What is the current level of worker performance?	0	0	0
f. How many workers will participate in the training?	10	10	10
Calculations to Determine Net Performance Value			
g. What is the estimated performance level during training? Will trainee produce during training? No = 0 Yes = $\frac{a+e}{2}$	.75/day	0	0
h. What is the length of the period being evaluated? (At a minimum, this will be the longest "d" of all options under consideration.)	40 days	40 days	40 days
i. What is the estimate of the total number of units (b) that will be achieved during training? (d x g)	30	0	0
j. What is the estimate of the total performance per individual for the evaluation period? [(h – d) x a] + i	30	45	48
k. What is the value of the total performance for the evaluation period? (c x j)	$ 18,000	$ 27,000	$ 28,800
l. What is the net performance value gain? [k – (e x c x h)]	$ 18,000	$ 27,000	$ 28,800
m. Do you want to calculate the total net performance value of all trainees? Yes ☐ = (f x l) No ☐ = Net performance value of one trainee, which is calculated value of (l)	$ 180,000	$ 270,000	$ 288,800

comparison period. This calculation ensures that only the net performance gain due to training and its attendant economic value are used in determining the benefit from the particular training option.

A COST-BENEFIT FORECASTING CASE STUDY[1]

The employees of a manufacturer of specialized circuit boards for electronic equipment had previously been trained by an unstructured on-the-job method. The circuit-board assembly workers read at an average level of seventh grade, and all of them experienced difficulty in understanding the English language. Approximately forty working days were required for a new assembly worker to reach the acceptable performance level of three good circuit boards every two days. Each circuit board was valued at six hundred dollars, and assembly workers were paid nine dollars per hour. When workers reached the expected performance level, they generally produced rework at the rate of one circuit board in eighteen. The rejects were caused by poor soldering or incorrect positioning of one or two installed parts.

Management was considering designing or contracting for a training program to decrease the time in which new assembly workers achieved the desired level of performance. One option was a commercially available ten-day training course that cost $1,500 per trainee. This course would provide training in basic soldering techniques, component identification, blueprint reading, instrument calibration, basic circuitry design, theory and practice, and systems diagnostics.

To develop another option, management hired a training consultant to do a training needs assessment and propose the content for an in-house training course. The consultant submitted a report and a bill for $2,200. The consultant recommended that in order to meet the manufacturing skills needs of the company, the training should cover basic soldering techniques, identification of components for the circuit board, and electronic circuitry blueprint reading. The consultant further recommended that the workers be provided with job aids to help them identify correct components and proper installation. The consultant recommended that the job aids be 8" x 10" color photographs of correctly built circuit boards, in the belief that such a job aid would facilitate the workers' continued learning of the proper identification and placement of components. The consultant estimated that the total training time would be eight working days, at the conclusion of which the new assemblers would be able to produce at the rate of three boards every two days, the current quality level. Management believed that developing and delivering the in-house training course could be handled by the in-house training staff and the chief electronic engineer. Temporary clerical support could be hired to assist during the analysis, design, and development steps.

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[1]This study, the first in a series of industry-based studies conducted by the Training and Development Research Center of the University of Minnesota, was funded by the Onan Corporation. Other studies in this series include forecasting the benefits of training for geometric tolerancing, welding training, grammar and punctuation for office workers, and customer service for managers. All will use the benefit forecasting method.

Management's role was to decide whether ten new employees would (option 1) be trained on the job as in the past, (option 2) attend the commercially available training course, or (option 3) receive the in-house training. A benefit analysis of the three options would lead the decision maker to the option with the highest project benefit: option 3, the in-house training (see Figure 3). The forecast benefit for that option was $270,144. Both Table 2 (the cost analysis) and Table 3 (the performance-value analysis) lead to the benefit analysis and option decision.

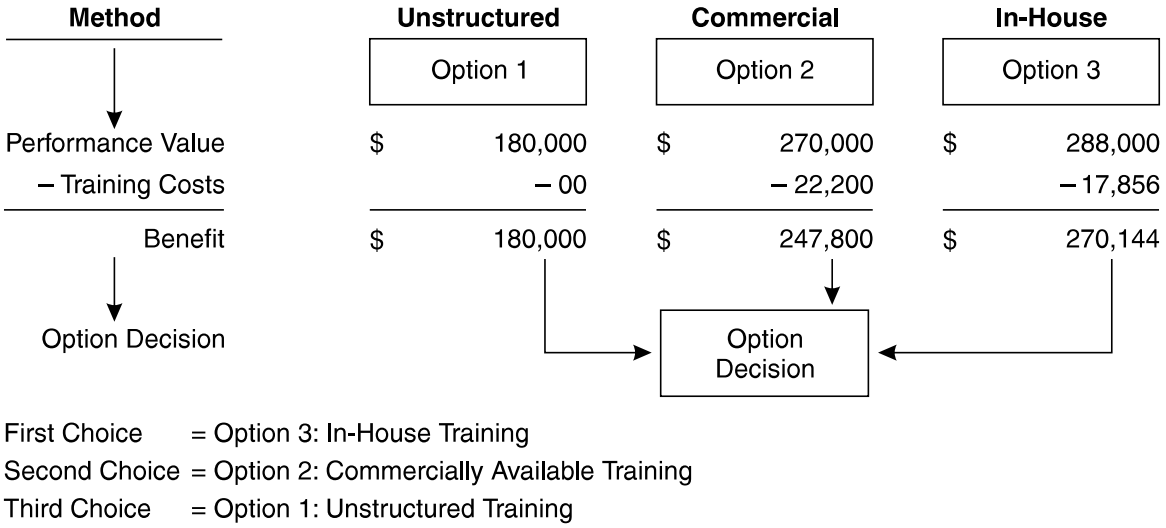

Figure 3. Benefit Analysis for Circuit-Board Training*

CONCLUSION

Analysis of the economics of training has become one of the important issues of the decade for business and industry. The quality of the analysis tools available to managers and training professionals will affect the quality of their training decisions. The benefit forecasting method described in this article demonstrates that training decisions can be made on the basis of rational thought and economic analysis.

Training benefit forecasting methods, such as the one presented here, are important decision-making tools in the workplace. Managers and trainers who can discuss training activities in economic terms will be in a position to contribute to the strategic plans for the human capital in their firms. As top management thinks more seriously about human capital and about strategic planning for human resources, the training function will become more central to the firm.

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NEW AGE TRAINING TECHNOLOGIES: THE BEST AND THE SAFEST

Beverly Byrum

The *New Age* is influencing many different arenas (Friedrich, 1987; Trachtenberg, 1987; Zemke, 1987):

1. *New Age books are finding a place of their own.* Bantam Books reports that its New Age titles have increased tenfold in the past decade and that the number of New Age book stores has doubled in the past five years, bringing the total to about 2,500. Publishers estimate total sales to be at least $100 million. Bantam, Simon & Schuster, and Random House all produce New Age books in cassette form.

2. *New Age periodicals are being born. New Age Journal* counts 150,000 readers, and *WholeLife* counts 60,000 readers. Other magazines, such as *Brain/Mind Bulletin, East/West Journal,* and *Body Mind Spirit,* contribute to the proliferation of New Age ideas.

3. *New Age music is making a name for itself.* The Grammy Awards now have a special category for New Age music, and the number of radio stations playing New Age music is increasing. Windham Hill Productions, a New Age record company, estimates that it will sell $50 million of its own label this year.

4. *New Age healing is gaining hold.* The American Medical Association reports that 10,000 doctors practice holistic medicine. Nurses are taught therapeutic touch to help patients to deal with pain and illness. In his book *Love, Medicine and Miracles,* surgeon Bernie Siegel discusses alternative methods of healing (Siegel, 1987). Sales of crystals used for healing account for $100 million a year.

5. *New Age is infiltrating the corporation.* Stockbrokers use astrology, millionaires use psychics, and investment bankers talk about past-life experiences. The United States Army has commissioned a West Coast firm to explore not only the military potential of meditation and extrasensory perception but also the feasibility of conducting nontraditional training programs based on these New Age techniques. Werner Erhard sells his Transformational Technologies programs to managers worldwide and to NASA. A firm called Innovation Associates runs $15,000 seminars to strengthen top management's commitment to a common purpose. Training consultants enter corporations to do everything from stress-management seminars to organizational transformation.

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News about New Age is not all treated seriously. *Newsweek* (Miller, 1987) reports on "Corporate Mind Control," a description of the California Public Utilities Commission's investigation of complaints of mind control in Pacific Bell's mandatory Krone training program.[1] In other companies, employees who have refused to participate in New Age training have been fired and have taken legal action based on violation of their right to religious freedom. For example, a car dealer has filed suit against his former employer, maintaining that he was terminated for refusing to participate in a mandated New Age training program. Similarly, a human resources manager with Firestone Tire was fired for refusing to conduct a New Age training program; he filed suit and subsequently reached an out-of-court settlement with his employer.

Incidents like these bring into question the legality of mandating training that some say is against their beliefs; this casts another critical eye on New Age training. Two of the most widely read periodicals in the field of human resource development, *Training: The Magazine of Human Resources Development* and *Training and Development Journal*, recently printed major articles and letters to the editor about New Age training. Their overtones range from cautious at best to ominous at worst. Any trainer or consultant would certainly pause before using the psychotechnologies listed in an article entitled "New Age training in the workplace: Intrusive at best and malevolent at worst?" (Zemke, 1987).

New Age training was censured in human resource development (HRD) periodicals long before it attracted such heavy publicity in the mass-communication media. Gordon (1985) called New Age training "weirdness at large," claiming that it scored a 10 on "the woo-woo factor." New Age also bore the major brunt of the Training Zone Awards, given for dubious achievement in HRD, for the past three years. In fact, in 1988 New Age had its own categories of awards: "New Age Event of the Year" and "New Age Threat of the Year" (The Training Zone Awards, 1986, 1987,1988).

However, not all of the commentary in HRD periodicals is negative. New Age is here, whatever it is, and it is something with which HRD practitioners need to contend. This article offers a definition of New Age, an identification of the issues involved, a description of New Age training technologies, an analysis of the best and safest of these technologies, and a discussion of how they might best be delivered and what results and benefits to expect.

A DEFINITION OF NEW AGE

Friedrich (1987) states most concisely the problem involved in defining New Age: "There is no unanimity of New Age belief in anything." However, *The Guide to New Age Living*, published by *New Age Journal*, a widely read publication of New Age material, attempts a collective definition of New Age thinking. The author quotes a

[1]Charles Krone is a management consultant; Krone training is based on the teachings of George Gurdjieff, Armenian philosopher and mystic. Pacific Bell employees objected to the training, which was billed as "Leadership Development" and complained to the Utilities Commission that the exercises were mind-control sessions.

variety of New Age thinkers and then summarizes their definitions: "New age thinking can be characterized as a form of utopianism, the desire to create a better society, a 'new age' in which humanity lives in harmony with itself, nature, and the cosmos" (Adolph, 1988, p. 6).

Some view New Age as a resurrection of the Human Potential Movement (Zemke, 1987). Others who are not aligned with the New Age movement define it in various ways. For example, Burrows (1986, p. 22) defines it negatively and abstractly with, " . . . ways that glorify the self, deny the reality of human depravity, and hold out pure, contentless experience as ultimate truth and the final arbiter of meaning and value." Ferguson, on the other hand, is more positive and concrete: "[New Age] sees us as stewards of all our resources, inner and outer. It says we are not victims, not pawns, not limited by conditions or conditioning" (cited in Adolph, 1988).

A recent survey gleaned notions of New Age from American Society for Training and Development chapter members who had neither studied New Age, promoted it, nor carried on a crusade against it. Fifty-nine percent were intuitively close in their responses when asked "What does the term New Age Training Technology suggest to you?" Their responses included the following:

- Self-improvement;
- Taking self-responsibility;
- Self-expanding;
- Holistic attitude toward training;
- Opens a person up to full abilities;
- Using both sides of the brain; and
- Nontraditional, new methods.

The last statement summarizes the beliefs held in common about the New Age training technologies born of New Age thinking. New Age thinking is a willingness to explore nontraditional lifestyle alternatives; as Carlson (1987) maintains, New Age training technologies are those that depart "from traditional systems of both teaching and learning . . . to empower employees to maximize both their potential and their inner resources" (p. 18).

New Age training technologies create New Age Learning, which is based on different assumptions than traditional learning, as outlined in Figure 1 (Meier, 1985). The disparity of definitions and feelings about New Age training reflect the controversy it stimulates among proponents and opponents alike. *Training and Development Journal* reported, "As the general level of human consciousness continues to evolve in our culture, training in the use of the 'higher self' for improving job performance and satisfaction will become more commonplace" (Trends in Training, 1986, p. 6). What began as an innocent report ended in "sounding the alarm" and vicious attacks on New Age training in general.

Dimension	Traditional Learning	New Age Learning
Training concern	External behavior	Whole person
Mind focus	Rational	All mind states
Aim	Fill mind with information	Stimulate mind to release full powers
Effectiveness judged by	Standardized program	Individualized program
Knowledge viewed as	Fixed	Changing
Learning seen as	Work	Joyful

Figure 1. Traditional Learning Versus New Age Learning

ISSUES AFFECTING ACCEPTANCE OF NEW AGE TRAINING TECHNOLOGIES

Three major issues plague the acceptance of New Age training technologies. First and most significant is the religious issue. Though *New Age Journal* contends that "the New Age Movement is not a religion" (Adolph, 1988, p. 10), some Christians believe that New Age thinking and, therefore, training associated with it are "demonic" (Burrows, 1986); are universally anti-Christian (Burrows, 1986); teach "a false religion" (Deo, 1987); and promote a world view of "monism" and "spiritism . . .involving occult correspondence" (Watring, 1987). Because New Age training is said to create religious conflict in employees forced to participate, the religious issue becomes a legal one.

The second major issue is the charge of *brain-washing* or *mind control*, as in the Pacific Bell/Krone case. Participants may be asked to suspend critical judgment (Zemke, 1987) or to enter a trancelike state in which they are subject to suggestion (Watring, 1987), which, Carlson (1987) maintains, can cause emotional distress. On the lighter side, New Age training claims are seen as humorously irrational, objects of intellectual derision that are mocked in the periodical *Training* by issuing awards for silliness rather than taking them seriously. Some people are alarmed rather than amused and allege that New Age training causes thousands of instances of debilitating effects that "hurtle [trainees] into flights of uncontrollable fantasy or throw them into the depths of despair . . . [as] . . . the fragile balance between intellect, sensory response, judgment, and action does not always survive a New Age Training" (Garvey, 1987).

A third issue is distrust of the profit being made by New Age gurus. Reports about Shirley MacLaine, who is funding a spiritual center in Colorado with the proceeds from her seminars (Friedrich, 1987; Zemke, 1987), J.Z. Knight, who channels a $400-a-session spirit (Friedrich, 1987; Hackett, 1986), or other New Age proponents who make money from their offerings meet with much skepticism. Viewed as "new money-making adventures" (Showers, 1987), New Age training technologies are distrusted because psychic sensitivity is being sold, according to Utne (Zemke, 1987), or because it is seen

as promoting "childish self-indulgence" as opposed to anything seriously concerned with human development (Ornstein, 1986).

These issues are serious concerns for those in human resource development; methods for dealing appropriately with them will be explored in this article after New Age training technologies are identified.

AN OVERVIEW OF NEW AGE TRAINING TECHNOLOGIES

The term *New Age training technology* needs to be distinguished from more personal or spiritual New Age explorations (such as lucid dreaming, therapeutic prayer, channeling, crystal healing, past-life regression, or occult sciences like astrology, tarot, or numerology). These training technologies, or "psychotechnologies" (Zemke, 1987), include such diverse methods as affirmations, meditation, biofeedback, and self-hypnosis. The following sections explain New Age training technologies in accordance with the major proponents of each technology.

Affirmations

An affirmation is "a positive thought consciously chosen to be immersed in consciousness to produce a certain desired result" (Ray, 1981, p. 34). An affirmation is spoken or written as if the result is already present (Gawain, 1982); it directs one's mind, behavior, and, therefore, life (Leonard & Laut, 1983). Usually phrased in the first person present tense with a positive active verb, an affirmation describes that which is desired as already accomplished (for example, "I am calm and cool when my boss yells at me.") Affirmations are also called positive thinking, positive self-talk statements, positive programming, or thought selection (Helmstetter, 1986; Spice & Kopperl, 1984).

Affirmations work as follows: Beliefs present in one's mind create emotions, which influence actions, which in turn determine the results or effects on one's life. If the thoughts or beliefs are negative, results will be negative; if positive, the results will be positive. The intensity of results will be proportional to the depth of the belief and the intensity of the feeling (Helmstetter, 1986; Robbins, 1986). Changing negative beliefs to positive beliefs will change the circumstances of one's life. In training situations, a positive affirmation such as "I am now learning this new procedure easily and effortlessly" replaces a negative "I'll never get this right," in order to change the speed and ease of learning.

Biofeedback

The term *biofeedback* originated in experimental psychology. It refers to a continuous aural or visual report of changes in bodily reactions brought about by changes in thoughts and emotions (Marcer, 1986; Shealy, 1977; Smith, 1975). A feedback machine is electronically calibrated to communicate minute changes in brain waves, muscle contractions, temperature, or galvanic skin response. As Olson reports, a person can

bring previously autonomic functions under conscious (if not rational or verbal) control (cited in Schwartz, 1987).

Biofeedback works by providing information about a bodily state frequently enough that the person can learn to recognize the link between thoughts and feelings and physical reactions. People can be taught to control their bodies, thereby producing relaxed and pleasant sensations instead of tense and painful ones. For example, an EEG indicates when a person is in the relaxed (alpha) brain-wave state as opposed to the normal daily activity (beta) brain-wave state. After exposure to EEG feedback and practice with it over a period of weeks under the guidance of a biofeedback professional, Olson reports that a person's subjective awareness of his or her body increases to the point that the person no longer needs the artificial device and can consciously rely on internal psychophysical cues to exert control over physical reactions (cited in Schwartz, 1987).

Although this technique is not likely to be used in group training, a project team manager consistently under the pressure of deadlines could use biofeedback to learn to keep himself or herself relaxed and calm in the midst of constant rush and change.

Centering

Centering creates a sense of inner balance (mental, emotional, physical, spiritual) through mechanisms that focus the person on a single point. Using these techniques pulls the mind and body away from external stimuli, detaching and stabilizing them. Centering is a path to meditation rather than a substitute for it. Centering devices, such as focusing on a word, phrase, or object, prepare one for a deep state of spiritual communion; when a practitioner is advanced enough, the centering technique can be discarded and meditation can be entered directly. Westerners consider centering to be practical meditation, or meditation used for purposes other than spiritual enlightenment (Carrington, 1977). For example, participants in a training session could be asked to close their eyes, "go inside," and pay attention to their breathing, allowing all parts of themselves to achieve harmonious balance before beginning a difficult task.

Dianetics

Dianetics, the foundation of Scientology, is "a science of mind" following the "natural laws of thought" (Hubbard, 1978). Negative past events (*engrams*) are stored as cellular traces in the body structure and can trigger irrational actions (Hubbard, 1978). Dianetics works by *clearing,* eliminating negative past events by *auditing,* or *pastoral counseling.* A specially trained auditor listens, asks questions, recognizes psychological reactions by using an *E-meter* (a device that records electrical resistance in the hands), and probes reactions to help the client find the answers that will lead him or her to clear (Henderson, 1975).

Clearing might be used in a counseling session with an employee who reacts to a question about his or her work environment, and when probed more deeply, finds the feeling related to a childhood experience. The employee then is guided to reexperience

the childhood situation and emotion; as the childhood situation is resolved, the employee simultaneously resolves the feelings about the work situation. Practitioners believe that with this particular form of self-actualization, every aspect of the person improves, including posture, health, and vision (Henderson, 1975).

Guided Imagery

Guided imagery gives external direction to the way a person represents objects and experiences to his or her mind. These images might be visual, auditory, or kinesthetic (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987). In guided imagery, a facilitator either suggests the outline of an experience and the person imaging completes it with personal information, or the facilitator suggests an exact sequence, such as is used in relaxing each muscle of the body in turn (Carrington, 1977).

Guided imagery works by allowing a person to release the analytical part of the mind to a guide who leads him or her to receive information from the intuitive part of the mind, which will then be helpful in problem solving. This information may provide answers, emotions, or experiences that were formerly subconscious or blocked. For example, a common unstructured guided imagery is the *expert within.* In this experience, a person is given the framework of speaking to a wise person, asking a question and receiving an answer. With these minimal instructions, each person creates a personal image of a wise person, his or her own question, and his or her own answer. This imagery is said to carry great power for influencing thoughts and behavior (Meier, 1984). Sometimes, for relaxation, a facilitator may conduct a guided imagery that is more detailed and structured, such as describing a beach, the sun, a gentle breeze, and the sound of waves; the participant is asked to see and hear these things and then is guided through a relaxation sequence.

Meditation

Meditation is a method of attaining spiritual development through disciplines of concentration (practices that involve thinking about meaning) and/or contemplation (practices that control thought by focusing on one object, internal or external to the meditator) (Bloomfield, Cain, Jaffe, & Kory, 1975). Meditational practices also can be categorized by the aspect of human experience addressed:

1. *Intellectual,* or a deep mental understanding of reality;
2. *Emotional,* or an expansion of positive emotions like love;
3. *Bodily,* or complete absorption in movement; and
4. *Action,* or the practice of a particular kind of skill useful to others (LeShan, 1974).

In addition to helping a person to attain spiritual development, meditation also is used practically, for the purpose of bettering one's experience of life. Many of the techniques are the same ones used for spiritual development; however, the goals are

more limited (Carrington, 1977). As in guided imagery, meditations may be structured (those that define precisely what internal experience one is seeking) or unstructured (those that allow one to experience a subject, such as compassion, and concomitant thoughts and feelings) (LeShan, 1974).

Meditation works by providing a nondistracting, focusing experience, a disengagement from the continuous impressions of normal living (Bloomfield et al., 1975). This disengagement allows relaxation by altering the rhythm of the brain waves, either by changing them or by evening them out so that they pulsate together, thus slowing bodily functions (Carrington, 1977). Relaxing and focusing reduces stress and tension and may provide side benefits, such as more positive emotions and outlook. Researchers believe that the ability to use focused attention disconnects thinking and emotional systems from each other, thus allowing a state of continued relaxed alertness (Smith, 1975). Permissive and unstructured meditation might be used in training before a strategic planning session.

Transcendental Meditation (TM) is one of the most commonly described methods of meditation. Its key element is a mantra, assigned by a trained TM teacher. Use of the mantra moves one's attention from the active, fully developed thought level of the mind toward the depth of less elaborated, more basic, and simple thought (Bloomfield et al., 1975). Whereas other types of meditation use contemplation or concentration, TM uses the nonfocused, nonconcentrative repetition of the mantra to release the natural propensity of the mind to quiet itself; thus TM's results are considered to be spontaneous and to involve no forced learning (Bloomfield et al., 1975).

Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP)

Neurolinguistic programming originated as a therapeutic practice; it uses a detailed model of human experience and communication to make fast, deep, and lasting changes in human behavior (Bandler & Grinder, 1979).

This technique begins by determining the client's representation system from his or her language and eye movements. The three representation systems are categorized as follows:

1. *Visual:* "It's clear to me"—eyes up;
2. *Auditory:* "That sounds good"—eyes center or down left; and
3. *Kinesthetic:* "I don't like the feel of that proposal"—eyes down right.

A therapist matches or mirrors this representation system (pacing) to achieve rapport. Once rapport is established, the therapist or trainer can then change his or her own behavior *(leading)* to cause changes in the client (Bandler & Grinder, 1979; Robbins, 1986). For example, if a client who is auditory becomes anxious when his or her supervisor yells, the facilitator can teach the client to switch to a visual mode when the supervisor is present. The yelling then will not cause the same reaction. Or, a trainer can lead a visual participant to reduce anxiety about learning a new procedure by replacing a picture of failure with one of success.

Anchoring is a verbal response or physical movement that solidifies the client's desired feeling or behavior change. For example, when the client says something positive about his or her own abilities, the facilitator can anchor that feeling with a smile or a touch on the arm. Because it is important for the client to be able to use these skills personally, *bridging,* or making an anchor out of the context itself, gives the client the power to change. The client might be asked to think about situations in which he or she would like to feel competent. As the client creates those situations, the facilitator touches the client's arm and says, "When you are in these situations, you will feel this touch"; this anchor will remind the client to feel competent (Bandler & Grinder, 1979). Anchors ground the client in reexperiencing a success; an anchor is developed, such as touching the thumb and middle finger together, and the client can use that anchor whenever he or she needs to feel powerful and resourceful (Robbins, 1986).

Reframing is another technique used to ensure that other behaviors or motives do not obstruct change. Reframing works to generate options, other than the present behavior, to satisfy the client's goals. For example, if a client receives negative feedback about his or her behavior, the consultant asks the client what the behavior was intended to achieve, then helps the client discover alternative behaviors (Bandler & Grinder, 1979). Reframing works by changing the content (for example, "I'm not failing, I'm just discovering what won't work") or by changing the context (such as, "My spouse may think I'm too aggressive at home, but it's a terrific quality to have at work") (Robbins, 1986).

Metaphor, a symbolic representation of ideas, is another NLP technique. Metaphors work by linking the unfamiliar to the familiar; for example, in dealing with computer anxiety, fears might be compared to first learning to ride a bicycle or to write in cursive (Ludwig & Menendez, 1985).

Neurolinguistic programming is used in therapy for remedial, functional change and for generative, creative change (Bandler & Grinder, 1979). This technique also is taught to managers and trainers to improve interpersonal and persuasive skills (Ludwig & Menendez, 1985; Robbins, 1986).

Relaxation

Relaxation is the absence of muscular tension and the accompanying mental calm. Relaxation works by slowing breathing and metabolic rates (Carrington, 1977), reducing oxygen consumption, eliminating carbon dioxide from the system, and minimizing the frequency of visual and auditory imagery and stimuli. As a consequence, both thought and emotional processes diminish (Shealy, 1977). Relaxation techniques may be used in training in the same ways as suggested meditation or as preparation for another technique, such as affirmation.

One of the most well-known methods for achieving relaxation is the relaxation *response.* This technique calls for four steps to be followed:

1. *Select a quiet environment* with few distractions;

2. *Use a constant, repetitive stimulus* as a mental device to help minimize externally focused, distracting thoughts (a word, phrase, or gazing at an object while paying attention to breathing);
3. *Maintain a passive attitude* by not being concerned about the concentration level, allowing thoughts to appear if they will and then returning to the mental device, without worrying about performance; and
4. *Relax muscles* by sitting (not lying) in a comfortable position and avoid falling asleep (Benson, 1975).

Another common technique is *progressive relaxation.* In this technique, participants are instructed to tighten muscles in each muscle group and then to relax them, thus learning to identify the difference (Jacobson, 1938). Typically, the client is taught to go through progressive tensing and relaxing (Marcer, 1986) and eventually learns to relax without tensing the muscles first (Jacobson, 1938).

Self-Hypnosis

Self-hypnosis is sometimes called autogenic (meaning self-created) training (Smith, 1975). It involves focused attention on suggestions one gives oneself in a self-induced trance (Henderson, 1975; Shealy, 1977).

Self-hypnosis works " . . . [by] playing a game with yourself. Your conscious and subconscious make a contract that after certain rituals and signals your subconscious will accept as true some untruths your conscious may suggest" (Henderson, 1975, p. 14).

A light, goal-oriented trance state is the result; attention narrows to one or two thoughts, thereby reducing awareness of external surroundings and usual ways of perceiving and thinking (Carrington, 1977). Suggestions first target muscular and breathing outcomes, such as "My arms are heavy, my heartbeat is calm" and later cognitive or action outcomes, such as "I am now working effortlessly on this article" (Marcer, 1986; Shealy, 1977). Suggestions also can vary by being directed to a present state (such as, "I am now relaxed") or a future state, sometimes called post-hypnotic suggestion (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987) (for example, "When I proceed to write my proposal, ideas will come easily to me"). Suggestions can be given at the moment in a state of relaxation or they can be tape-recorded to reduce the amount of thinking necessary and to increase receptivity (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987). Because the subconscious takes what it is given, affirmations are useful for positive results (Murphy, 1963).

Self-hypnosis is used in mental training (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987), for tension release leading to better sleep, in management of stress and increased efficiency (Carrington, 1977), and under the term self-suggestion to treat neurotic, compulsive, and depressive disorders as well as numerous physiological maladies (Romen, 1981). Autogenic training can go beyond healing to achieve a state of optimum health (Pelletier, 1980).

Silva Mind Control

Silva Mind Control is a process of changing one's awareness from everyday consciousness (beta) to a lower frequency consciousness (alpha) for better problem solving and increased memory, efficiency, and creativity. This method "uses the mind to mind itself" by first physical and mental relaxation, then affirmation, visualization, and anchoring (Silva & Stone, 1983, pp. 9394).

The suggested relaxation method consists of turning the eyes upward and counting back from one hundred to one (with practice, a count from five to one will suffice). The suggested anchor is to put three fingers together. The suggested vision process is to see the situation first as it is; then to see the situation in the process of positive change, viewing the second image on the left to activate the right brain; and finally, to see the situation resolved (Silva & Stone, 1983). This combination can be used to accomplish personal goals, to increase group commitment, or to maintain energy and enthusiasm. Those who continue the training improve their extrasensory perception; some even engage in psychic healing.

Suggestology

Suggestology is the science of the art of freeing and stimulating the personality, both under guidance and alone. *Suggestopedy* is its application in instruction (Lozanov, 1978). The goal of suggestopedy is to help people to use both the body and the mind at peak efficiency to develop supermemory and superlearning capacities (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1979).

Suggestopedy operates on the principles of joy and relaxation in learning, integration of conscious and paraconscious brain activity, and maximum use of reserve capacities (Lozanov, 1978). The American method works by first training the participants in relaxation, visualization, breathing, and positive affirmations. Next, the material to be learned is presented dramatically with readings, plays, and games. The last or memory-reinforcement session requires the participants to relax and to breathe deeply and rhythmically in time to Baroque music, while the instructor recites or chants in time to the music, using three different intonations (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1979).

Suggestopedy is used in education to enhance foreign language learning and to increase memory. During the learning process, it also has beneficial psychological and physical side effects (Lozanov, 1978). Additionally it has been used to heal and control pain and to develop extrasensory abilities (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1979).

Visualization

Visualization uses the imagination to create experience in one or more sensory modes. Visualization can be either receptive, relaxing and allowing images and impressions to surface as they will; or active, consciously choosing or creating what is desired to be felt or experienced (Gawain, 1982). Active visualization "is not the same as wishful

thinking . . . it is enlisting the powerful resources of human imagination in systematic and proven ways to achieve certain ends" (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987, p. 130).

Receptive visualization works by reducing the analytical activity of the brain, allowing subconscious thoughts, emotions, ideas, or insights to emerge. A common example of this type of visualization is having a solution to a researched problem emerge in a state of quiet. Active visualization works by giving form to thought; if a thought is held in attention, eventually its material form is created (Gawain, 1982). The most powerful visualizations, those most likely to result in tangible effects are specific, clear, controlled, positive, active, simple, repeated, and self-rewarding. Repeated visualization works to change one's view of self, which is a means of changing identity; the new identity makes it more feasible to become and to do what is being visualized (Simonton, Matthews-Simonton, & Creighton, 1978; Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987). An example of active visualization is creating an image of a new job or a successful training program.

Yoga

Yoga is a Hindu practice that takes four forms:

1. *Raja yoga*, meditation through contemplation and concentration on universal truths;
2. *Jnana yoga*, meditation on the various natures of one's self;
3. *Karma yoga*, active meditation or the path of service to others; and
4. *Bhaki yoga*, meditation using prayer and chanting for the purpose of praising others and divinity.

Hatha yoga, which is a preparation for any of these four forms, follows the principle that a healthy body means a healthy mind. Hatha yoga uses breathing exercises and postures in a set of systematic movements designed to keep the body in a constant balance state (Oki, 1970). Its postures (asanas) give the body strength and stimulation, while the breathing exercises (pranayama) increase energy and relaxation. Both work to cleanse the internal body (Henderson, 1975). Additionally, the deep calm acquired through the consistent practice of yoga helps the mind to function fully and exceptionally (Oki, 1970).

Yoga is used as a means of spiritual enlightenment, which was its original purpose (Henderson, 1975). However, in the Western world, hatha yoga is more often used as a form of exercise to promote good health, to alleviate stress and its related illnesses (Brena, 1972; Udupa, 1978), to increase attractiveness and sexuality (Phelan & Volin, 1963), and to energize and to relax the body and mind.

Summary of New Age Training Technologies

Many of the techniques described in this section involve inducing a state of relaxation and/or imagining. In some techniques, this state is used to minimize a dysfunctional

condition; in others, the technique is used to connect with a higher self or a higher power for self-actualization or spiritual enlightenment. The next section will demonstrate how the best and safest of these techniques can be used in human resource development to maximize performance.

THE BEST AND THE SAFEST OF NEW AGE TRAINING TECHNOLOGIES

Relaxation, affirmation, and visualization emerge as the best and safest of the New Age training technologies for the following reasons:

1. They combine both the analytical and the intuitive functions of the brain (Meier, 1984), especially if the experience is adequately explained and processed; therefore, suspension of critical judgment is less of a problem than with other techniques.
2. They are "readily available, easy to learn, and simple to use . . . [they] harness natural abilities" (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987, p. 12).
3. They empower the participants to control the process (choosing whether or not to relax and how, determining their own affirmations, and creating their own visualizations) because the trainer gives process instructions rather than content instructions.
4. They have a proven success record in the learning field (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1979) and the human resource development field (Chalofsky, 1987; Gentilman & Nelson, 1983; Robinson, 1984; Spice & Kopperl, 1984; Wilson, 1987).

Trainers who successfully use these New Age training technologies:

- Know the purposes and effects of the techniques;
- Have been trained in the processes themselves;
- Experience positive personal results with the techniques;
- Use the techniques voluntarily; and
- Frame the training in familiar concepts to participants and in terms of its dollar value to management.

In order for the techniques to be safe (both legally and psychologically) as well as workable, participants must be in control of choosing and using the techniques (Anderson, 1987; Fitzgerald, 1987a; Robinson, 1985). To put participants in control, or to empower them, trainers should follow six key steps:

1. *Meet in advance* with a cross-section team of employees to plan the program and adapt it to local needs; when the program is devoted solely to teaching the techniques, run a pilot program. Stress that employee use of the techniques must not be tied to retention, evaluation, or promotion.

2. *Present the techniques as voluntary learning aids* in a program, giving an alternative technique to achieve the same result wherever possible; although the techniques should not be tied to a particular value system, the trainer should be willing to discuss his or her own value system if the question arises. Participants must be allowed to stop at any time in the process. If teaching the techniques constitutes the program, the entire program should be voluntary.

3. *Explain the techniques thoroughly,* reviewing the assumptions governing the technique, documenting the technique statistically whenever possible, and explaining what is going to happen, the expected results, and step-by-step instructions in the process. Present the techniques in language familiar and acceptable to the participants first, then give them their formal names so that the participants will not feel duped. If the techniques constitute the program, the techniques to be covered should be publicized thoroughly so that participants will be operating from informed consent. Present the techniques in increments, one or two at a time. Present unfamiliar techniques as experiments that can be tried and discarded if they do not suit an individual's style.

4. *Process the outcomes thoroughly* during the training session; trainees should be encouraged to discuss and to analyze any experiences they had while using the techniques.

5. *Support practice outside the session* by including handouts of blank work sheets (if required by the technique) and the instructions used during the session. Suggest that a journal be kept of the experiences and their short- and long-term consequences.

6. *Encourage completion of an action plan* for both the participants and the trainer; schedule follow-up sessions if at all possible as well as sessions with the participants' supervisors for the purpose of common understanding and environmental support.

How To Present Relaxation, Affirmation, and Visualization Techniques

Successful presentation of the New Age training techniques of relaxation, affirmation, and visualization requires careful planning on the part of the trainer. Ten components will be described, each of which is critical to the participants' understanding and acceptance of the techniques.

1. State the Purpose of the Technique

One purpose of the technique can be a means to a specific training goal; for example, "To ensure success with the sales skills learned last week, this technique can help you to retain what you've learned, to use it with your customers, and to pattern yourselves for success." A second purpose could be stated as a learning goal itself: "The purpose of this technique is to provide you with more control over the use of your mind, so that you are more likely to achieve success in whatever you desire."

2. Introduce the Technique in Familiar Language

The following are examples of introductions in familiar terms: "All of these techniques are called 'accelerated learning techniques' and can be considered as stress-free, fast-learning methods to develop memory and to improve performance."

Relaxation. "This technique quite simply is called relaxation; it relaxes you and helps you to reduce the tension that builds up in your body."

Affirmation. "This technique is called 'positive talk' or 'positive statement' or 'self-fulfilling prophecy'; some know it as 'affirmation.' It helps you create what you desire by focusing on the realization of your goal through positive thinking."

Visualization. "This technique is called 'imaging' or 'visioning' or 'envisioning'; some know it as 'visualization.' It helps you experience what you want to happen by seeing, by hearing, or by feeling. By using your senses, you will bring more force to materializing your goal."

3. Support the Use of the Technique

The following types of statements could be given to support the use of the techniques: "According to Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder, who have researched alternative learning systems for over fifteen years and published their methods in *Super-Learning* (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1979), these techniques contribute to supermemory, superperformance, and super-rapport. Weston Agor, after discovering that top managers scored higher than middle or lower managers in underlying intuitive ability, began using these techniques to teach managers how to develop intuitive management (Agor, 1984a, 1984b). If you are interested in further documentation or evidence that these techniques work, I will provide a bibliography at the end of the session."

Relaxation. "According to Herbert Benson, M.D., relaxation has been used to reduce common stress-related problems such as headaches and tension and even more serious illnesses, such as heart disease and cancer (Benson, 1975; Benson, 1984). *The Hardy Executive* (Maddi & Kobasa, 1984) demonstrated from an eight-year study of 259 managers in a stressful environment that those who reach the top and manage not to suffer from the climb are skilled at focusing, a method that begins with relaxation. In *Corporate Pathfinders* Leavitt (1986) found from a historical study of visionary people that relaxation and meditation heighten creativity."

Affirmation. "According to *What to Say When You Talk to Yourself* (Helmstetter, 1986), positive self-talk has been used successfully to change habits, to solve problems, and to accomplish goals. A study of over five hundred peak performers (Garfield, 1986) indicated that one of the aptitudes that helped them to perform was the ability to use positive thoughts, eliminating preconceived limitations. After an eight-year study of 259 managers in stressful environments, Maddi and Kobasa (1984) found that the hardy executive engaged in 'transformational coping' or thinking positively about events. Additionally, Bennis and Nanus (1985) studied ninety leaders and discovered that they

had incredible self-confidence fueled by using words other than failure. Deborah Bright (1985) also found a high level of self-confidence in the 2,000 high-tech managers she studied for *Gearing Up for the Fast Lane:*

> High tech managers see themselves, as better managers . . . . Such a self-image tends to function as a self-fulfilling prophecy. A manager who sincerely believes himself or herself to be more capable, more creative, more able to overcome myriad obstacles and achieve substantial goals is likely to become so. These managers who see themselves as different and better right off the mark set higher expectations for themselves and their work groups. They find exceptional energy and drive for performance at a higher than routine level. (pp. 2-3)"

Visualization. "According to two noted behavioral therapists, Zilbergeld and Lazarus (1987), they and their clients have experienced success in using visualization to deal with stressful situations and to accomplish goals. Great athletes, such as Mary Lou Retton, Greg Louganis, Bill Russell, and Jack Nicklaus, also use this technique. Successful corporate leaders also use 'vision' to mentally rehearse for events, to imagine alternative futures, to synthesize facts, and to keep themselves flexible (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Brown & Weiner, 1984; Garfield, 1986; Leavitt, 1986). Probably the most powerful evidence of the power of visualization comes from cancer studies. As early as 1978, *Getting Well Again* reported that of patients considered medically incurable, 68.4 percent of those who visualized themselves getting well later showed no evidence of cancer (22.2 percent), showed remission (19.1 percent), or stability (27.1 percent) (Simonton et al., 1978)."

4. Relate It To the Participants' Experience

Each of these techniques can be described as situations and events common to everyday life, minimizing any fears participants may feel about trying the technique. The following examples describe the techniques in this way.

Relaxation. "You've probably helped yourself relax by taking a coffee break, by talking to a friend, or by watching TV. Closer to this method, you might have told yourself to relax and take a deep breath when in a pressured situation."

Affirmation. "Perhaps you've had experience with negative self-talk; you told yourself that you would have a terrible day and you did! You also might have had positive experiences because you rehearsed the way you wanted an event to turn out. Perhaps you believed that the day would be your day and you received that praise or raise."

Visualization. "You've probably pictured yourself in a situation many times or maybe you've actually seen in your mind the house or car you've always wanted or the sign on your office door that says you've arrived."

5. Indicate How the Technique Has Worked for You

Personal examples (such as the following) of ways in which relaxation, affirmation, and visualization work for the trainer help participants to feel more comfortable with the techniques.

Relaxation. "I use relaxation exercises before I have meetings with my boss about disagreements we share."

Affirmation. "I use positive self-talk to get training proposals accepted."

Visualization. "I use imagining to see myself giving successful presentations."

6. Indicate That the Technique Is Voluntary

Teaching the technique should be preceded by the following type of statement: "This technique is voluntary, so you don't have to do it if you feel uncomfortable with it. It is simply one method of achieving results. Probably what will be new is learning conscious control of the technique and setting aside a special time to use it, so you may want to experiment with it today. If there are any techniques with which you feel uncomfortable, use this time to review your notes or take a break." (If several people are not willing, they could work on a group task that would target the same outcome for which the technique is designed.)

7. Give an Overview of What Will Happen

In each case, let the participants know briefly what they can expect to happen during the entire exercise—as indicated in the following examples.

Relaxation. "We'll first get into a comfortable position, then pay attention to our breathing, then begin to relax various muscle groups throughout the body until the entire body is relaxed."

Affirmation. "We'll first think of some goals you want to achieve, than narrow to one focus goal. Then we'll make some positive statements about that goal and work with it to see what may prevent it from occurring and how to counteract those obstacles."

Visualization. "We'll start by closing our eyes, if that is comfortable for you, then we'll experience what you want by whatever sense is easiest for you: sight, hearing, or feeling. After the visualization, we'll review ways to strengthen the experience."

8. Take Participants Through the Process

Go through the process step by step, reminding the participants why they are doing each step and what they are trying to accomplish. Following are some examples.

Relaxation. "You may find it easier to do this exercise if you get comfortable in your chair. Some people find it best to put both feet on the floor, to have their backs fully supported by the chair, and to put their arms on the sides of the chair or their hands

in their laps. You may want to try that now or any other position that is most comfortable for you. Some also find that closing their eyes helps them to focus and to avoid distractions; however, you can allow your eyes to focus wherever you wish. In the position that is comfortable for you, begin to focus on your breathing. You don't have to change it or control it; you will probably find it slowing down as you pay attention to it. Continue that focus for a moment. Remember you can change position any time you wish to reach a greater level of relaxation and comfort.

"Now, imagine a pleasant feeling of warmth in your feet that relaxes them and releases tension. Allow any tension to leave and be replaced by a comfortable, warm, relaxed feeling. Now proceed to your ankles with that feeling of pleasant warmth and relaxation and release the tension. When you are comfortable, take that feeling to your calves and relax them, letting the tension go, then your thighs, up to your torso, to your chest, now your back, imagining comfortable warmth spreading and tension leaving. Now your shoulders are pleasantly warm and relaxed; now all the tiny muscles in your face are relaxing, the tension leaving. Finally the top of your head, pleasantly warm and completely relaxed. Your entire body is relaxed, relaxed and warm and comfortable. Stay with that pleasant, totally relaxed feeling as long as you wish; when you feel ready, open your eyes and redirect your focus slowly and gently to something in the room. Then you may want to take a few moments to make some notes to yourself about that experience and its meaning for you."

Affirmation. "Write down all the things you want to accomplish; they can be future-oriented or short-term or a mix of both. Then choose one goal to use in practicing this technique.

"State that goal in as many different ways as possible. Write your statements in the first person as things already accomplished or on their way to being accomplished; they need to be positive and active. This simple and direct method is the most effective way to make the statements work. We are more likely to make things happen if we involve ourselves by using 'I' in some positive action.

"Now choose one statement and write it at the top of a piece of paper. You will write it ten times in this session. Repetition reinforces; it also allows you to pay attention to any other thoughts, even negative ones, that come to mind. When these thoughts come to you, record them next to the positive statement."

Negative thoughts interfere with achieving goals; therefore, participants should be instructed to counteract them in the following ways:

- Continue writing the positive thought until no more negative thoughts occur;
- Write that it will be all right if the negative occurs ("I'm okay if I don't own a Porsche");
- Look at what positive might lie underneath the negative ("If I don't make $25,000 in commissions, my boss won't have such high expectations of me");

- Dispute the negative, especially if it comes from the past ("I can do it. I've done harder things before"); or
- Create a new positive thought more basic and powerful than the original ("I can achieve anything I set my mind to do").

Additional instructions may include the following: "These methods take the power out of negative statements so that you do not spend time and energy programming yourself with the negative; instead you concentrate on the positive and strengthen yourself.

"Write your final positive statement again on a three-by-five card. Underline it, add exclamation points, anything you want. Then put it in your wallet and look at it often. You might make other copies and put them in various places as reminders. You also could write these thoughts several times daily or tape record them with other positive statements and listen to them often. These forms of repetition are recommended for the positive self-talk to work effectively."

Visualization. "Think of some goal you'd like to achieve; just let anything come to mind. If it changes in the course of this process, that's okay. We're going to imagine that you are achieving or have achieved this goal. If you would like to try and 'see' or visualize yourself arriving at your goal or already there, it may be helpful to close your eyes. If you want to hear or feel the results, you can do it either way.

"As you begin to relax, feeling pleasantly warm and comfortable all over, you find that your breathing is regular and calm as your entire body relaxes. Your mind becomes quiet so that you can move inside to your mind's eye. Imagine that you are watching a movie screen; you are going to see, hear, or feel your goal being realized or already realized on that screen. Allow yourself, if possible, to see the picture you have created or hear the results or feel the experience. Imagine specifically what you are doing, what you are saying, what you are hearing, and how you are feeling. As you do this, fully experience the success you have created for yourself. When you are ready to leave that image, experience it once more—perhaps the happiness and success of it—and remember that you can capture that image again any time that you wish. It is in your power to do so. Come gently and slowly to focus on something in the room.

"If you'd now like to switch to a more analytical mode, take a few minutes to interpret what you experienced and jot down some notes about the implications and potential solutions. If you decide to use this technique, you may find it useful to keep a journal of your experiences. If any visualization produces significant or powerful images for you, you may want to represent those images in some way and display them where you can see them often."

9. Process the Experience

The purpose of this step is to ensure that participants understand thoroughly the technique they experienced and that they have the opportunity to express any questions

or concerns. Examples are given below for helping participants to process the experience.

Relaxation. "I'd like to give you the opportunity to talk about how you reacted to that technique. Who would like to tell what he or she experienced? Did anyone else feel that way? Who felt something different? Who isn't sure? What are some themes we need to discuss? What do those themes seem to suggest about the relaxation technique? How do you think you might be able to adapt this technique for use on the job?"

Affirmation. "What were some of the positive statements you chose? What kind of thoughts came up in response to your writing? What did that tell you about your positive statement? What did you do to counteract any negative thoughts that surfaced? How did that work? What are you thinking or feeling about your positive statements right now? What's a theme about positive self-talk in this group right now? What do you think we can say that might be true about positive self-talk? What might that mean for you in your job?"

Visualization. "How did you react to imaging your goal realized? What was that experience like? How did it feel? What seems to be some common experience in the group? What does that seem to say about the technique of visualization? How might you use visualization to give you better experiences in your job? What other job related applications might imaging have?"

For all (after the processing). "Is there anything left that someone would like to say? Are there any questions about the use of this technique? I will be available at the break to discuss this technique further with you."

10. Provide for Action and Follow-Up

A statement like the following is appropriate before the participants depart: "To get you started on transferring this technique to your job, fill out an action plan for how you will use the technique, for what purpose and when. We'll have a chance to see how this worked for you at our next session. Feel free to work with another person if you like. You will also notice that handouts are available that will allow you to walk through this process on your own whenever you wish. You may also wish to keep some kind of journal to record your experiences and their results."

Difficulties That May Be Encountered

If the preceding guidelines are followed carefully, most difficulties will be circumvented or their impact lessened. Any difficulties that do arise will probably take one of two forms: (1) resistance to the methods themselves or (2) a negative occurrence while using the technique.

Resistance to the Methods Themselves

After the techniques are explained and documented in the participants' own language and made voluntary, the remaining resistance most likely will be a product of one of the major issues mentioned at the beginning of this article. Some may argue that New Age training is against religious beliefs, as in the Pacific Bell case. In addition to reaffirming that use of the technique is voluntary, the trainer may wish to explain that even those who dispute these techniques from a religious point of view do not condemn them entirely. As Richard Watring, an evangelical Christian, explains, "I am not against all training technology more advanced than the lecture. In fact, the only so-called New Age techniques I greatly object to are those that depend on trainees loss or suspension of [critical judgment]" (cited in Zemke, 1987, p. 30). Even *Christianity Today*, a conservative Christian publication, states that some of the techniques "may seem neutral, even desirable . . . [and] have a legitimate function. What is objected to is placing them within a religious 'interpretive framework' or using them for 'devotional purposes'" (Burrows, 1986, p. 23). Again, if they are presented as a means to achieving some training goal, they should not be seen within a religious framework.

On the other hand, it seems inaccurate to state that these techniques are value free. If the techniques are used to solidify sales skills, then sales success is a value; if they are used to create corporate policy, then quality or service or profit or community may be values; if they are used in management development, then compassion and empathy or better performance management may be values. It has been asserted that great companies are "value-driven" (Peters & Waterman, 1980), often because their great leaders attend to values (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Leavitt, 1986).

A second argument may stem from the *brainwashing* or "suspension of critical judgment" issue. Two responses can be made to this argument:

1. "Irrational" actions are different from "nonrational" or "arational" actions (Ornstein, 1986, p. 182).
2. When people choose to suspend critical judgment for the purposes of creativity or using intuition, for example, they can always get it back.

In fact, many management sources speak eloquently to the need for more nonlinear thinking to balance analytical, linear thinking (Agor, 1984a; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Bright, 1985; Brown & Weiner, 1984; Garfield, 1986; Leavitt, 1986; Maddi & Kobasa, 1984). These responses can be explained and documented by reference to well-established sources in the field.

Negative Occurrences While Using the Technique

Any negative experience that occurs while using the technique (for example, if a participant becomes angry or sad) can be handled within the processing period when feelings are expressed. Because the techniques are presented as voluntary, the trainee can choose not to continue if the experience is too painful. If the trainee wishes to continue and to express the feelings, he or she probably will receive support from the

group. Of course, the trainer or consultant should be capable of and available for support (not therapy). Many other training techniques—role play, instrumentation, structured experiences, or even viewing a film—could produce the same potential problems. The profession has learned to handle these situations through competent processing.

RESULTS TO BE EXPECTED

If a trainer decides to use one or more of these New Age training techniques, certain results can be expected.

Benefits for Participants

Tangible results of New Age training technologies are discussed frequently and voluminously both in and outside training literature. Olympic athletes have used the techniques, with clear and internationally acclaimed results (Trachtenberg, 1987; Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987). The medical field cites positive results with more and more regularity (Benson, 1984; Siegel, 1987). Psychology continues to study the effects of these various techniques in normal healthy cases as well as abnormal ones (Burns, 1980; Carrington, 1977; Helmstetter, 1986; Romen, 1981; Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987).

Although no quantitative evaluative studies have been published, human resource development specialists use these techniques to produce results in the following areas:

- Whole-brain training (Herrmann, 1987);
- Learning skills (Meier, 1985);
- Program design (Chalofsky, 1987);
- Featuring skills (Gentilman & Nelson, 1983);
- Stress management (Jenner, 1986);
- Influencing subordinates' performance (Sandler, 1986);
- Changing the organization's future (Lynch, 1986);
- Improving performance (Friedrich, 1987);
- Motivating teamwork (Carlson, 1987); and
- Transforming large organizations (Veltrop, 1987).

Discussing results as the rewards of "mental training" (a combination of the technologies of visualization, affirmation, relaxation, and self-hypnosis), Zilbergeld & Lazarus (1987) conclude the following:

> There is hardly any situation in life that mental training can't help you deal with in a better, more constructive, and healthier way. No matter what you do, your mind is going to deal with every situation in one manner or another. Why not take steps to ensure that it works to your best advantage? (p. 216)

Benefits and Drawbacks for the Organization

Most of the results mentioned above can be seen as benefits to the employee and to the organization; if the employees learn all the skills New Age training technologies are being used to support, both they and the organization will surely profit. By learning to use relaxation, affirmation, and visualization as skills in their own right, employees may accrue some additional benefits:

1. *Employees will be more open to change,* knowing that they have some control over their own attitudes, options, actions, and reactions.
2. *Employees will be more able to concentrate,* focusing on the tasks before them.
3. *Employees will be more creative,* having greater resources for generating ideas and alternatives.
4. *Employees will be more responsible,* knowing that what happens is, at least in part, a result of how they manage their mental life.
5. *Employees will deal with others more effectively;* they will be more flexible and adaptable and know better how to control and to choose their actions and reactions.
6. *Employees will improve their personal lives,* which will in turn improve the work environment.

These techniques empower employees; empowered employees are more satisfied with themselves, and their work is more efficient, effective, and productive. New Age training techniques are available at a time when more organizations are being urged to empower their employees (Bennis, 1982; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Bradford & Cohen, 1984; Bright, 1985; Garfield, 1986; Naisbitt & Aburdene, 1985; Pascarella, 1984).

Drawbacks to New Age training technologies are common to most training and development efforts. Some typical drawbacks are the following:

- Training takes time to deliver, reinforce, and support.
- Training costs money.
- Training may meet resistance.
- Training may stimulate certain individuals to take action of which management does not approve.

Although the last drawback can occur with any kind of training, empowered employees may feel more comfortable with confrontation. (Assertiveness training could have the same result.) They may also be more comfortable in leaving a situation they find untenable. (Problem solving and decision making could have the same result.) Finally, they may choose to make life choices that the organization would not deem beneficial, such as not working overtime or not doing the work required for a promotion. (Stress management could have the same result.) However, these outcomes are unlikely, because empowerment expands one's options rather than limiting them.

Impact on the Trainer

Knowing, using, and teaching these skills have the potential to produce the benefits all trainers desire, "If you truly want to reach [employees], work first with their self-talk" (Helmstetter, 1986, p. 96). By promoting more and longer-term change, as well as leaving employees with flexible and adaptable skills for any situation, trainers will gain credibility, reputation, and influence. Expressed more forcefully, "The term professional development can never again denote only the acquisition of external skills and knowledge, but must include developing the full range of internal mental and spiritual skills as well" (Meier, 1984, p. 26).

Trainers will experience the same benefits as employees: They will feel more confident and competent and in more control of themselves and the situation. A list of ways trainers can use these techniques in training and development follows (Meier, 1984; Robinson, 1984):

- Learning factual material;
- Learning a system or a piece of equipment;
- Sorting and classifying data;
- Generating ideas;
- Solving problems;
- Resolving conflicts;
- Assessing "what-ifs;"
- Setting goals, planning for the future;
- Preparing for meetings:
- Determining organizational structure;
- Explaining concepts;
- Giving instructions;
- Devising changes in a physical setup;
- Sensing physical, mental, and emotional conditions;
- Establishing rapport;
- Designing curricula;
- Developing learning contracts;
- Tapping intuition;
- Patterning success; and
- Creating personal understanding and empowerment.

CONCLUSIONS

The best and safest of New Age training technologies are relaxation, affirmation, and visualization. Cutting-edge literature such as *Leaders, Corporate Pathfinders, Managing for Excellence, Peak Performers, Super Managing, Gearing up for the Fast Lane, Reinventing the Corporation,* and *Thriving on Chaos* refer to these techniques as being or contributing to: intuition, imagineering, focusing, scanning, mental agility, self-confidence, self-nurturing, creativity, metanoia, vision, and empowerment. Although these techniques can be used for dysfunctional conditions and for spiritual growth, they also can be considered a series of techniques for "basically normal people who want to extend their capabilities" to whatever productive ends they wish (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987, p. 15). New Age training technologies need not be attached to metaphysical, psychological, or spiritual theories; they can be presented in familiar language to avoid resistance and to become more workable. As accelerated learning techniques, they can be used as a means to many training ends and can be taught profitably alone. Trainers and consultants should be knowledgeable about these techniques for the same reasons as their clients: to expand their personal and professional boundaries.

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THE EFFECTIVE USE OF HUMOR IN HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Ozzie Dean

David Kearns, chairman and chief executive officer of Xerox Corporation, told this joke as he addressed students at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business (Kushner, 1990):

> There's a story about a Frenchman, a Japanese and an American who face a firing squad. Each gets one last request. The Frenchman asks to hear "The Marseillaise." The Japanese asks to give a lecture on the art of management. The American says, "Shoot me first—I can't stand one more lecture on Japanese management." (p. 39)

After the laughter subsided he added, "You'll be glad to hear I'm not going to talk about Japanese management today. In fact, if we keep on the right track, we may wind up listening to the Japanese give lectures on American management" (Kushner, 1990, p. 39).

Just as the message that David Kearns delivered was an important one, the messages that you deliver during the course of your work as a human resource development (HRD) practitioner—whether in formal speaking engagements, in training sessions, or in informal conversations with trainees or clients—are equally important. If your message is worthwhile but boring, the chances are that it will not be heard, understood, and remembered. Humor enlivens your message and helps listeners to relax and pay attention. Gene Perret (1990), a leading comedy writer in the U.S., reinforces this point:

> Some people may wonder "why bother using humor when you can make a point as fiercely as possible and get on with it?" Marshall McLuhan answers with: "Those who draw the distinction between education and entertainment don't know the first thing about either." (p. 327)

THE BENEFITS OF USING HUMOR

> As I left home to come down here tonight, my wife gave me some last-minute advice. She said, "I know it's a difficult subject and a tough group. But don't be intimidated. And don't try to be charming, witty, or intellectual. Just be yourself."
>
> Mario Cuomo

By using and encouraging humor and fun, you can have the following positive effects on those with whom you communicate:

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1. You show them that you are not afraid to let your guard down.
2. You convey that you are confident about their reactions to you.
3. You demonstrate that you trust them to value your spontaneity as much as, or more than, your stage persona as a speaker, trainer, or consultant.
4. You reduce their anxiety so that they can better deal with the problems they are facing.
5. You help them to gain perspective on their problems and to see those problems in a broader context.

Demonstrating a sense of humor decreases the distance between you and your listeners and increases their trust in you. Listeners tend to develop a quicker rapport with a speaker who encourages laughter than with one who is serious and stern. Also, listeners who laugh experience certain physiological and psychological reactions that not only benefit them but also benefit you as a speaker seeking receptivity: Their facial, torso, and stomach muscles relax; their blood pressure goes down; and a general sense of well-being and euphoria takes over.

Research on the psychology of humor shows that humor has a rejuvenating effect on listeners. Regardless of how accomplished a speaker is, listeners eventually reach a saturation point at which they demand some refreshment or they will absorb no more. A little comedy can provide that refreshment, after which people can listen with renewed interest.

Often HRD practitioners resist the use of humor for one or both of the following reasons:

1. *"I'm not here to win a popularity contest."* Because HRD professionals are more interested in getting the job done—in helping people to learn skills and solve problems, in helping organizations to become more effective, and so on—than in creating an atmosphere of fun and play, they sometimes think that creating such an atmosphere is not an important part of their work. This line of thinking is sometimes expressed in comments like "I'm not here to win a popularity contest. I'm here to work hard for my client." Certainly no one wants to serve a client with anything but the highest standards of competence, diligence, and creativity. However, there is a major difference between taking one's work seriously and taking oneself seriously.

2. *"Having fun is childish."* Another reason that HRD professionals sometimes hesitate to use humor is that they associate play or fun with immaturity. Some seem to think that fun precludes learning, creates an atmosphere of laissez faire, and damages their credibility. In reality, injecting appropriate humor into a seminar or session may enhance one's image, alleviate boredom, and boost retention.

It is important to note that creating humor does not necessarily mean becoming an expert at telling jokes. It means saying things that make people feel at ease and relaxed. Having fun, generating laughter, and sharing that laughter tell people that you are glad to see them, that you are happy to be with them, and that you are enjoying yourself.

Often it is humor that sets effective speakers apart and makes listeners remember them and recommend them to others. Those who can both educate and entertain—a rare quality in speakers today—earn high fees. And as an HRD professional, you should not hesitate to increase your fees over those of others if you can both generate learning and provide entertainment.

THE LINK BETWEEN FUN AND EFFECTIVENESS

> If you aren't having some fun, you might wonder just what you are doing in your business life . . . . If employees, customers, and vendors don't laugh and have a good time at your company, something is wrong.
>
> Paul Hawken

As Hawken implies in the preceding quote, there is a definite link between fun and effectiveness. The following paragraphs describe findings involving teachers, priests, managers, and organizations.

Findings with Teachers and Priests

> When his congregation began nodding off, a preacher said, "Last night I held in my arms the wife of another man." That woke people up, and they looked at him startled. Then he added, "It was my dear mother."

Teachers who used humor or created and/or allowed an atmosphere of fun and play were rated more favorably by their students (Abramis, 1991). Studies with priests (Holland, 1982) yielded similar results: Priests who used humor while delivering sermons were rated by those in attendance as "more likable" and "more effective" than were priests who did not use humor. Furthermore, church attendance was greater for the priests who used humor than it was for the priests who did not.

Findings with Managers and Organizations

> Just think, if Moses were alive today, God could have faxed the ten commandments to him.

One study with a control group and an experimental group of managers found that subordinates in the experimental condition—in which managers created and allowed a "funny" atmosphere at meetings—more frequently rated their managers as "likable" and "effective" than did those in the control groups—whose managers did not create or allow fun and play (Chapman, 1986). In addition, David Abramis (1991) studied office fun and reported that roughly 60 percent of employees have fun at work and 10 percent say that they do so consistently. Furthermore, Abramis (1991), Duncan and Feisal (1989), and Kiechell (1983) reported an increase in creativity, productivity, motivation, and satisfaction among employees when enjoyment in the office was emphasized. A decrease in anxiety and depression was also noted. Abramis predicts that managers will increasingly be allowing fun in the workplace once they become convinced that it might help them to achieve organizational goals.

Organizations are beginning to realize that an environment that encourages fun and humor creates a relaxed atmosphere and enhances effectiveness. Consequently, many are hiring humor consultants to teach their managers to take themselves lightly. Joel Goodman, head of the Humor Institute in Saratoga Springs, New York, and the only full-time humor consultant in the United States, speaks to companies across the world on the use of humor in management and leadership. He reports that he has to turn down twenty lectures a month. That is how important humor is to some organizations; they know its power in motivating people and in boosting morale and productivity. In addition, some companies have recognized the importance of interrupting boring daily routines with enjoyment and have responded by creating "humor rooms" that are filled with mini-basketball hoops, funny props, and Candid Camera videos. Employees are encouraged to visit these rooms occasionally for some comic relief.

HOW TO USE HUMOR EFFECTIVELY

Before you start using humor, first make sure your listeners understand that you are competent in your subject matter. You do this by briefly stating your qualifications for the job that you are there to do.

Caution 1. Never introduce yourself in a humorous manner unless your reputation has preceded you. If the listeners have never heard of you, introduce yourself in a serious manner so that they have a chance to get to know you and to become convinced that you can get the job done. A basic principle of audience psychology is audience resistance to humor: People tend to resist those who try to be funny. They need to hear your voice and to become acquainted with you before you attempt to make them laugh.

Caution 2: Never use humor to conceal a lack of preparation or inadequate knowledge of your subject matter. Humor is only the icing on the cake; it should complement and enhance your message, not replace it.

After you have introduced yourself, you are free to use and encourage humor. Here are ten guidelines that you might find helpful:

1. Make Fun of Yourself—Not Others

When I told people I'm in software, they thought that meant women's lingerie.

In any given audience, you will find "hostages"—people who were forced either directly or indirectly to attend. Using self-effacing humor gives "hostages" as well as others an incentive to pay attention and to become less bored. However, be aware that using humor to make fun of others is inappropriate and will alienate people.

Self-effacing humor shows strength and confidence; it tells your listeners that you are secure enough to laugh at yourself. Charles Gruner, professor of speech communication at the University of Georgia in Athens, has studied humor and persuasion for more than twenty years. He reinforces the importance of self effacing humor by saying, "A little self-deprecation humor shows that the speaker feels strongly

enough to make fun of himself. It creates audience rapport" (Kushner, 1990, p. 79). The important phrase in this comment is "a little." Research shows that self-effacing humor is most effective when used sparingly (Kushner, 1990). Without it, you may appear stuffy; but if you use too much of it, you may cast yourself as a "Woody Allen" character, someone who is always putting himself or herself down. To be effective, you will have to strive for a happy medium.

2. Laugh with People—Not at Them

Be sensitive to people's feelings and needs. Never share a funny anecdote about a person known to you and the listeners unless you have previously received that person's permission to share it.

3. Select Material That Relates to Your Topic or Your Listeners

Keep in mind that you can tell a good story or joke badly, but you can rarely tell a bad story or joke well. Part of what determines whether your material is "good" or "bad" is its relevance to your topic and your audience. Use material that is suited to your topic or audience: stories about careers for a training session on career development, stories about management for an audience of managers, and so on.

4. Believe in Your Material

To tell a story or joke effectively, you must believe in its concept. You must "buy" the idea. Otherwise, you may subconsciously hold back.

5. Deliver Your Material Well

Musicians often say that many people can play the guitar but few play it well. The same is true of telling stories and jokes. Good delivery takes practice, practice, and more practice so that the material sounds spontaneous and conversational.

6. Learn Techniques for Good Delivery

Here are some tips for achieving good delivery:

- Know your lines.
- Be confident.
- Do not announce that you are going to tell a joke.
- Establish eye contact.
- Pause for the punch line and wait for the laugh.
- Keep it brief.

7. Avoid Ethnic Put-Downs

Jokes that disparage specific cultures are inappropriate. Some professional comedians feel that you can tell an ethnic joke if you are of that ethnicity, but others disagree. This issue warrants careful judgment, especially in light of recent concern about sensitivity to cultural diversity.

8. Avoid Sexist Put-Downs

Although it has never been wise to disparage one sex or the other, it is especially inappropriate now, when the gender gap is widening because of sexual harassment. It is also unwise to belittle particular people in your audience, who will probably resent it. Humor should heal, not hurt.

9. Give Listeners Permission to Laugh

> In these times, a good time to laugh is any time you can.
>
> Ozzie Dean

Listeners typically model their behavior after that of the speaker: If the speaker is serious, they tend to be serious; if the speaker is entertaining, they tend to relax and have a good time. For this reason, it is important to give your listeners permission to laugh. You do this by laughing with them, reminding them of the difference between taking your work seriously and taking yourself lightly.

In the five years that I have been a management consultant and a professional standup comedian, I have spoken to a wide variety of audiences: Navy personnel, senior citizens, people who are hearing impaired, religious people, graduate and undergraduate students, and tough comedy-club customers. I have never encountered an audience that did not want to laugh. The reason is simple: There is a child in each and every one of us dying to have permission to laugh. Try to involve your listeners actively in the fun; encourage them to relate funny anecdotes, personal experiences, and so on. Keep in mind that in any audience there are natural jokesters who like to draw attention to themselves and who can contribute to the overall atmosphere of fun. Allow them to do so as long as they do not upstage you or get out of hand.

10. Use "Savers" If a Story or Joke Bombs

A "saver" is a funny comment that is made after a story or joke does not receive the expected laughter. Even the most accomplished comedians tell stories and jokes that bomb once in a while. As one comedian put it, "Dying is easy; comedy is hard." Consequently, all comedians prepare savers to use when their material fails. Either you can compose your own savers to fit a particular situation, or you can use any of the following:

- "Well, I'm going to follow in Saddam Hussein's footsteps and call that joke a victory."

- "That usually works . . . with my wife (husband)."
- "You know what they say: 'He who laughs . . . lasts.' "
- "Come on, people, that joke is a killer in Cleveland (substitute any other city)."
- "I should have a sign that says 'How am I dying? Call 555-1212.'"
- "That was one of those scud-missile jokes. You never know when it's going to hit."
- "What's the difference between a consultant and a pigeon? The pigeon can make a deposit on a new car."

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NEEDS ASSESSMENT: AVOIDING THE "HAMMER" APPROACH

Joe Thomas

In the hands of a skilled craftsman, a hammer has an almost infinite number of uses. However, a carpenter would not attempt to build a house with only one or two types of hammer. Similarly, the needs diagnosis is an essential tool for a program builder. Unfortunately, many program designers have one or two favorite needs-assessment tools that are applied to many situations, regardless of fit. Just as the hammer can be used by a skilled craftsman to force a square peg into a round hole, an assessment technique can be forced to fit a given situation.

A recent literature review (Moore & Dutton, 1978) concluded that needs assessments are not being performed appropriately. They tend to be performed on a periodic, program-oriented, "crisis management" basis, with little attempt to coordinate the assessment with other organizational activities. Blake and Mouton (1980) have stated that "responding to felt needs rather than real needs might be the number one problem facing HRD professionals today" (p. 107). Felt needs for which programs are often designed include the need for better communication, better leadership, better time management, and more effective decision making. Improvement often is needed in these areas. Because people do not argue against these needs, the standard procedure frequently is to develop a program. Like the square peg fitting into the round hole, the program may not quite fit the real needs of the situation.

Individuals who conduct needs assessment often tend to reduce the scope of their assessment by looking only at a limited number of sources of information and by using only one or two favorite techniques for collecting and analyzing the data. In a typical assessment program, the program designer meets with the department manager and they determine that the supervisors seem to be having trouble explaining the new cost-control system to their subordinates. They agree that it looks like a communication problem and that a communication program would probably be useful.

This scenario may be oversimplified, but it does illustrate three common pitfalls in diagnosing program needs. First, the source of information about the need for a program is limited—in this case, the source is the department head and program planner's perception of the problem. Other sources of information could have been explored. Second, the interview was the only technique that was used to diagnose the problem. Again, other techniques such as questionnaires, observation, and critical incidents may

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have been more appropriate. Finally, the decision was made by only the two individuals. Other means of data analysis obviously could have been helpful.

This article will identify a variety of diagnostic tools for assessing training and development needs. For each technique, issues regarding its use will be discussed and references to further information will be provided. These techniques will then be developed into a model that will help to integrate the various sources of information, techniques of data collection, and methods of analysis for the program designer.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A needs assessment is conducted to determine the extent of a specific organizational problem and to design a program to resolve that specific concern. The first step of the program designer is to try to acquire an understanding of the problem. This understanding usually is achieved by collecting information. Individuals, groups, public sources, and organizational records all are potential sources of information, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sources of Data

Individuals	Internal Success External Success
Groups	Committees Constituents
Public Sources	Government publications Trade associations Indexes Business services Public statements
Organizational Records	Company records Performance records Task analyses

Individuals

Information gathered from people on an individual basis can provide very useful data. If the individuals selected have regular contact with the problem area, they are likely to have a deeper understanding of the problem. Depending on the type of program to be designed, knowledgeable individuals could include persons within the organization or external to it.

Internal sources of data might include the people on whom the program will focus or their superiors, subordinates, and/or peers. These individuals frequently can provide good anecdotal evidence that can be used to diagnose weaknesses. The same examples then can be used later to add substance and relevance to the program.

In the scenario previously described, when interviewing the supervisors, the program designer found that they could not explain the new system to their employees because it had not been clearly explained to them. In this case, meeting with the people on whom the training was to focus revealed that they did not need general communication training, but merely a better explanation of the system they would be using. The person who was then called on to explain the accounting system was able to focus on the supervisors' questions and to provide appropriate examples. The supervisors were then able to explain the system to their subordinates.

Consultants also are frequently used as external sources of information. Although consultants can be very helpful, research by Tichy (1975, 1978) and Slocum (1978) shows that consultants may have limited perspectives about how to approach a problem. Like many people, they use certain activities and techniques in most situations. If the information desired is in one of "their areas," the consultants can provide a wealth of information. Otherwise, their perceptions may be biased or misleading. Consultants also may tend to diagnose the problem to fit their areas of expertise, even though it may be only marginally related to the true problem.

Care must be taken to assure that the information obtained from individuals is representative. If only a few individuals have direct involvement with a particular problem, they may be hesitant to share their knowledge for fear that the information may be detrimental to them in the long run. Using only a few sources of information may also limit a statistical analysis of the data. Finally, the "expert" status of the information source may restrict the range of alternatives considered in designing the program. When an "expert" states an opinion on something, many people are reluctant to challenge that viewpoint. The impact of these issues depends on the nature of the data sought.

Groups

Groups also can provide valuable information for a program planner because they represent a variety of viewpoints about a particular concern. A sample of group members can provide measures of the frequency or importance of issues. Committees and constituents are groups that are commonly used to generate data.

A *committee* with members from diverse backgrounds can give the program planner numerous perspectives regarding the problem under consideration. An ad hoc group with the explicit purpose of assisting in program design can provide information during the planning phases of the program and can help to anticipate and resolve problems during the implementation stages.

In developing a vocational training program, for example, individuals with relevant experience could advise on program development, provide input about what the students should be capable of doing on completion of the program, and help to determine what training is actually feasible within the setting. This temporary committee could meet periodically during the early phases of the program to provide assistance in solving problems of implementation. Frequently, members of the temporary committee later

serve as members of a permanent advisory committee that helps to keep the program relevant to its initial goals or provides guidance concerning modification of the program.

Standing committees formed to accomplish a specific function also can provide information for program design. In the performance of their regular duties, members of these committees frequently perceive areas that could benefit from training and development activities or difficulties that could arise as a result of planned changes. For example, if a business were considering secretarial training programs to introduce word-processing skills, valuable input could be obtained from a standing committee on computer usage. This committee also might be able to identify future training needs in other areas of computer usage.

Constituency groups also can provide useful data about the performance of an organization (Bartee & Cheyunski, 1977). These groups include providers of resources and services, developers of technology, and consumers of goods and services produced. It is common to think of these groups as outside the organization; however, departments and groups within an organization may provide resources and services to, or utilize outputs of, the group being studied. Their perception of the group is likely to be different from that of the group's members.

For example, the trimming department of a diecasting facility was unable to meet the production standards established by the engineering department. Although piecerate incentives had been established for employees who exceeded a set level of production, employees rarely were able to meet the level needed to qualify for the production bonus. The production manager believed that employees in the trimming department needed training to make them more efficient. However, the trimming employees blamed the workers in the casting department for producing defective components that required excessive trimming and slowed production. Interviews with members of the constituency group, the casting department, indicated that the parts did conform to existing tolerances. The problem was that as the dies became more worn, the components produced needed more trimming. However, replacing the dies in the casting department would cost the members of that group time and thereby reduce their production bonuses. So, as long as the parts met specifications, they were going to produce with worn dies. Meeting with constituency groups in this case enabled management to see that the problem was not defective parts, but a combination of excessive tolerances and the current production bonus system.

Public Sources

A vast amount of information relevant to solving business and economic problems is readily available to the diagnostician. Such information can be useful in identifying problems, industry trends, and potential solutions. Much of this information is free or comes with a subscription to a publication, which is quite reasonable compared to the expense of collecting the data. Common sources of information include government publications, trade publications, indexes, business guides and services, and speeches. Goeldner and Dirks (1976) provide a comprehensive review of sources of business facts.

Government publications are available from many agencies at the Federal, state, and local levels. The *Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications* provides a comprehensive list of publications issued by various Federal agencies. Other data are available through the Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce. Probably the most difficult aspect of obtaining government data is finding out which agencies publish the relevant information.

Trade associations provide much basic data about the operating characteristics of their members. The *Encyclopedia of Associations* and the *National Trade and Professional Associations of the United States* provide a variety of information about the thousands of trade and professional associations operating in the United States.

Some *periodicals* also publish special reports about particular industries. For example, *Business Week* publishes an annual survey of the liquor industry every February or March.

Indexes can provide references to authors, subjects, and titles of books, pamphlets, periodicals, and other documents. Many indexes are available in public libraries.

Business guides and services provide information about particular industries or companies. *Moody's Industrial Manual* provides information about principal officers, products, business history, and properties. Standard and Poor's provides *Industry Surveys* (annual surveys of each industry), *The Outlook* (weekly stock-market letters), and *Stock Guide* (investment data concerning many common and preferred stocks).

Speeches made at professional meetings, seminars, commencements, and other public events also can provide insight into industry trends, problems, and challenges.

This brief review of sources of published information is not comprehensive; a variety of information is publicly available. Such information is especially useful to a consultant who is not familiar with a particular industry. Reviewing published data provides a means for determining how common certain problems are to the industry and how other firms within the industry have resolved such problems. Such information also can familiarize the consultant with the specific terminology of the industry.

Organizational Records

Internal company records are often underutilized in diagnosing problems within the organization. Much information that has been collected for other purposes is available and useful for problem diagnosis, but other groups in the organization may not realize that it exists. One indirect benefit of using a committee to collect information is that the various committee members may be familiar with different company records. These records might include company reports, performance records, and task analyses.

Company reports are compiled from a number of sources and vary widely in their usefulness for diagnostic work. They are useful in developing a broader understanding of the company, its operations, and its personnel. For example, annual reports provide statements of organizational goals and information about the firm's product line(s). Annual reports also usually provide information about officers, customers, and geographical locations. The recognition of interrelationships between locations and/or

individuals is especially important when changes in one aspect of an organization impact others. Other typical company reports relate to personnel practices, marketing efforts, financial conditions, and operating techniques and changes.

Similarly, *performance records* can be useful in problem diagnosis. They can provide information about individual, departmental, or organizational performance. They may be able to show the development of trends. They also may be useful in pinpointing when a particular problem or behavior began, which could be helpful in establishing causes of existing problems. For example, one organization noticed a decline in productivity in a particular department. The review of performance records showed that the decline had been occurring for almost two years, although it had only recently become critical. Further examination of company records showed that the decline had started about six weeks after the appointment of a new head of the department. This discovery helped to shift the focus of the training program from one of improving workers' productive skills to one of improving working relationships between the employees and the department head.

Task analyses that identify specific attributes of a job also can be useful in designing training and development programs. The analysis should provide a description of the skills and abilities needed by job incumbents as well as the actual work, working conditions, and other relevant information. If the people being hired to perform the task do not meet the necessary requirements, a program to develop the needed skills and abilities is indicated.

Task analyses also can be used to compare the actual performance of the task to the way it is supposed to be done. This can be especially useful in diagnosing problems that result from unclear instructions and role ambiguity or from differences between written job descriptions and the actual tasks being performed.

DATA-COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The next problem faced by the diagnostician is to determine how to collect the needed data from the various sources available. Many methods can be used. Some of them require the involvement of individuals or groups. Others such as observation and review of existing data require less direct involvement. Table 2 is a partial listing of techniques for collecting information. For more complete discussions of data-collection techniques, refer to Bouchard (1976) and Nadler (1977).

Individually Oriented Methods

Most data-collection techniques involve either the people who are to be trained or individuals who have frequent contact with the prospective trainees. These techniques include interviews, questionnaires, and tests (see Table 2). Each method has unique features that influence its appropriateness.

One of the most commonly used methods for gathering data is the *interview.* Frequently, the person doing the needs assessment meets with the potential trainee and

Table 2. Data-Collection Techniques

Individually Oriented Methods	Interviews Questionnaires Tests
Group-Oriented Methods	Sensing interviews Committees Delphi technique Nominal-group technique Brainstorming
Observation	Systematic observation Complete observation Participant observation
Review of Existing Data	Sensitivity Originality

the trainee's supervisor or subordinates and asks questions that are designed to identify the training needs. Such interviews often are conducted informally; usually, the people to be interviewed are not given enough notice of or details about the meeting to prepare themselves adequately.

In one instance, the author was interviewing employees of an airplane manufacturer in an effort to establish causes of excessive employee turnover. Subjects were selected at random and asked to report to the interviewing room at a specified time. Just before receiving the notice to report for the interview, one worker had argued with her boss about her job performance. She came to the interview expecting to be fired. It took most of the time allocated for the interview to convince the worker that the purpose of the interview was not to hear her side of the argument.

An unprepared interviewee usually can offer only opinions, unsubstantiated by "hard" data. Obviously, such information also may be superficial. This problem is more severe if the interviewee is relatively unfamiliar with the subject or the interviewer is not highly skilled in interviewing. The interviewer must know how to ask probing questions to get at the real problems.

A second problem associated with interviews is determining whom to interview. If unfavorable information about someone is introduced, there is always the fear that the source of the information will be revealed to that person. Unless an atmosphere of trust is developed with the interviewee, the information shared may be slanted, particularly if the subject is the interviewee's supervisor or another supervisor. A trusting relationship can take time to develop. Some people never will "open up" to an interviewer, and many people will tell the interviewer only what they think the interviewer wants to hear. Information acquired under such circumstances should be evaluated carefully and compared with data acquired from other sources.

The *questionnaire* or survey is another commonly used method of collecting data from large groups of people, although many factors can bias these data (Bouchard,

1976). Any questionnaire or instrument should be checked for its ability to measure what is desired (validity) and the consistency, over time, of the ratings obtained (reliability). Questions should not be phrased so that the answers received are biased. Closed-ended questions limit the responses an individual can make. For example, if the choices on the instrument form are limited to "team development," "MBO," and "performance appraisal," but the respondent actually feels that the answer should be "a lack of organizational direction," it is unlikely that the respondent will write in "lack of direction" even if a space is left for "other."

Another way that bias is introduced in the use of questionnaires is through leading questions. Such questions indicate to the respondent how he or she is expected to answer (Bartee & Cheyunski, 1977). If asked whether assistance in improving leadership abilities would be useful, who would say no? This does not, however, mean that leadership training is actually the most crucial training need.

Tests also can be used to assess the skills, abilities, or perspectives of an individual for diagnostic purposes. Tests are probably the least used of the techniques for assessing individuals, although they may be quite appropriate. It is worthwhile for a program designer to have an understanding of how accomplished the class is before starting the program. Many programs repeat too much information that is already known or assume too much prior knowledge. Tests are a convenient way to assess the entry-level abilities of the class members in order to customize the program to meet the needs of the individuals involved.

One of the major disadvantages of tests is that they frequently are perceived as threatening, and people become quite defensive about their scores. The purpose of the test, i.e., to identify needs for developmental purposes, should be stated explicitly if the test is to serve as a motivational tool.

Group-Oriented Methods

In contrast to individually oriented methods of data collection, group-oriented methods allow people to receive assistance from other group members to support their viewpoints. Such techniques also allow members to "piggyback" on other people's ideas, generating expanded information. However, they also can limit opinions that do not represent the majority viewpoint. This limitation can be an advantage or a disadvantage, depending on whether the researcher wants a variety of ideas or ideas common to the majority of group members. The most commonly used techniques for collecting data from groups are sensing interviews, committees, the Delphi technique, the nominal-group technique, and brainstorming.

Sensing interviews are often used to ascertain the concerns, issues, needs, and resources of people within an organization (Huse, 1980). Various individuals from different groups in the organization are selected to share their views with the data collector. Members' reactions to different program alternatives can be explored or issues that are of greatest concern to the group can be examined. The resulting information can

be analyzed to determine common themes, and programs can then be designed around the themes identified.

Sensing interviews may be preferable to individual interviews in terms of time utilization and group support of ideas, but they do have potential weaknesses. First, as with most data-collection methods, the respondents must feel that their answers will be used in the intended manner. Trust of the leader and the other group members is a prerequisite to an honest, open discussion. Second, people who were not invited to be members of the group may feel that they were excluded deliberately; thus, they may feel threatened. An explanation of the purpose of the sensing interview (or continued use of the technique) should be given to alleviate (or confirm) the fears of such people.

Committees may be ad hoc or permanent advisory groups whose purpose is to provide input and guidance in program design. Alternatively, functional committees—such as a safety committee or a planning board—may provide insight into particular problems. Often, committee members can see skill deficiencies, attitudinal barriers, or other factors that hinder performance. Because of their expertise, they also may be able to specify the type of employee development that would be most useful in overcoming the problems.

Another useful method of gathering data from a group of people is the *Delphi technique* (Bunning, 1979; Dalkey, 1969). This process is especially useful if it is necessary to obtain information from individuals in a variety of locations. Generally, the process starts with the selection of a panel of individuals who are knowledgeable about a particular area of concern. These individuals are requested to identify the major aspects of a specified issue. These issues are then integrated into a questionnaire that is sent back to the panel of experts, who are asked to indicate the extent of the problem. The responses are summarized and returned to the panel members with another questionnaire; this time the experts are asked to complete the questionnaire and to explain their rationale for deviating from the mean group response on each question. The process reveals both the group members' opinions and reasons for differences of opinion.

The *nominal-group technique (NGT)* (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975; Ford, 1975) is somewhat similar to the Delphi technique. The major difference between the two methods is that in the NGT, the panel members meet as a group to discuss the various issues, rather than operating independently as in the Delphi method. The individuals participating in an NGT exercise are given a subject or theme and asked to write their thoughts about the topic on a sheet of paper. The next step is to proceed around the group, asking each member in turn to share one thought or idea with the group. These ideas are recorded without discussion until all ideas are shared and recorded.

The major advantages of the NGT are that it assures that every group member contributes to the generation of ideas and that multiple facets of ideas are surfaced. It also helps to gain commitment from the participants because they have had equal opportunities to contribute and to evaluate ideas.

Brainstorming (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1974) is similar to the NGT. In this approach, ideas are voiced as they occur and are recorded without discussion of their merit. This allows participants to build on other members' ideas. Quantity of ideas is the first concern of brainstorming. After numerous ideas are generated and no new ideas are forthcoming, the discussion turns to the feasibility of the ideas. The major advantage of this approach is that "piggybacking" of ideas can occur. The technique does not assure that all members will participate.

Observation

A third group of techniques used to collect data (and also to verify data collected by other methods) is observation (Bouchard, 1976). The techniques range from observing a sample of behavior to some form of "undercover" observation by a concealed observer. The advantage of observation is that behavior is more natural and people are not required to provide the information directly. They continue to function as they would normally. Ideally, this would decrease the intervention impact caused by the data-collection process. Still, observation is likely to have some impact on behavior. Subjects being observed may "perform" for the observer and thus bias the data.

Systematic observation techniques frequently require a sampling of the desired behavior. For example, a task being performed could be observed on a random basis. After a series of observations, a pattern of activities would evolve, showing how time was spent and what problems were encountered. If the observation revealed that much time was spent in giving instructions, it might be deemed worthwhile to design a program to facilitate the communication of instructions. This might involve a training program on communication skills or the development of written instructions to reduce the need for verbal ones.

Complete observation occurs when the observer openly uses a camera, tape recorder, videotape, or other technique to record relevant behavior. This method can yield massive amounts of information. It also can require large expenditures of time and money.

The complete observation technique can be used within a training program to record participant behavior during an activity. The primary purpose of such a recording would be to allow the trainer to discuss relevant issues with the trainees without interrupting the dynamics of the original session. However, it also would allow the trainers to analyze the session later, in order to improve the design of the training program. This type of observation also can be useful in analyzing meetings and other group events.

In a final method of observation, the observer is also a participant. This may require that the diagnostician actually perform a task in order to learn what is involved in doing the work. Participation gives the data collector added credibility as well as relevant examples.

In another version of participant observation, the observer surreptitiously becomes a member of the group. Ideally, this method reduces the bias caused when the subjects

realize that they are being observed. However, because the observer is intervening in the group's activities, his or her actions can bias the results. A potentially more serious issue is one of ethics and credibility (Friedlander & Brown, 1974). How would employees respond to data gathered by such means? Would they trust a leader who used such techniques to gather data? This method would be especially counterproductive if the program based on the data were to require openness and trust among the participants.

Review of Existing Data

A review of existing data is useful in gathering information because the information is collected after the action, so there is no danger of biasing the behavior. An example of this technique is a review of critical incidents or performance evaluations to determine employee strengths and weaknesses. It may be possible to trace a number of incidents to common causes and, thus, to identify potential problem areas.

Although a variety of data is available in most organizations, there do not seem to be well-established techniques for collecting such data. Information collected is often in the form of case studies, which may be used to demonstrate a point during a program, indicate needs for program development, or verify the results of information acquired through other means. The keys to the use of this data-collection technique seem to be sensitivity and originality. One must be very sensitive to the type, quality, and initial purpose of the information that is being reviewed. Creativity or originality in interpreting and analyzing the data can lead to new insights. Historical data also can be used to supplement and confirm data collected from other sources and by other means.

DATA ANALYSIS

After the sources of needed information are identified and the data are collected, it is necessary to analyze and interpret the data. The procedures that are frequently used include some form of gap analysis, scaling methods, weighting formulas, and consensus. These procedures can be used to analyze data collected by a variety of techniques, and more than one procedure can be used to analyze a group of data. These techniques are listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Methods of Data Analysis

Gap Analysis	
Scaling Methods:	Rating scales Rankings Nominal-group technique
Weighting Formulas	
Consensus:	Voting Compromise

Gap Analysis

A fairly easy method of analyzing data is examining the gap between where the organization "is" on a particular issue and "where it should be" or "where it would like to be." The differences between actual and desired states indicate potential areas for program development. A difference between 50-percent turnover for a particular firm versus a 10-percent average turnover for the industry would signal a potential problem. Once such differences are identified, it is necessary to attach priorities to the gaps to guide program development.

Scaling Methods

Scaling methods such as measurements on a continuum or rankings can be used to establish the relative significance of issues.

Scales are frequently used to show the importance or magnitude of various issues to the person completing the scale. The most frequently used is the Likert scale, on which the respondent indicates agreement on a continuum ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Other frequently used measurements include ranges of importance or desirability. A variation of this technique is to ask the respondent to mark a scale to indicate where the organization is and where it should be on particular issues. This helps to identify major gaps between the current and desired status of the organization.

Various data also can be rank ordered in terms of their importance, desirability, frequency, etc. Individual rankings then can be combined to establish the relative value that the group places on each issue.

In the nominal-group technique discussed earlier, the participants in a group rank the items identified in the group discussion in order of importance. The responses of all participants are then compiled, and the results are reported to the group. The group ranking then can be used to establish priorities for discussion, training, or other program design.

Weighting Formulas

One of the problems in using scales is that no mechanism is provided to indicate the relative differences in the importance of the scales. Weighting formulas allow the respondents or diagnostician to attach more value to one scale than another. A common weighting method is to ask the respondent to indicate how important a particular attribute (skill, attitude, need) is, how frequently the attribute is encountered, or how deficient the subject feels in terms of the attribute. A recent study (Thomas & Sireno, 1980) asked managers to indicate how important a particular competency was for their subordinates, how frequently the subordinates needed the competency, and how prepared the subordinates were in that competency. These three responses were then combined to determine the need for a program to develop the competency. This study also identified substantially different priorities for job competencies among industries—

again supporting the need to customize training programs rather than interpreting the training needs to fit the existing program.

Consensus

One of the most commonly used methods of reaching agreement is consensus (a majority or all members agree on an issue, a ranking, or a next step). This is not to be confused with voting, compromising, or "horse trading." Although the latter are often easy methods for decision making, they may not include a careful weighing of all the relevant information.

If a committee uses a nonquantitative method to collect information, a vote of the committee often is used to determine the implications of the data collected. However, one or two persons or issues frequently dominate the discussion, or individuals with high status, such as experts or superiors, often voice their views on the subject. Unless there is information that clearly contradicts these high-powered views, the subsequent vote and recommended actions will likely follow along.

If there are a number of strong feelings about an issue, a common solution is a compromise. This often results in a nonthreatening, suboptimum recommendation that is acceptable to all but will do little to solve the problem. In fact, a compromise program could worsen the problem by raising the expectations of participants. Then, if the expected results are not achieved, the program, its sponsor, and its planner look bad.

A DIAGNOSTIC PROCESS MODEL

The preceding discussion has identified three important dimensions associated with the performance of an organizational needs diagnosis. To develop an organizational improvement program, the program designer should consider the possible sources of data, how the data will be collected, and how the data will be analyzed. Figure 1 shows a representation of a diagnostic model based on these three dimensions.

This model can be used to demonstrate several points. First, it provides a systematic framework for thinking about needs assessment. It shows various sources of data and techniques for collecting and analyzing the data. Second, the model shows the interactive nature of data sources, collection, and analysis methods. The three dimensions of needs assessment indicate an ongoing, systematic process. The accuracy of the needs assessment will be improved if all three elements of the diagnostic process are considered simultaneously.

Just as the carpenter needs a variety of tools to build a structure, the program builder needs a variety of tools to diagnose program needs. Although it is possible to design a program based on an interview with an employee or a few supervisors, a wider perspective is helpful in assessing the needs that the program should attempt to meet. In general, the more sources of information, techniques of data collection, and methods of data analysis that can be used to diagnose a problem, the better the understanding one

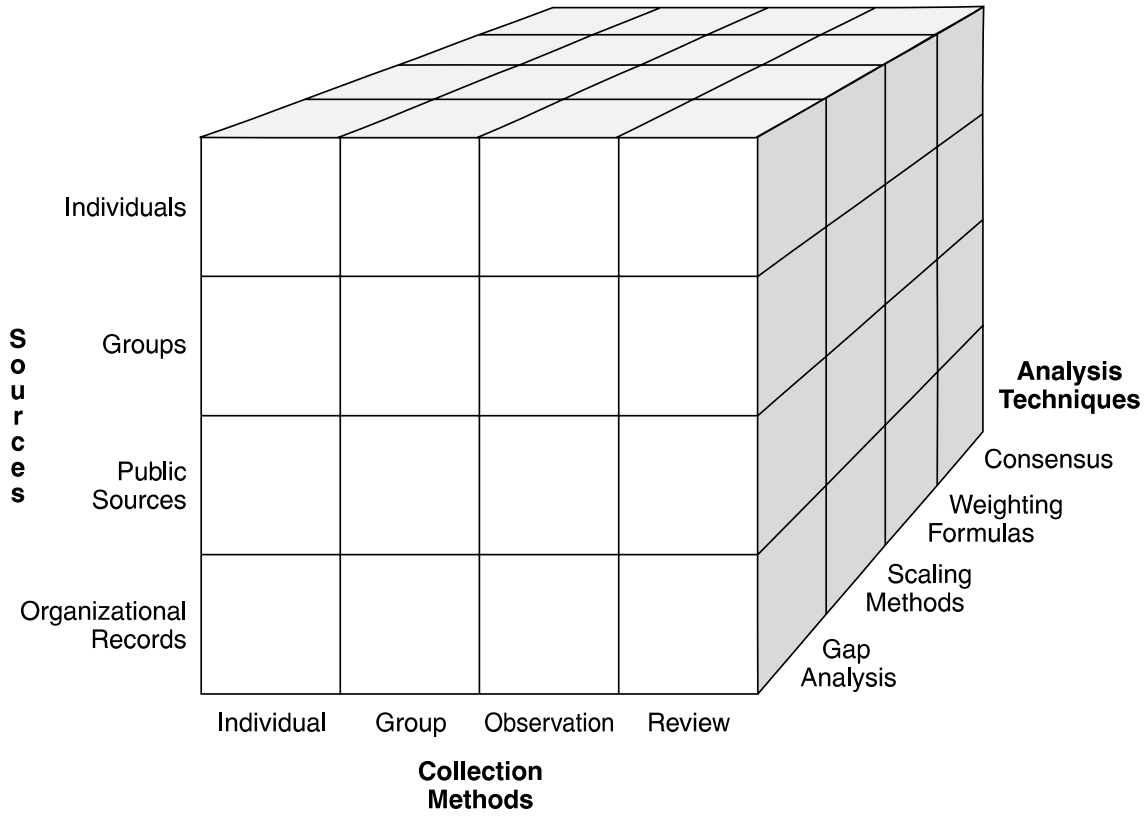

Figure 1. A Diagnostic Process Model for Needs Assessment

has of the problem. The better one's understanding is of the problem, the less likely one is to try to hammer a square program into a round problem.

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DIAGNOSING THE TRAINING SITUATION: MATCHING INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES WITH LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ENVIRONMENT

Carol Rocklin Kay, Sue Kruse Peyton, and Robert Pike

Professionals in training and development often ask about the "best" instructional techniques. Many experienced trainers realize that what is best is relative to the learners, the trainer, the outcomes desired, and environmental conditions. Numerous techniques are available, and each has its own characteristics and potentials for making an effective training program. Knox (1980) suggests that the major reason trainers need to use a variety of training techniques is to promote interest and encourage persistence among the participants until the desired outcomes are achieved. This article provides a framework to assist trainers in effectively matching instructional techniques with desired outcomes in the learning environment.

It is especially important for trainers to tailor the techniques to accomplish specified outcomes, because application of knowledge and skill is the justification for training. To enable learners to use the content of training programs in their jobs or personal lives, trainers must plan for higher levels of learning than can be achieved with certain instructional techniques. According to Watson (1980), many adult-education trainers use structured, learner-centered group methods. Such methods include consensus problem solving (Hall & Williams, 1970), nominal group techniques (Ford & Nemiroff, 1975), role play (Jones & Pfeiffer, 1979; Wohling, 1976), and simulation (Coppard, 1976; Horn, 1978). Additionally, many trainers adapt such methods to their own situations. They do not need extensive knowledge of group dynamics in order to be effective in the use of structured, learner-centered group techniques; however, a less directive, more consultative role is necessary (Watson, 1980). Time must be allowed for participants to develop their groups and adjust to more active roles in the learning process. Thus, these techniques have implications for both the learning environment and the desired outcomes.

Although lower-level learning may not be accomplished best in group processes (Raven, 1969; Middleman & Goldberg, 1972), there is evidence that planned discussion can support learners who are encountering difficulty acquiring basic knowledge and understanding from lectures, readings, and other information receiving techniques (Watson, 1980). By specifying the outcomes desired from training experiences and by

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using a variety of techniques that can effectively and efficiently produce those results, trainers have a greater probability of successful programs.

Effective teaching is the heart of a training program. This article identifies important relationships among instructional techniques, learning outcomes, and the learning environment to assist trainers in increasing teaching effectiveness.

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES[1]

Trainers need a broad repertoire of teaching techniques to incorporate into training programs. They need to understand the advantages, disadvantages, and potentials of techniques in order to match them with desired outcomes and the learning environment. Instructional techniques often evolve naturally from specific content. For example, in an introductory computer workshop, an appropriate strategy for introducing the concept of "booting the disk" is the demonstration technique. In a management-development session, on the other hand, a role-play technique could help participants become more adept at performance-appraisal interviews.

An effective trainer generally uses a variety of strategies, depending on what is appropriate for the content, outcomes, environment, and available resources. This section outlines some popular training techniques or methods, and they are grouped under the primary categories of "information receiving," "discussion," "information finding," and "dramatization." For each technique, the sentence numbered "1" describes the method; the number "2" sentence relates some of the advantages; and sentence number "3" enumerates some of the limitations.

Information Receiving

The Lecture

1. One person systematically presents information.
2. Maximum information is presented in a limited time; diverse materials and ideas can be arranged in an orderly system.
3. This method uses one person's point of view, one channel of communication, and no group participation; it is strongly influenced by the personality of the speaker.

Figure 1 illustrates the pattern of interaction in the lecture method.

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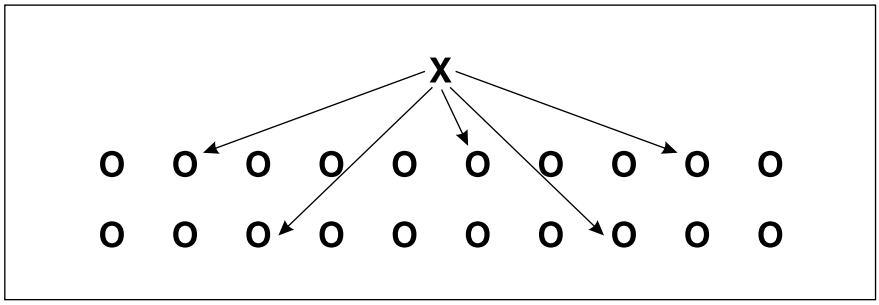

Figure 1. The Lecture

Demonstrations

1. A process is performed before an audience.
2. Processes that illustrate techniques and skills can be visually presented, and results of particular procedures can be shown.
3. This technique provides for limited participation by group members.

The Debate

1. Two sides of an issue are presented by speakers under the direction of a moderator.
2. Issues can be sharpened, questions can be clarified, and interest can reach a high level.
3. Debates can easily become too emotional, and a good moderator should be present to mediate differences.

Figure 2 illustrates the pattern of interaction in a debate.

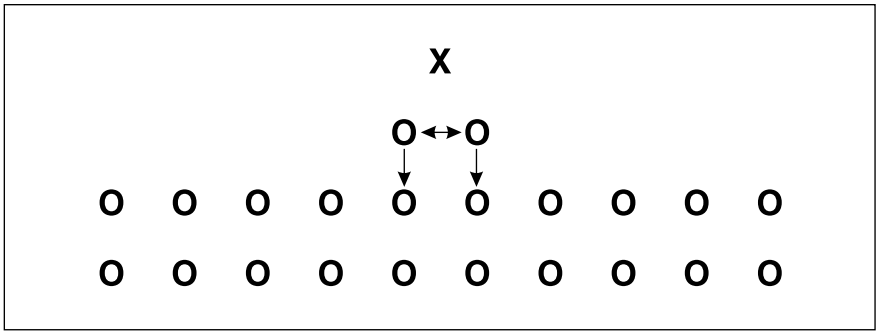

Figure 2. The Debate

Dialog

1. Two people informally discuss a topic before an audience.
2. Information is provided in an informal setting, which adds interest and emotional appeal and encourages discussion.

3. A dialog needs careful planning to keep it from becoming disorganized or dominated by the personalities of the participants.

Panel

1. Under the direction of a moderator, several people discuss an issue in front of an audience; frequently after all members of the panel have made their initial presentations, a full-panel discussion is held.
2. The different viewpoints stimulate thinking.
3. A skillful moderator is needed to keep the panel on the topic and to keep any of the members from monopolizing the discussion.

Discussion

Question-and-Answer Sessions

1. Responses are solicited by inquiries, which can come either from a leader to a member of the audience or from a member of the audience to either a leader or another member of the audience.
2. Clarification can be provided to answer specific needs, and this method is easily combined with other techniques.
3. A question-and-answer session can easily become threatening, embarrassing, dull, too formal, or too informal.

Figure 3 illustrates the pattern of interaction during question-and-answer sessions.

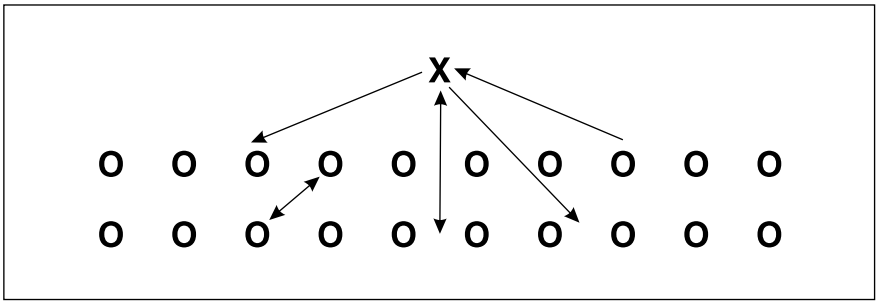

Figure 3. Question-and-Answer Sessions

Group Discussions

1. To reach an agreement or gain a better understanding, two or more people share knowledge, experiences, and opinions; build on ideas; clarify; evaluate; and coordinate.
2. Many needs of group members can be met with this method, because it provides a high degree of interaction, interest, and involvement.

3. Group discussions may not provide authoritative information, nor are they usually helpful when the group is large; they require time, patience, and capable leadership.

Figure 4 illustrates the pattern of interaction in group discussions.

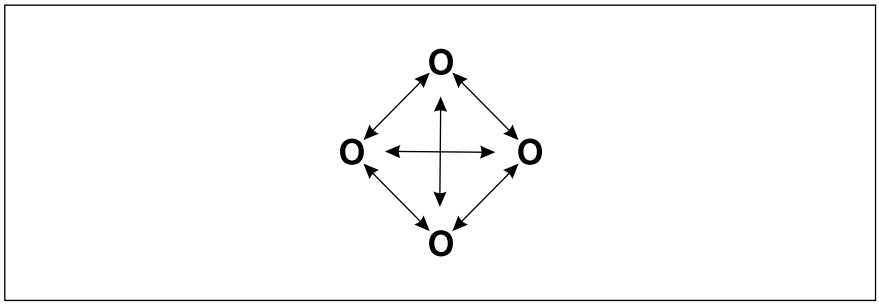

Figure 4. Group Discussions

Buzz Groups

1. Large groups are divided into smaller groups (frequently containing five to ten members) to discuss a particular topic and report back to the large group.
2. An opportunity is provided for a maximum discussion in a limited time, thereby promoting involvement and enthusiasm.
3. The discussion may be shallow, disorganized, or dominated by one or two people.

Brainstorming

1. Groups identify as many ideas related to a problem or topic as possible, without evaluating quality or practicality of the ideas.
2. This technique can produce excellent audience involvement and it encourages creativity; it can be done quickly; and a large group can be divided into small groups for the activity.
3. Creative thinking may be inhibited (and the method fail) unless participants adhere strictly to the guidelines and refrain from making evaluative comments.

Symposium

1. Several people with different points of view make presentations; often the presentations are followed by a question-and-answer session directed by a moderator.
2. This method presents several viewpoints on a topic.
3. To work effectively, this technique needs speakers with equal ability and a skillful moderator.

Listening Team

1. A team from the audience reacts to a presentation by a resource person in order to raise questions or clarify and summarize the presentation.
2. The audience becomes involved, helping the resource person to meet the needs of the group; this method can be helpful when the content is difficult.
3. This technique can be time consuming, and the quality depends on the team members.

Information Finding

A Field Trip or Tour

1. A visit to a place of interest is arranged for direct observation and study.
2. This method, which can be highly interesting to the participants, expands their understanding and broadens their interest; at least to a degree, it involves every member of the group.
3. This method is time consuming and requires a great deal of organization; without adequate discussion prior to and following the visit, the learning may be limited.

Group Project

1. Group members cooperatively work on a project.
2. This technique can provide first-hand information and practical experience; it can provide interest; and it can provide insights on teamwork.
3. Unless sufficient time is allowed for discussing the process, the project tends to become an end in itself.

Case Study

1. A description of a situation or an event is supplied, often supported by a handout, and participants are given instructions about dealing with the situation or finding a solution.
2. This technique requires participants to use higher learning processes and helps them to apply principles.
3. A case study may be difficult to develop, especially if adequate data are not available; and it is time consuming for groups to work through the case study and report their discussions.

Dramatization

Role Playing

1. Roles are assigned, and participants spontaneously act out a situation; usually the role play is followed by analysis and evaluation.
2. This method provides opportunities to "feel" human relations situations and to experiment with possible solutions or interactions.
3. Unless carefully handled, role playing can become merely entertaining or too artificial.

Skits

1. The skit is a short, planned, and usually rehearsed performance to convey a message or to present or interpret a situation.
2. This method is entertaining; it can be used to introduce a topic, or it can be interspersed to emphasize certain elements of a training session.
3. Effective skits require advance preparation and adequate processing.

Simulation Games

1. Games are fashioned from actual situations in order to explore concepts and to practice behavior.
2. These games provide a safe environment for practicing new behavior; they encourage active learning; and they can be fun and challenging.
3. Games may encourage a false sense of confidence in handling a real-life situation, and they may be expensive to develop.

INSTRUCTIONAL-DESIGN GRID

The Instructional-Design Grid (see Figure 5) was developed to help trainers and other program designers select instructional techniques that are appropriate for the desired learning outcomes in the learning environment. (Typical learning outcomes and environments are discussed in the following sections.) The grid provides an organized approach to planning a training program. To use the grid, the designer should first consider the desired outcomes and match the preferred outcomes with the appropriate techniques listed on the grid. Techniques with the greatest potential of producing a particular outcome are designated by a double "X" (i.e., "XX"), and those with less potential by a single "X." After those techniques are considered, they should be narrowed further by the constraints of the learning environment. The grid employs the same single-X and double-X system for the learning-environment section.

	Information Receiving					Discussion						Information Finding			Drama-tization		
	Lecture	Demonstration	Debate	Dialog	Panel	Question-Answer	Group Discussion	Buzz Groups	Brainstorming	Symposium	Listening Team	Field Trip-Tour	Project-Experience	Case Study	Role Playing	Skit	Simulation-Games
Clarification	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	x	xx	x	xx	xx	xx	x	x	x
Problem Solving							x	x	x			x	xx	xx	x	x	x
Creativity									xx			x	xx	x	xx	xx	x
Consensus							x	xx					x	xx			
Enthusiasm							x	xx	xx			xx	xx	x	xx	xx	xx
Attitude Change			x	x		x	x	x	x			x	xx	x	x	x	x
Skill Change		x					x	x				x	xx	xx	x	x	x
Communication																	
One-Way	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx					x							
Two-Way						xx				x	xx	x	x	x			
Multiple						x	xx	xx	xx			xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx
Formal Setting	xx	xx	xx		xx					xx							
Informal Setting				x		xx	xx	xx	xx		x	xx	xx	xx	x	x	x
Learner Involvement					x	x	xx	xx	xx	x	x	xx	xx	xx	x	x	xx
Large Group	xx	x	xx	xx	xx	x				xx	xx					x	
Small Group		xx		xx		xx	xx	xx	xx			xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx
Time Efficiency	xx	xx	xx	x	xx	x	x	xx	xx	x	x		x		x	x	x

Figure 5. Instructional-Design Grid

Learning Outcomes

As trainers design programs, a primary consideration must be the objectives or outcomes expected from the learning experiences. Learning outcomes suggest the end results of training activities and guide the selection of appropriate instructional techniques. Therefore, the trainer should be cognizant of the instructional techniques that can accomplish the desired outcomes. In addition to using the Instructional-Design Grid,

trainers may be interested in studying the taxonomies of learning objectives in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains that were developed by Bloom (1956), Krathwohl (1964), and Simpson (1966).

Some typical learning outcomes, which are used in the grid, are briefly outlined in the following paragraphs.

Clarification

For clarification to occur, learners must understand the information and concepts presented and comprehend how they can be used outside the training situation.

Problem Solving

If learning to solve certain types of problems is the goal, then the learners need to be able to apply their training to other situations.

Creativity

If being creative is a desired outcome, learners should be encouraged and given the opportunity to use their own ideas and experiences in analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information.

Consensus

The term "consensus" is used in the grid to convey the concept that the learners are able to reach agreement on a decision or solution with peer input or support.

Enthusiasm

If learners receive and respond to ideas in a positive way, the objective of enthusiasm will be accomplished.

Attitude Change

Learners must become convinced that the ideas presented have merit in order to be motivated enough to change their attitudes.

Skill Change

After the training session, learners must be able to use the skills they acquired in order for skill change to occur.

Learning Environment

The learning environment must also be considered in the design stage. Factors such as communication patterns desired, the setting, and the type of audience affect the selection of instructional techniques.

Communication Patterns

Communication patterns in the training environment vary in the number of ways that messages can be sent or received, and the communication pattern has important implications for audience interactions. Instructional techniques that bring the learner and the trainer face to face vary in their communication patterns. One-way communication flows from trainer (or other speakers) to learners; two-way communication is an exchange between trainer and learners; and multiple communication includes exchanges among learners. A closely related factor is time efficiency, because generally time is more easily controlled with one-way communication. The time-efficiency factor refers to the degree to which a trainer can predict that the training can be completed and objectives met in a specified amount of time.

Leavitt (1951) contends that when communication moves from an open, unrestricted dialog to more restrictive one-way patterns, errors increase, less work is accomplished, and the learners are less satisfied with their participation. Leavitt's findings, however, do not mean that one-way communication is always bad and that two-way communication is always good. In a given setting, whether formal or informal, each has particular strengths and weaknesses that affect learner involvement. Table 1 identifies some of the advantages and disadvantages of both types of communication.

Table 1. Advantages and Disadvantages of Communication Patterns

Type of Communication	Advantages	Disadvantages
One-Way (from Trainer)	Trainer controls amount, pace, and flow of information. A lot of information can be transmitted in a short amount of time.	Learners have little or no opportunity for response. Since feedback is low, trainer makes assumptions about learners' skills. Learners take little initiative and may become apathetic.
Two-Way	Trainer's assumptions about learners' skills, prior training, and understanding of content are tested. Learners depend less on trainer and take more initiative and responsibility.	Information takes longer to be communicated. Amount, pace, and flow of information is not exclusively under the trainer's control.

Settings

Instructional techniques vary in the degree of formality required. Some call for an informal setting, whereas a formal learning environment is more suitable for others.

Audience

Some techniques require the audience to become actively involved during the learning process, whereas others allow the learners to be passive. Some techniques are appropriate for large groups, and others are more effective when used with small groups of learners.

CONCLUSION

Cross (1976) suggested that the selection and organization of instructional techniques reflect the trainer's style, preferences, and experience to a greater degree than do any other aspects of program planning. Planning an approach to the instructional design encourages trainers to consider the learners, outcomes, and environment as well as their own preferences for instructional techniques. Although the Instructional-Design Grid is expected to be helpful for emerging professionals, its greater strength may lie in stimulating experienced trainers to reconsider their habits, add some variety, and try to ascertain that selected techniques are compatible with desired outcomes and the learning environment.

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USING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TO IMPROVE QUALITY

Ellie S. Browner and Robert C. Preziosi

Abstract: Quality improvement is an issue that is addressed by teams, not individuals; yet many workers do not posses the skills necessary to work effectively in teams. Experiential-learning methods such as games, simulations, and instrumentation are particularly appropriate for team learning. The authors offer a detailed explanation of how to select games, simulations, and instruments that are particularly appropriate for quality-improvement training. They suggest that the first step in selection is determining the role of the team itself—to improve steadily, at a rate of 5 to 15 percent annually (a "continuous-improvement team") or to achieve a breakthrough improvement of 50 to 90 percent (a "quality-breakthrough team").

The kinds of activities and training topics that are appropriate for team building with both kinds of teams are discussed. Subsequently, the authors suggest how to conduct activities, covering the four major phases of preparing, introducing, experiencing, and debriefing. The authors conclude with a pictorial representation of their own model for using activities, which is based on these four phases.

Quality improvement, like most other issues in today's organizations, is addressed by teams, not individuals. Yet many workers—especially those in the U.S., who were brought up in a culture that rewards individuality—lack the necessary skills to resolve issues effectively in a team setting.

As Rogers (Myers, 1989) states, "For 16 years of schooling, students are told, 'Keep to yourself. Do your own work.' Now, for the first time . . . trainees are told, 'Here's the problem. The four of you must solve it together.'"

Consequently, for the practitioner of human resource development (HRD), the challenge of implementing a quality program in an organization frequently involves changing not only the culture of that organization but also the culture of learning itself. The practitioner must begin to think in terms of "learning teams" whose members have the potential to think and act collectively to solve an organization's quality problems.

Learning must be viewed as a collaborative experience—a team experience—rather than an individualistic one. Team learning, according to Senge (1990), is the process of aligning and developing the capacity of team members to create the results that those members truly desire.

Experiential-learning methods such as games, simulations, and instrumentation are particularly appropriate for team learning. A wide variety of experiential tools are available in many formats, and practitioners involved with quality-improvement programs must become knowledgeable about these tools.

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DEFINITIONS

In order to build a framework for the use and applicability of experiential-learning methods that will help to improve teamwork and quality, the practitioner needs to become familiar with the definitions of a number of terms (Table 1). Following the table is a more detailed explanation of these terms.

Term	Definition
Game	An activity in which two or more participants compete, usually for fun.
Simulation	An interactive, dynamic learning experience that mirrors a real-life situation (through their decisions and actions, participants can effect changes or be effected by those changes).
Simulation Game	An activity that combines the characteristics of a game and a simulation (a game-based simulation).
Instrument	A paper-and-pencil device used to assess or take an inventory of oneself.

Table 1. A Guide to Terms Used in Experiential-Learning Methods

Games

Games are brief, usually not more than thirty minutes each in duration. They are characteristically inexpensive; when the practitioner develops a game himself or herself, that game often can be included in a training session at no cost.

Most games involve participants physically or psychologically, causing them to think, act, and/or laugh. When a game is matched appropriately to the training objectives, it provides a low-risk, highly successful learning experience. Even those purchased commercially have high learning impact when used properly.

Most games can be modified easily to fit a training objective without changing their original flavor. Games may be used as icebreakers, to "warm up" the group and grab attention and to encourage participation; to provide a vivid, visual illustration of technical-skill building; to reinforce learning by providing an opportunity to "test" the transfer of learning through feedback; or to add vitality to the closure of a session and to link the transfer of learning to the real world. Sometimes a game may be used simply to energize the group or as a stress releaser for a particularly long or tedious training session.

Simulations

A pure simulation does not involve the competition and closure that are typical of a game. Simulations are generally used to provide hands-on experience when participants are implementing new equipment or computer software or new systems (as in quality-improvement projects). Simulations, when properly designed, are as close to the real world as imaginable.

Simulation Games

A simulation game combines the elements of a game (competition, objectives, and closure) and those of a simulation. There are thousands of simulation games in use today, most falling into one or more of the categories shown in Table 2.

Category	Description
Gamut running	Resembles the format of a board game. Used for al types of content: technical, managerial, sales, etc.
Allocation Game	Involves allocation of resources, budget, or power/influence.
Group Interaction	Exposes participants to a new point of view or way of thinking.
General-System Game	Presents a complex model of the total system of an organization.

Table 2. Categories of Simulation Games

Advantages of Games and Simulations

Games and simulations combine real-life tasks with important information or insights connected with those tasks to provide participants with skills or knowledge that ordinarily might take weeks, months, or even years to obtain. When a game or simulation deals with continuous quality improvement, the discoveries made by participants can clearly demonstrate the positive bottom-line value of training to the organization. Also, participants are required to work together collaboratively, just as they must in their own work teams to improve quality.

Disadvantages of Games and Simulations

Some participants may perceive games and simulations as frivolous compared to traditional instructional methods. Often the participants who have such perceptions are accustomed to the traditional roles of teacher and learner in which the learner passively absorbs whatever information the teacher dispenses.

These participants often expect to leave a training session with a notebook crammed full of notes and a serious case of writer's cramp. When they have participated in games or simulations instead, they may leave feeling frustrated and even angry, believing that they have not learned anything.

An HRD practitioner who is skilled in group facilitation can divert some of this resistance by fully explaining the roles of the instructor and the learner, by ensuring that all participants actively participate in the experience, and by emphasizing the real-life application of the learning. The practitioner should stress the important link between collaboration in the learning environment and collaboration in the workplace.

Instruments

Use of instruments is popular in many quality-improvement programs since they are based on quantifiable data, just as quality improvement must be.

Instruments offer many advantages. They provide an easy way to teach theory and concepts and usually produce involvement and interest. Participants receive insightful information about themselves and their teammates through instruments.

Also, when instruments are used repeatedly over time, they can measure change. In addition, instruments can provide useful information about individual potential within groups. Finally, their use demonstrates the value of openness in communication, which is essential in the quest for improvement in quality.

Certain disadvantages are also incurred with the use of instruments. Some participants fear that their scores will be made public and used against them (Bowen, Hall, Lewicki, & Hall, 1989):

> This is a real and legitimate fear and should be honored. Only ask people to share their scores in small groups and with people they trust. Don't ask people to share their scores in large groups unless they are willing. (p. 20).

It is possible to chart people's scores without identifying which scores belong to whom. Also, it is important that the practitioner share his or her own score with the group; doing so models openness and trust.

Some participants may question whether an instrument is meaningful. This difficulty may be overcome by linking the instrument to real-life examples. Also, the practitioner should be prepared to explore any data that tend to contradict the ways in which participants perceive themselves.

Finally, the practitioner should be prepared to discuss the reliability and validity of the instrument. If he or she is not prepared to respond adequately to participants' doubts about an instrument, that instrument should not be used. By being prepared, the practitioner demonstrates an important principle of quality improvement.

COURSE DESIGN AND LESSON PLANNING

Strategic course design and careful lesson planning are key elements in selecting experiential-learning techniques that are appropriate for quality-improvement training in a collaborative learning environment. Both are driven by participant needs and program objectives. Each, however, requires a different strategy to ensure that a successful transfer of learning occurs.

Course Design

During the course-design phase, the designer concentrates on the "big picture." At this macro level, he or she is concerned with a number of issues:

- The development of learning objectives and desired outcomes;
- Time concerns such as development and scheduling;
- Costs;
- The number of participants;
- Facility logistics;
- Cultural and diversity issues;
- The availability and talents of trainers and instructors; and
- Compliance with mandated legislation, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Of these, the development of learning objectives is the most critical.[1] Learning objectives fall into three general categories: skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Table 3 illustrates the relationship between learning objectives and the appropriate use of games, simulations, and instruments.

Category	Focus of Learning	Games	Simulations	Instruments
Skills	Physical manipulation of equipment/objects	●	●	
Knowledge	Cognitive or mental processes	●		●
Attitudes	Perception, attitudes, behavioral changes	●		●

Table 3. The Relationship Between Learning Objectives and Games, Simulations, and Instruments

Lesson Planning

Lesson planning represents the micro level of course design. A lesson plan or "blueprint" is developed to keep the learning on track and focused.

For each activity that is considered and selected, the planner must take certain steps:

- Assess whether the activity will build and create a collaborative learning experience;
- Determine how the activity will be introduced;
- Develop appropriate ways to segue into and out of the activity (linking the activity appropriately and smoothly to the one that precedes it and the one that follows it);

[1] Note that team development of the objectives mirrors quality values.

- Test whether the learning involved in the activity fits appropriately with the course objectives and whether the activity needs to be customized to meet those objectives;
- Take an inventory of the equipment/handouts required to conduct the activity (furniture, game pieces, observer sheets, work sheets, etc.);
- Develop questions for processing and debriefing the activity;
- Test the logical sequence and timing of the activity; and
- Ensure that a transfer of learning will take place.

SELECTING ACTIVITIES

Continuous-Improvement Teams Versus Breakthrough Teams

An important first step in researching and determining the appropriateness of activities for improving teamwork and quality is to determine the role of the team itself in an organization's quality-enhancement efforts: Is the purpose of the team to build a continuous-improvement environment (a steady process of improvement of 5, 10, or 15 percent annually) or to achieve a breakthrough (a dramatic gain of 50- to 90-percent improvement)?

The characteristics of continuous-improvement (CI) teams and breakthrough teams are quite different (Hay, 1992):

> Simply stated, the goal of a CI process is to get as many people as possible involved in a total quality (TQ) effort, and to achieve real but incremental improvement as a result. The goal of a breakthrough process is to achieve quick dramatic quality improvement in an area that's critically important to the business (p. 12).

Table 4 compares the roles of continuous-improvement and breakthrough teams.

Team-Building Training

Both continuous-improvement and breakthrough teams require team-building sessions, and it is imperative that trust be established as the central thread of such sessions. According to Hay (1992), one " . . . kind of training both [continuous improvement and breakthrough] teams need—and the kind they never get in many companies—is team-building; that is, training on how to work effectively in a team environment."

However, the specific content of the team-building sessions and the activities used are distinctly different for the two types of teams:

1. *Team-building strategies for a continuous-improvement team.* These strategies should emphasize long-term team development; shared commitment; a quality focus on data-collection techniques, problem solving, change, and customer identification; and a general understanding of statistical process control (SPC) methods.

CHARACTERISTIC	CONTINUOUS-IMPROVEMENT TEAM	QUALITY-BREAKTHROUGH TEAM
Team profile	Natural work group	Cross-functional team
Goal	Long-term improvement	Two to three business targets per year
Life Cycle	Ongoing (indefinite)	Four to six months
Number of Team Members	Approximately twelve to fifteen	Five to seven
Organizational Structure	Committee structure (operating with a defined set of procedures and processes)	Project-management structure
Leadership Role	Shared	Formal leader, with task-specific skill and/or influencial leadership style
Return on Investment	Slow process/results	Rapid results
Task/Project Selection	Group selects improvement targets	Improvement targets assigned

Table 4. Roles of Continuous-Improvement and Breakthrough Teams

2. Team-building strategies for a breakthrough team. These strategies should provide members with the skills to develop their team at an accelerated rate as well as the skills to bring positive closure to their team experience at the appropriate time. Also included should be activities that build trust across cross-functional lines as well as activities that build specific skills to address performance problems, project management, and advanced SPC measures.

Team building fosters not only valuable skills and attitudes but also creativity. A team tends to be more creative than one person working alone. Thus, any continuous-improvement program benefits from the addition of team-building efforts. In fact, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Commission on Industrial Competitiveness has identified creativity as the most important factor in efforts to gain competitive advantage.

According to Robert W. Galvin (1991) of Motorola Corporation, creativity is the missing ingredient in many quality-training programs. Galvin contends that “creative thinking is essential to the problem solving factors of getting quality up to a level of perfection. We [organizations] can’t do that without optimal creative thinking.”

Group-Dynamics Training

Successful quality teams must understand and be comfortable with the small-group process (see, for example, Bradford, 1978; Dimock, 1987). Team members must be aware of the developmental cycles of group dynamics and the ways in which individual behavior patterns impact both relationships and work in small-group settings.

Topics to Include in Training for Quality Teams

An article in *Training & Development* by Ted Cocheu (1992) suggests topics to include in training for quality teams. Cocheu divides these training topics into three categories (see Figure 1) according to the intended participants: managers, team members, and team leaders.

Topic	Managers	Members	Leaders
Building participative environments	●		
Leading versus managing	●		
Trust	●	●	●
Delegating	●		●
Coaching teams	●		●
Self-empowerment		●	●
Meeting management		●	●
Identifying team types		●	●
Team formation	●		●
Team development	●	●	●
Group processing		●	●
Problem solving		●	●
Decision making		●	●
Seven quality tools*		●	●
Project planning		●	●
Gaining support			●
Conflict resolution		●	●
Creativity	●	●	●
Communication	●	●	●
Basic SPC		●	●
Visioning and goal setting	●	●	●

Figure 1. Training Topics for Quality Teams

* The seven quality tools are brainstorming; cause-and-effect diagrams; checklists; histograms; Pareto charts; scattergrams; and other kinds of charts, such as run charts. For additional readings on the seven quality tools, see Hodgetts (1993), Chang & Niedzwiecki (1994), and Eshelman & Cooksey (1992).

CONDUCTING ACTIVITIES

A crucial factor in the success of using a collaboration-based activity in training a quality team is the skill with which the practitioner conducts the experience. All such activities share four major phases: preparing, introducing, experiencing, and debriefing.

Preparing

When using an activity in training a quality team, the practitioner must be organized, prepared, and completely familiar with the activity design. By preparing adequately, the practitioner models an emphasis on quality.

Proper preparation includes developing a thorough understanding of the following:

- How the activity fits the instructional needs of the participants;
- How it helps to meet the objectives of the training session; and
- How it coordinates with the overall goals, objectives, and culture of the organization.

For instance, if the participants function in a health-care environment, then the activity should model a health-care system. Similarly, if the participants are from the banking industry, then the activity should mirror a banking environment. If the purpose is to train trainers, then the participants should be able to see the relevance of the activity to their own training settings.

Finally, the trainer must be prepared in terms of practical issues, such as scheduling, arranging meeting space, and collecting materials, as well as in terms of contingencies that might occur, such as interruptions or difficulties that will need to be dealt with.

1. *Interruptions*. Interruptions can seriously disrupt learning and should be avoided. For this reason the practitioner may want to meet with the participants off-site or at least in an area that is separate from their normal meeting space. In this way phone calls, requests from coworkers, and other interruptions may be forestalled.

2. *Difficulties*. One excellent way to become familiar with possible difficulties—such as discussions that stray from the goals of the experience or high affect—is to share the activity design in advance with other practitioners. This use of networking can provide valuable insights that will help in preparing for what might occur during an activity.

Introducing

In introducing the activity, the practitioner should clarify his or her own role as well as the responsibilities of the participants. It is also important for the practitioner to set the tone of the learning experience by creating an atmosphere of trust with and among the participants.

To create such an environment, the practitioner should stress the following points:

- Any and all learning from the upcoming activity is legitimate and valuable;
- All reactions (both thoughts and feelings) generated by the activity will be honored; and
- The participants' actions during the activity will not be judged or held against them in any way.

In addition, the practitioner should explain the purpose of the activity, should provide enough information for the participants to proceed on their own, and should then "step back" so that the participants can experience the learning. All of these behaviors are consistent with the tenets of quality improvement.

Experiencing

Participants should be allowed to think, act, decide, and learn for themselves. The trainer's primary responsibility during the experiencing phase is to observe and evaluate the process and to provide support, understanding, and enthusiasm. By meeting this responsibility, the practitioner demonstrates the values of quality improvement.

If subgroups are formed, it is useful to "visit" each subgroup briefly to monitor the activity and to ensure that the participants are carrying it out as specified. It is not a good idea to leave the room for any length of time; participants may need advice or clarification of a task. Also, the practitioner may be called on to ameliorate frustration or to mediate a disagreement.

Debriefing

At the conclusion of an activity, the practitioner facilitates a discussion. One trap that practitioners sometimes fall into is that of allotting only a few brief minutes to debrief. Bowen et al. (1982) point out that an activity is not worth doing if there is not sufficient time for adequate processing and subsequent discussion. A thorough debriefing discussion generally takes fifteen to twenty minutes and should be guided by specific questions to the participants that relate closely to the goals of the activity.

Much of the learning from an activity takes place and is recognized by participants during the concluding discussion. Without adequate debriefing, participants do not see the experience as meaningful, relevant, or valuable.

A SAMPLE ACTIVITY

An example of using team or collaborative learning in a quality-improvement effort is provided in an activity entitled "Poster Designs: Learning the Characteristics of Quality Measures," whose participants are members of three or more functional teams.

Lecturette

The activity begins with a lecturette on the characteristics of good quality measures:

- *Timeliness*—A measure that is *timely* provides data quickly enough so that corrective action can be taken on a minor difficulty before it becomes a major problem.
- *Validity*—A measure that is *valid* provides data that show actual changes in quality dimensions;
- *Cost-effectiveness*—A measure that is *cost-effective* is one that represents the least costly approach possible; and
- *Usefulness*—A measure that is *useful* is not only easy to use but also acceptable to those who must apply it in the process of making decisions.

The practitioner presents examples of these measures and then allows time for questions.

Subgroup Task: Poster Design

Next the participants are organized into subgroups, each of which includes members from all functions represented.

Each subgroup is given newsprint sheets and as many felt-tipped markers as there are subgroup members. (The markers should be different colors.) Each subgroup is instructed to create a poster depicting the four characteristics: timeliness, validity, cost-effectiveness, and usefulness. The practitioner tells the subgroups that they have thirty minutes to complete the task and then monitors the task work to ensure that all subgroup members are participating actively.

After each poster has been completed, it is signed by all of the members who created it.

Poster Review and Discussion

The posters are taped to the walls. The participants are instructed to move around the room reviewing all of the posters.

Subsequently, the practitioner leads a discussion about the poster content. The following questions may be useful during this discussion:

- What do the posters tell you about the various characteristics of quality measures?
- What did you learn as a result of the process of illustrating these measures?
- How will you use what you have learned during this activity to improve quality in your own team?
- How can you share what you have learned with other people in the organization who have not participated in this activity?

Conclusion/Options

The session may be concluded at this time, or the practitioner may continue the discussion by dealing with another quality-related issue:

- Creative behavior;
- Conflict management;
- Communication; or
- Problem solving.

Another option is to reconfigure the subgroups according to functions and have each subgroup develop a set of measures for its own functional activities.

PIED MODEL FOR USING ACTIVITIES

Deming (1986) advocates the use of a Shewhart Plan-Do-Check-Act model to ensure a continuous-improvement cycle. Shewhart developed the concept of cyclical continuous improvement for his study titled "Statistical Method from the Viewpoint of Quality Control." Deming presented the model in Japan in 1950 as the Shewhart cycle. "It went into immediate use in Japan under the name of the Deming cycle, and so it has been called ever since" (p. 88). Figure 2 presents an adaptation, the Prepare-Introduce-Experience-Debrief (PIED) model, which may be followed to ensure continuous improvement in the process of using activities in a training setting. Use of the PIED model supports the relationship between quality and learning.

CONCLUSION

It is tempting to an HRD practitioner to develop a repertoire of familiar training activities and to cling exclusively to these activities. But if we practitioners are to be role models for change in the quality movement, we must take the lead in the training setting by using new and creative activities for improving quality through teamwork.

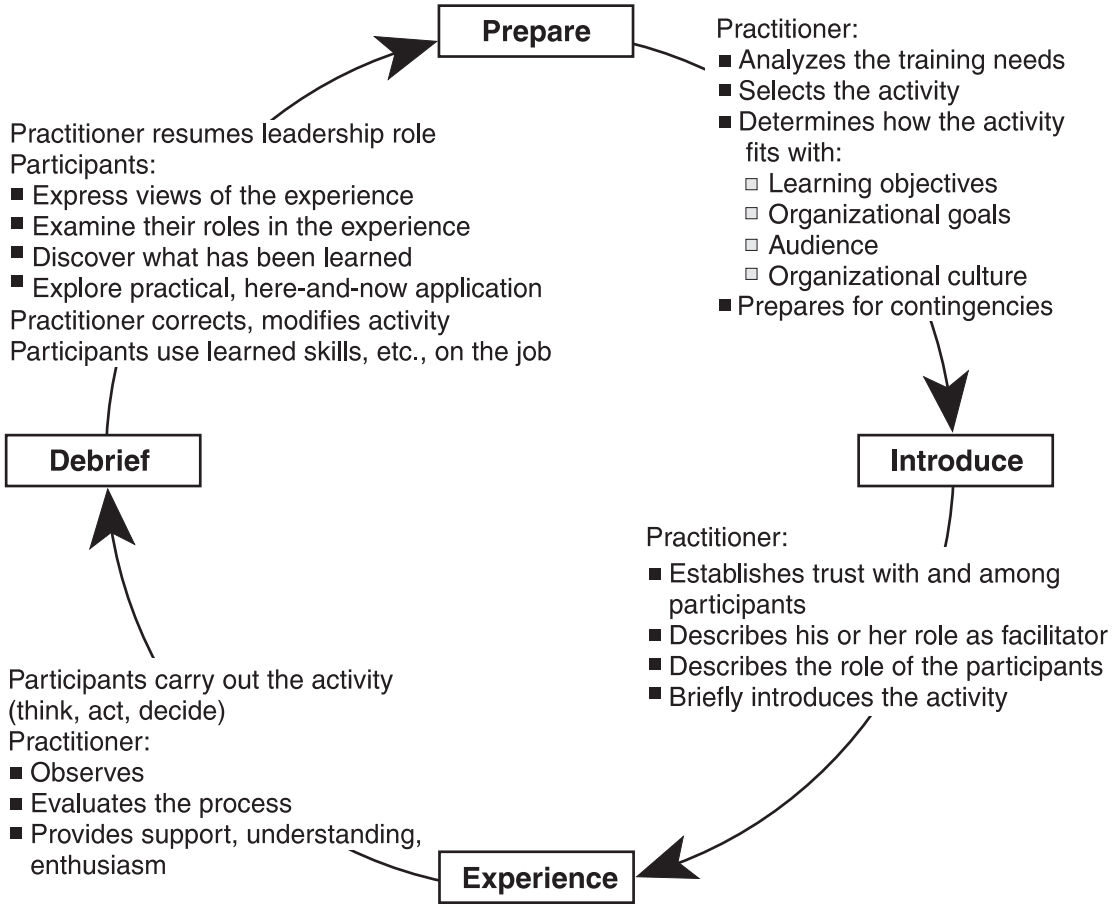

Figure 2. Preparing-Introducing-Experiencing-Debriefing (PIED) Model

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SENSITIVE-SUBJECT TRAINING: CONSIDERATIONS FOR TRAINERS

Daphne DePorres

Abstract: Organizations and individuals exist within ever-changing environments. Increasing technological complexity, environmental uncertainty, and the need for adaptability require employees to rely heavily on interpersonal skills and the ability to learn. As they are asked to respond to changes in organizational culture, training in sensitive subjects is often indicated. For the purpose of this article, sensitive-subject training is training that requires participants to examine their assumptions and their behaviors. Examples of sensitive-subject training include diversity, conflict resolution, mediation and communication skills.

Sensitive-subject training calls for more considerations on the part of the trainer than less emotionally engaging subjects. By being aware of the challenges of sensitive-subject training, the trainer and developers of training can design and deliver training that will be successful in achieving the organization's objectives, foster productive relationships among organizational members, and truly engage the participants in the training.

As an organization responds to its environment, training is often indicated. When the required shift involves changing or reinforcing the values, assumptions, or beliefs of the human beings that populate the organization—the very culture of the organization, the training can be termed "sensitive."

For the purposes of this article, sensitive-subject training is training that takes place within an organizational context and requires participants to examine their assumptions and their behaviors. Examples of sensitive-subject training include diversity, conflict resolution, mediation skills, and communication skills.

Sensitive subjects may not be seen as sensitive to participants when they voluntarily attend training, have asked for training, or are participants in sessions where they have anonymity. This article focuses on training in which attendance is mandatory, participants have little desire for such training, and participants attend training with their work groups or other organizational members. Trainers of sensitive subjects often face groups that are far more reserved and resistant than "ordinary" training groups.

Sensitive-subject training calls for more considerations on the part of the trainer than less emotionally engaging subjects. By being aware of the challenges of sensitive-subject training, the trainer and developers of training can design and deliver training that will be successful in achieving the organization's objectives, foster productive relationships among organizational members, and truly engage the participants in the training.

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WHO ARE YOU AND WHERE ARE YOU?

Trainers can begin by looking at their own experiences. A person of color who has faced discrimination, a woman who has been sexually harassed, a middle-aged white male who has been laid off, a parent who has been refused family leave, a gay or lesbian who has been threatened with bodily harm, a manager who has seen many programs come and go, or an employee whose boss has had a grudge against him or her from day one—all of these people have work to do before they train in a sensitive subject.

Trainers cannot bring significant unresolved emotional issues into the training room. These issues will show through any veneer, unconsciously affecting training. Trainers with unresolved issues who must do sensitive-subject training might seek the confidential counsel of a respected and trusted colleague. When delivering sensitive-subject training, it is helpful to have colleagues with whom to consult about issues and challenges that arise during training.

IS IT SAFE HERE?

The role of a sensitive-subject trainer requires much more than sharing information and guiding participant learning. For information and learning to be received, it is critical that the environment allows participants to feel safe enough and comfortable enough to participate.

The participants themselves should help in developing the ground rules for the training, the temporary norms that will shape an environment conducive to sensitive-subject training. This can be done simply by asking the participants the question "What are the conditions you'd like to have present in order for you to participate fully in the training?" Typical responses include honesty, open-mindedness, full participation, respect for others, and confidentiality. By establishing their own ground rules, the participants are more likely to take ownership for the environment in which the training takes place.

Confidentiality

Participants often bristle at a request for confidentiality, knowing that an agreement in that area will likely be broken. Indeed, much of the participants' internalization of sensitive-subject training occurs after such a training, when they discuss and debate the issues among themselves.

What many participants assume is that the request for confidentiality means that nothing that occurs in the training should be repeated outside of the training. It is important to clarify agreeing to confidentiality means that agreeing not to repeat what other participants have said and done. Participants are always free to share their own thoughts and perceptions of the training with others. They are always free to repeat what they themselves have said. Clarifying what confidentiality means often relieves this anxiety.

Group Size

Participant involvement and participant safety are also dependent on group size. Clients and trainers must seriously consider the objectives of the training and how much change is expected when determining the size of the training group. If the sensitive-subject training is expected to shift an organization's culture, it is critical to engage the participants in the learning. One trainer in a group of ninety participants is unlikely to engage the whole group or even a significant portion of it. The situation is compounded by the fact that often participants in a sensitive-subject training do not want to be there. The probability of deep and lasting results can be increased by carefully considering group size. In general, the depth and scope of the expected results are inversely proportional to the size of the training group. For a sensitive-subject training that is expected to contribute significantly to organizational change, the training group size is best set at between fifteen and twenty-five (Zander, 1989).

Previous participants of sensitive-subject training report that smaller group size encourages the committed exploration of sensitive subjects. Participants in small groups more willingly participate in exercises and engage in dialogue. In contrast, participants in larger groups report feeling "on display."

Setting

With sensitive-subject training, it is important to maximize the connections between participants, provide space for movement, and minimize distractions. Trainers and participants typically are accustomed to classroom-style arrangements with hefty manuals and workbooks poised on tables draped with hotel linen. Technical training may rely heavily on such things in order to be successful, but sensitive-subject training usually concerns human beings in relationship with one another. Therefore, it calls for a different way of looking at supporting materials and room arrangements.

Circular and U-shaped seating with tables removed may feel threatening to participants, and they often do not appreciate it at first. However, the primary motive of such settings is to remove as many barriers to participation and learning as possible. This means minimizing the use of manuals, videos, tables, overheads, and other typical accoutrements of learning. Although this may seem radical, examining assumptions and subsequent behavior changes require an environment where exploration, experimentation, and practice are encouraged.

Participation

Sensitive-subject training often accomplishes more than the sharing of information and the development of skills. Team building is often a byproduct of experiences in which participants have opportunities to communicate at deeper levels.

In sensitive-subject training, the subject matter requires that participants trust one another, that problem solving occur in a supportive atmosphere, and that the group learn the value of "constructive conformity" (Dyer, 1987, pp. 15-16).

Sensitive-subject training attracts a lot of attention, especially when the first sessions are taking place. Sometimes managers or the human resources department ask to have observers present. It is advisable to be very cautious about having "previewers" in the training sessions. If it is absolutely necessary to have a visitor in the training, that person should take part in the training as a participant. And, depending on the identity of the visitor, it may not be possible to avoid inhibiting the group.

The Presence of the Leader

Leaders sometimes feel that they inhibit participants and wonder whether or not they should attend. This is a legitimate concern. In the training room, assumptions about leaders may result in participants' trying to please, not speaking freely, being judgmental, being argumentative, and any number of other behaviors. Leaders may become the focus of participant ill will, derailing the real learnings desired during the sensitive-subject training. However, inasmuch as sensitive-subject training typically includes an examination of assumptions, it is appropriate to discuss assumptions about leaders as well as those about groups.

Setting the Tone

Setting the tone for the training right away clarifies the level and type of participation expected during the sensitive-subject training. Introducing a nonthreatening and interactive activity as soon as possible also helps participants quickly move through the discomfort of having been summoned to sensitive-subject training. In addition, involvement and activity also diffuse the challengers, those participants who have been waiting to disrupt or discredit the training, declare it to be nonsense, get the trainer on the defensive, or question the trainer's credibility.

In the opening moments of the training, participants are likely to be reserved, resistant, detached, or hostile because they are wondering what could be so wrong with them that they need fixing. Participants are concerned about being confronted, blamed, shamed, and exposed before their peers and colleagues. By setting the tone early on, the trainer can help the participants to relax and be ready to take part.

Language and Vocabulary

Trainers of sensitive subjects have become accustomed to the language associated with these subjects. However, participants, waiting to be attacked, often react very strongly to words such as racist, prejudice, confrontation, bias, and so on.

Purists will argue that when talking about a subject, the most commonly used language is the language to use. What trainers need to consider is whether or not the language commonly associated with the sensitive subject creates a safe environment for exploration, inquiry, and positive change. Using language that puts participants on the defensive will prevent or seriously delay the advent of learning. Participants begin with deeply ingrained assumptions about words as well as groups. For example, often when

trainers substitute the word “filters” for “stereotypes,” participants demonstrate a willingness to get involved and explore the stereotypes they have associated with groups and individuals. Use of alternative words does not mean avoiding real issues and delicate subjects; however, it allows the trainer to consider to the desired outcomes.

Other Considerations

Sharing personal experiences. Trainers need the confidence to share how their own behaviors have gotten in the way of learning and effectiveness.

Having fun. Sensitive subject training can and should be fun. Although the subject is serious, feedback for sensitive-subject training clearly indicates that participants remember more and internalize more when they have had fun.

Skill building. Sensitive-subject trainers often have only one opportunity for the training, and time is always short. A simple way to reawaken the latent skills most participants already possess is to provide an opportunity for skill practice. A case study tailored to the particular organization can provide an opportunity for participants to practice conflict resolution, effective communication skills, and apply learnings about the subject. Trainers also can incorporate into the skill practice an opportunity for participants to list and record the skills that help them to be effective. Common skills mentioned are listening to others, paraphrasing what is said, trying to understand the other person’s point of view, using “I” instead of “You” language, avoiding defensiveness, and so on.

CONCLUSION

By carefully considering the dynamics present in any sensitive-subject training, the trainer can increase the odds that the organization and the participants will learn. The trainer can also transform the sensitive-subject training from being emotionally and physically draining to an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

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HOW TO TALK SO YOUR AUDIENCE WILL LISTEN: THREE INGREDIENTS FOR KILLER PRESENTATIONS

Tom Henschel

Abstract: For the purposes of this article, the definition of "presentation" is as follows: "An interchange between a trainer and one or more other people when the trainer has had the opportunity to prepare some of the communication." A presentation can be a phone call, a department meeting, or a keynote address. This article was written with the following three goals in mind:

- To convince trainers that removing barriers between themselves and the audience enhances credibility;
- To persuade trainers that their major task is to make sure the audience understands what they are saying; and
- To focus on ways that trainers can make presentations memorable.

The author presents helpful hints for reducing nervousness, a template for structuring easy-to-follow presentations, and suggestions for enhancing delivery style.

Is there a doctor in the house?

Richard Dreyfuss was starring in a play in Los Angeles a few years ago. Just before the emotional climax of the first act, a woman in the second row of the audience had some kind of attack. The woman's companion, not wanting to disrupt the play, went for help as quietly as possible. However, those of us on stage were aware that this woman was in serious trouble. Within a minute, Richard descended into the audience and asked the question that, up until that moment in my life, had only existed in Warner Brothers cartoons: "Is there a doctor in the house?"

Collectively, the six of us on stage had well over one hundred years of theater experience, but none of us had ever before broken the golden rule of "The show must go on." Moustaches might slip or scenery collapse, but the show had always continued as if it were completely natural. Not so this night.

What did the theater-goers do when this award-winning actor asked for their help? Nothing. His plea was met with total silence. As if they were passive television watchers, they sat and stared, unwilling to believe he was talking to them. Finally, of course, he shook them back to reality, and the doctors in the house charged forward to give aid.

Fascinated by the audience's initial lack of response, I asked three members of the audience what they had experienced. Each had thought that the question was part of the

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play until the doctors actually ran down the aisle. Amazed, I said, “But it wouldn’t have made any sense for Richard’s character to do that as part of the play!” They answered, “It just seemed so natural we accepted it.” This should not have been so amazing to me: Theater audiences are wonderfully willing to ignore any barrier that comes between them and the imaginary world being created on the stage.

ONE TOUGH ACT

Trainers do not have the same advantages. We stand in the harsh light of some meeting room without the aid of costumes, sets, or music. The only props we have are flip charts or handouts, meager tricks for making people forget their busy, complicated lives. In fact, trainers often end up talking about the very issues that remind people that their lives *are* busy and complicated!

Then again, trainers do not have the same goals as actors. In theater, the evening is a success if the audience is moved emotionally. In order to be moved, the audience must believe. They must believe that a canvas square can be a door of iron, that a pink liquid is a poison potion, or that one actress is another’s mother. Everything artists do in the theater is done to protect the fragile bubble of belief; any barrier to believing must be removed.

Trainers, on the other hand, rarely think about being believable. But if the audience does not believe, the presenter cannot succeed. This article has three goals, each of which is meant to increase a trainer’s believability:

- To convince trainers that removing barriers between themselves and the audience enhances credibility;
- To persuade trainers that their major task is to make sure the audience understands what they are saying; and
- To focus on ways to make presentations memorable.

Achieving these goals requires improvements in three areas: reducing nervousness, formulating a structure for the presentation, and enhancing delivery style.

REDUCING YOUR NERVES

I was recently in someone’s home to listen to a presentation on certain legal issues. Twenty of us gathered comfortably in the high-ceilinged room. The presenter was well rehearsed: She delivered jokes with assurance, knew exactly when to change her transparencies, and spoke in a manner that showed she was confident. This woman does not sound particularly nervous, but let me add three other details: First, in this cozy room, she chose to speak into a hand-held microphone; second, she stated plainly and directly that she preferred for us to hold questions until she was finished speaking; and third, for most of her presentation, she focused on a spot on the back wall about eight inches above our hostess’s head. Does this woman sound nervous now?

This woman did not suffer obvious symptoms of nervousness like knocking knees or a sweaty brow. Instead her credibility was undermined more subtly: She showed a confident exterior but erected barriers that prevented her from connecting with her audience. Her nervousness caused her to give the appearance of not caring whether I understood or remembered her material. Consequently, I found it impossible to pay attention to her.

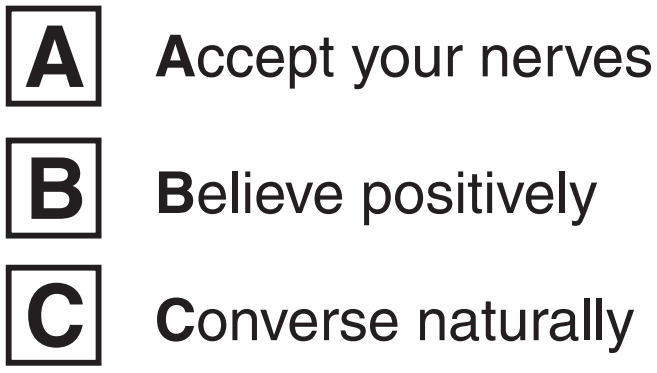
This woman is not alone in being undermined by her nervousness. Everyone is nervous. Different people experience different symptoms for different reasons. Barbra Streisand's nervousness forced her off the stage for years. Marilyn Monroe was sick to her stomach before public performances. Even the world-acclaimed Sir Laurence Olivier once suffered such acute stage fright that he forbade other actors to look him in the eye.

But there is some good news: Nervousness can be controlled. Take, for example, the case of a very affable manager for one of the major automobile manufacturers named Kurt. His job, which he loved, consisted mainly of making highly technical presentations at automobile dealerships. Kurt wanted me to help him to control his nerves. I began by asking him when he experienced his nerves, and he replied, "Only when the owners of the dealerships drop in on my presentations."

Because he had identified his trigger so specifically, I felt certain we could reprogram his nerves. I asked when his nerves first made themselves felt. Although Kurt contended that they did not occur at all unless the owner actually walked into the presentation room, I was sure that was not the case. After further discussion, he admitted he sometimes worried about the owners before he even arrived to set up for the sessions.

Kurt's dread increased his fear. It is like a child who fears getting an injection even before getting to the doctor's office. When the time arrives to roll up his or her sleeve, the fear makes the muscles tense, which makes the needle harder to push and makes the shot hurt all the more. Worrying makes the worst-case scenario come true.

If Kurt was willing to focus on his fear in its earliest stages, while it was still manageable, I knew he would be able to reduce his nervousness. He was skeptical but said he would give it a try. I assured him the process was as easy as "A B C":



Accept Your Nerves

Kurt did not like feeling nervous. He felt that as an intelligent man he should be able to suppress his nerves. But like most people, he was afraid that if he accepted his nerves they would rage out of control and consume him like a wildfire. He did not understand that nervousness feeds on resistance; stop fearing your nerves and they immediately decrease.

Although you must accept that you will feel nervous, you must also be active in trying to reprogram the thoughts that cause your nervousness. In Kurt's case I urged him to change his thoughts the very moment he felt his dread begin. I offered these new thoughts as an alternative: "The owner might come to my presentation today. That probably will make me nervous. But I still will do fine." Although this is not a huge shift in thinking, it allowed him to stop tensing against the fear. By beginning to accept his nerves he began to reprogram himself.

Believe Positively

The next step in reducing your nerves is to believe positively about whatever is triggering your anxiety. In Kurt's case, perhaps the owners frightened him because they represented authority or power. Included with issues of power and authority is a negative belief about how that power might be used against us. That negative belief needs to be uncovered and reversed.

I asked Kurt why the dealership owners would care to drop in on his presentations if the information were so technical. He answered, "Oh, I don't think they want to understand it; they just want to be in on everything." I then asked if there would be any benefit if the owners did understand his information. He protested that they would never understand it—and he was right. As long as Kurt believed that the owners would not understand, they wouldn't. Like the woman who used a hand-held microphone in a small room, Kurt had erected unconscious barriers between himself and the owners.

The good news here was that Kurt really did want to affect a change. He was willing to listen to himself. He heard how negatively he spoke about the owners and began to see that his negative beliefs had no positive benefits. Finally, he began to see that his beliefs were just beliefs; they were not facts, and he could change them if he wanted.

Picture Kurt now. He says to himself, "The owner might come to my presentation today. That'll probably make me nervous. But I'll still do fine. Besides, I really would like him to hear about the digital system. If he could get the mechanics invested in those, it would be great." Kurt began to accept his nerves and believe positively about the owners. And guess what? His nerves began to decrease.

Converse Naturally

Now we arrive at the letter C of the ABC formula: Converse naturally. This last change is what finally broke the back of Kurt's vulnerability. I asked him if he ever conversed with the owners individually. He said he did. "And are you nervous then?" I asked. "No," he said. "Usually I enjoy talking with them." "Then the next time an owner pops in, stop making a presentation and try conversing with him." Kurt's response to this was a look of such puzzlement that I had to smile.

Most people are pretty comfortable sitting across a desk and explaining an idea in a give-and-take manner. However, as soon as they imagine themselves speaking those same ideas in front of a group of people, they become fearful. What triggers this response? One contributing factor is the feeling that they are solely responsible for all the communication in the room.

Conversing naturally requires a casual, confident delivery style, just like a good one-on-one meeting. To be able to converse naturally you must first believe positively about your listeners. They are friendly people, not nameless shapes critically judging you. These people have needs and wants that you may be able to fulfill. They will listen to you because your ideas are valuable.

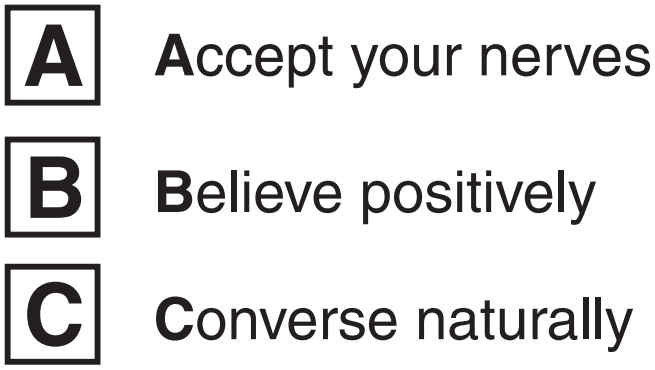
Once you believe positively about your audience and your presentation, avoid lecturing. Do not "present" and do not "deliver." Instead, converse naturally. Talk to the audience as if you were talking across a desk with someone you enjoy. Look them in the eyes. If you fix your gaze on a flip chart, your notes, or a spot in mid-air, you erect a barrier to understanding and retention. Your watchers lose the visual connection to your message and struggle to stay tuned in.

Conversing naturally also means you can actually talk to them. Ask them directly if they understand what you are saying, or comment on what you see in their eyes. Remind them often of where you are within your presentation's structure. Be willing to depart from your script and respond to them in the moment. This is not hard to do if you picture yourself as having a conversation.

Eye contact quickly will tell you who understands and who does not understand. Be sure the people you address are following you when you move to your next point. There is no point in rushing through your third and fourth points and finishing on time if the audience is still confused about something you said back at point two.

The point of conversing naturally is to keep everyone together and involved: They are watching you in order to understand, and you are watching them to be sure they do understand. This can work in large auditoriums or under the pressure of time. You cannot afford not to converse naturally: Your presentation has no value if no one is listening.

The wonderful by-product of this shift in attitude, aside from creating more positive connections with your audience by removing barriers, is that your nerves will decrease. Remember our ABC formula:



The steps that lead up to the ABCs are as follows:

1. Define the specific triggers that make you nervous;
2. Find the earliest moment that your nerves make themselves felt; and
3. Examine the thoughts that occur when your nerves first appear.

Now that you have the tools to keep your nerves under control, let's look at ways to make every presentation easy to understand.

STRUCTURING FOR SUCCESS

Your presentation is a journey. You must guide people through a landscape that you know better than anyone else. Guiding these people puts one very serious responsibility on you: You must keep everyone together. To do this you have to know where you are going and how you are going to get there. If the group is not all together when you reach the destination, you have not done your job. This is no easy task, but there is a template you can use for any type of presentation you ever have to give. This template will help you to create a map so your tour will be understandable, memorable, and easy to follow.

Before you actually set out with people in tow, you have to gather some information. What are you going to show on your tour? Is it going to be a broad overview of the entire City of Angels, or will it focus tightly on the narrow alleys of Chinatown?

Another piece of information to know is who you will be leading. You logically would show different things to children from Nairobi than you would to architects who specialize in Art Deco re-creations. What does your group already know and what do they think they want to know?

A final piece of information to know is whether your presentation is going to be informative or persuasive. Informative presentations primarily dispense data and their purpose is to educate. Persuasive presentations also dispense data but their primary purpose is to change how people think and to motivate them to action. Every advertisement in every medium is an attempt at a persuasive presentation.

You Need a Headline

Once you have answered these three questions, you will need to formulate a headline, such as “Inside Russian Nesting Dolls” or “The Cosmos: A Walking Tour.” A headline answers the question “What are you going to talk about?” The headline may or may not become the actual title you use for your presentation. It has no details, just a broad umbrella of an idea.

After the headline, the next step in creating your map is a brainstorming exercise. Write down everything you can think of that you might ever want these people to know. Once you have exhausted your ideas, get a blank sheet of paper and divide it into four squares. Looking at your list, see which items naturally relate to which others. Put the first set of related items together in one box on the new page. In the second and third boxes, put other items that form natural groups. Box number four is the catch-all bin for miscellaneous, unrelated items.

Next, consider each box by itself. Do the grouped details in a box suggest a topic? Keep thinking until you can name the three boxes. When you are finished, you will have assembled a page of information that looks like the table on the next page.

Boxes one, two, and three are the building blocks you will use to fill in the template. The ideas in box number four, however, will have to wait until another time. Why? It is a proven fact that things in threes are easier to remember. Look at this article: it has three sections (Nerves, Structure, Delivery). Section one even had three subsections (ABCs). Threes work. Listeners will not retain more than three topics; with fewer than three topics, you risk giving them the sense that the information is inconsequential.

The first thing to fill in on the template is the headline. In order to give you a sense of different ways the template can work, what follows are some brief transcripts from real presentations. Because the words were meant to be spoken and heard, reading them out loud will help you more than reading with your eyes only.

First, some sample headlines, the very first words these presenters spoke:

“Today I’m going to demonstrate how to create successful presentations.”

“I’d like to share some success stories about peer education on our college campuses.”

“I want to talk about the training tracks available to our employees.”

Each of these headlines is successful. It is a simple, declarative sentence that announces what will come next without details. It is the beginning of a map.

Announce Three Topic Titles

Next you will use the details from the three boxes. However, do not just launch into the details in box one. First, lay out a map so that people know where you are taking them. Two of the following examples are complete successes; one is not as good as it could be.

Headline

Topic Title #1			**Topic Title #2**		
Detail	Detail	Detail	Detail	Detail	Detail
Topic Title #3			**Misc.**		
Detail	Detail	Detail	Detail	Detail	Detail

"Today I'm going to demonstrate how to create successful presentations. There are three important components I'm going to show you. Each one contributes to a successful presentation. First is being able to control your nerves; second is giving your presentation a solid structure; and third is being able to monitor your delivery style."

"I'd like to share some success stories about peer education on our college campuses. There are three different phases of the process that I'm going to focus on: 1) the selection process; 2) the training process; and 3) monitoring the peers' performance."

"I want to talk about the training tracks available to our employees because our company really supports employee education and has set up a lot of different tracks people can participate in. One track is continuing education, which does not contribute toward any degree. It's just there if people want to better themselves. There are also equivalency courses that are just what the name says: courses to help people work toward a high school diploma. Then there are degree courses, which have many different components and can be rather confusing. I will get to those in a few minutes."

The third example clearly is different than the other two. It is not as effective because the headline was a long, compound sentence. The presenter did choose three topics to discuss, but did not announce that fact. He said there were "a lot of tracks," which could mean two or fourteen. He also gave details and definitions before introducing all of the topics. As a listener, I cannot distinguish topics from headlines from details. When I hear them all at once, I feel lost. In addition, the presenter failed to

give numerical listings. Using the format "Number one is . . ., number two is . . ., and number three is . . ." is one of the easiest, most powerful mapping tools in existence.

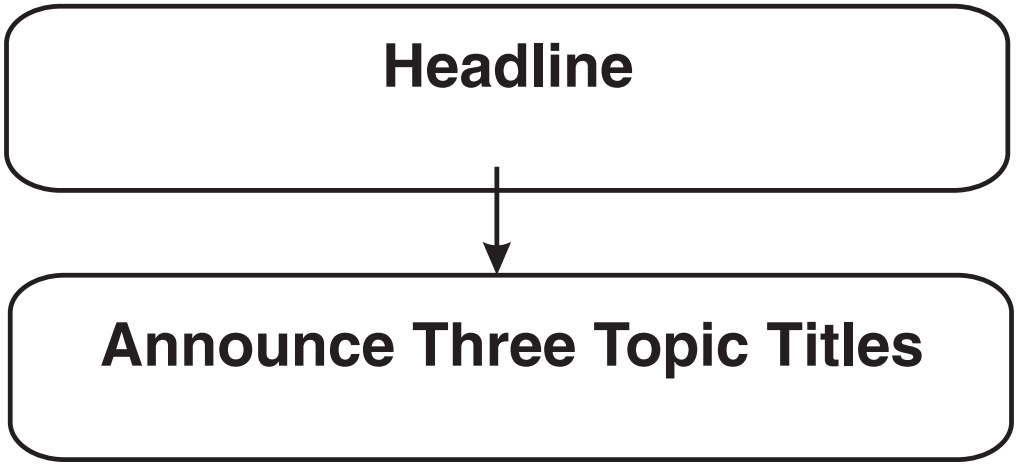
When announcing your topic titles, use the following rules:

1. Tell your listeners that you are about to list three items;
2. Introduce the items by using the same ordinal/numeric words (for example, "the first is . . ., the second is . . ., and the third is . . . .");
3. Use titles that are short, declarative statements; save the details for later.

Following these rules, presenter number three would change the introduction to be more like the following:

> "I want to talk about the training tracks available to our employees. Our company supports employee education and has set up three different educational tracks people can participate in. The first track is Continuing Education. The second track is an Equivalency Course. And the third track is a Degree track. I'm going to start with number one, the Continuing Education track."

This describes a clean map that anyone can follow and remember. So far the template has two items:



Transition Statements

In the presenter's last sentence, he said "I'm going to start with number one, the Continuing Education track." This is called a "transition statement." In this case, the statement guided the audience from the list of topic titles into the actual details of the first topic. Transition statements are to presentations what surveyor's levels are to map making: You can muddle through without them but the end product will not be first rate. Transition statements help people know how far they have come and how far they still have to go. Using them makes the comfort level in the room soar.

Later in her speech, the second presenter used two great transition statements, as well as creating a list that promoted understanding and memorability.

> ". . . Now I'm going to move on to number three: 'Monitoring the peers' performance.' We've found there are four ways to successfully monitor the performance of the peer counselors. One is to have participants fill out evaluations immediately after a session; another is to have the counselor fill out self-assessment forms about every six weeks; a third way is to record the sessions on tape; and a final option is to sit in on the sessions. I'd like to discuss the pros and the cons of each of these options and hand out some sample forms. First, let's look at number one: the participant's evaluation form."

This presenter's listeners are following right along. The transition statements (first and last sentences) guarantee that everyone knows that they are about to hear about topic three, "Monitoring Performance"; they then are poised to hear about detail number one.

This presenter's four details were announced and numbered in the same way as headlines and topic titles. When introducing details, it is important not to spew data. Giving details is similar to introducing topics, as follows:

1. Announce how many details you are going to discuss;
2. Give titles first, actual facts later; and
3. End with a transition statement that clearly indicates where you are leading next.

It might seem that the entire presentation becomes nothing but transition statements and announcements. This is not the case. These sentences take mere seconds to interject, and including them helps your listeners understand and remember what you are telling them. You can use this structure for persuasive or informative presentations, sales calls, or departmental reports. The complete template for memorable, understandable structure is shown in Figure 1.

ENHANCING YOUR DELIVERY STYLE

An actress I worked with while filming a television movie needed to cry during a certain scene. Crying on cue can be difficult. However, before crying, she also had to get a prop and return to a new spot that was marked on the floor. She could not look at the new mark and if she missed it, the shot would be no good.

How was she able to create the tears while also hitting her marks? The kind of emotional thoughts that generate tears would seem to cancel out the technical awareness needed to hit a precise mark. Yet if they do cancel each other out, you cannot be an actor. In order to succeed in even the simplest scene, you must be able to do two things at once: 1) consciously choose your behavior, and 2) consciously repeat it or change it.

Improving delivery style requires the same two abilities. Do you choose to talk while you write on the flip chart or is it just a habit? Do you choose to pepper your speech with "um," "ah," or "you know," or does it seem out of your control? Do you choose to jingle the coins in your pocket or are you simply unaware that you are doing it? If you choose to improve your diction or eliminate nervous gestures, can you repeat the new behavior when you are standing in front of a tough audience?

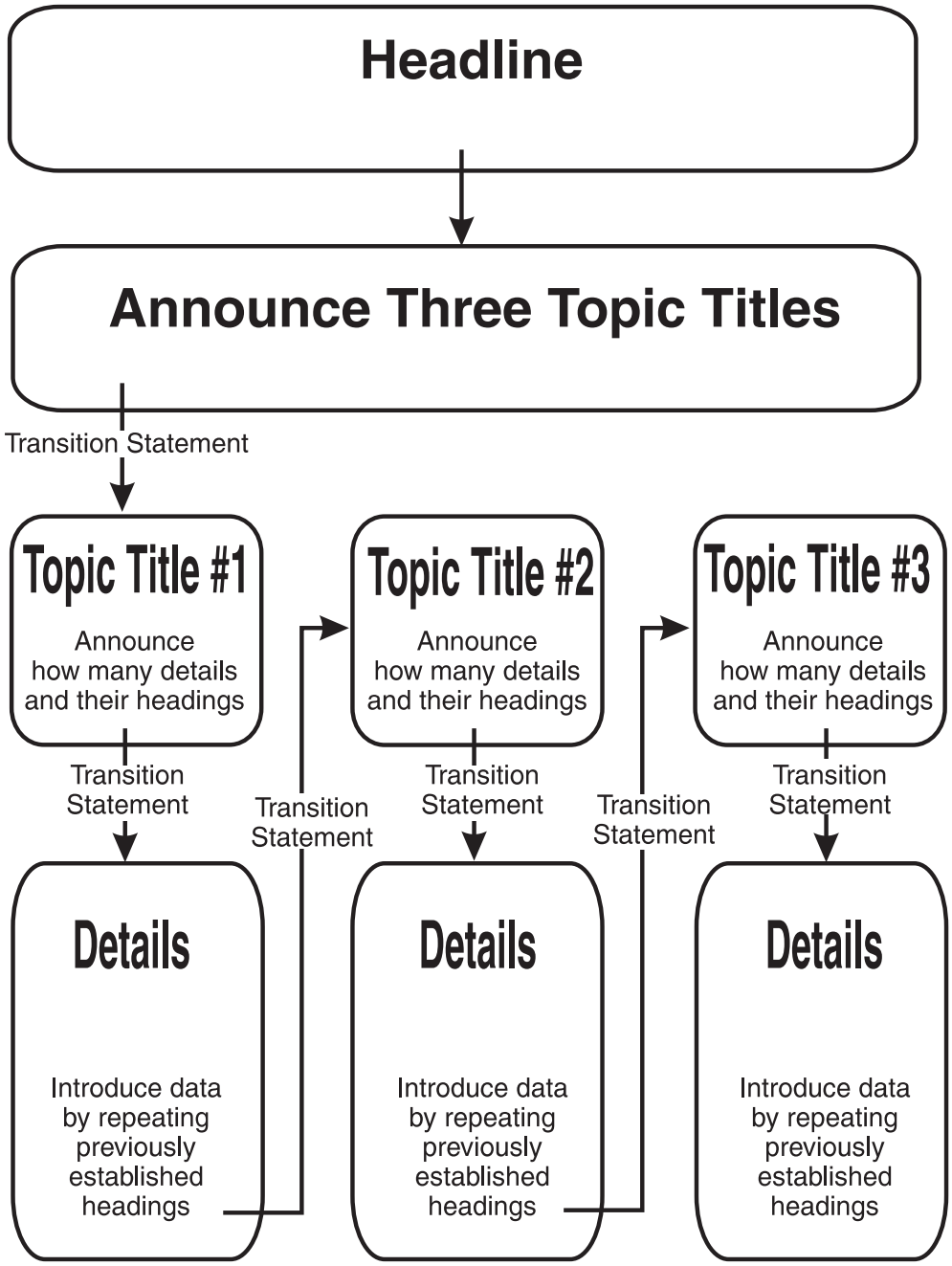


Figure 1. Successful Structure Template[1]

The good news about these hard questions is that everyone can improve their delivery skills. The best speakers understand that this process is without end; they work on improving their skills every time they open their mouths. Because they acknowledge that there is no perfect delivery, they are not threatened by the thought that there is room for improvement. Everyone's arena for improvement is highly personal. Even when two

[1] This diagram is adapted from material developed by Communication Development Associates, Inc.

people happen to need attention in similar areas, the tools that will help them break free of old habits often are vastly different.

Consequently, this article cannot be a standard prescription that will turn every reader into a fabulous delivery machine. However, I can prescribe certain tools that you can use to turn yourself into that fabulous delivery machine.

Taking Your Temperature

Most of us can take our own pulses, but it is almost impossible to accurately assess our inner body temperature. This is why thermometers were invented: to help us gain accurate, specific knowledge that can be vital to our health. Similarly, although most of us may be able to change our delivery habits over time, it is almost impossible to accurately assess what we are doing at the moment we are doing it. Without some sort of thermometer, this inability to assess ourselves means we may never become aware of the barriers we erect between our audiences and ourselves. Three such thermometers come under the headline of "Feedback." One has been around since at least ancient Greece. The other two are much more modern.

The oldest form of feedback is that that comes from another person. Just as every winning team has a coach and every Oscar-winning performance has a director, every presenter, no matter how good, needs the benefit of an outside eye. If you are ready to begin working on your delivery skills, there are many ways you can enlist other people in your development. Adult education centers offer professional development classes that help with awareness of yourself as a presenter. Many private companies offer group presentation courses, and personal coaches are available to work with you privately.

Another way to get feedback is to enlist friends or coworkers. Because the person you choose will probably not be trained as a coach, you both will benefit if you take control of the situation. First, decide as specifically as possible what you want to work on. Then let your coach know your area of focus by saying something like "I'm trying to improve my delivery skills. Specifically, I'm trying to change the habit I have of holding my hands behind my back. If you see me do that, would you help me be aware of it? Thanks."

Even with this kind of guidance, your friend's initial instinct will most likely be to tell you everything you do that is "wrong." This can be hard to hear. To help you keep the feedback in balance, I advocate "one-for-one" coaching. Each time your coach tells you something that needs improvement, he or she must also point out something that is working for you. This is a good rule for balanced feedback in general.

But how can you know what habits need changing? If you knew these habits were distracting, wouldn't you have changed them by now? This is where the other two, more modern thermometers come into play: audiotape and videotape.

I never have met a person who loves himself or herself on tape. People who make their living putting themselves on tape learn to accept recorded feedback, but they rarely look forward to examining the final product. I know several very successful actors who

never watch themselves on film. To use these powerful tools effectively, you must be willing to accept whatever discomfort you might feel during playback.

Using an audiotape recorder gives you a partial picture of yourself that can be enlightening. Hit the "record" button when dialing or answering your phone, then listen to your end of the conversation. Focus on the words you chose. Were you direct? Did you load your speech with qualifiers such as "sort of," "kind of," "maybe," and "I guess"? Did you say what you meant? Does the tape reveal that you often repeated yourself?

Listen to your voice. Is there variety in your inflections? Do questions stand out clearly, ending with rising intonations? Does it sound as though you are smiling as you talk? Why not? Are there different rhythms to your speech, or is it all one speed? And is half of the tape silent while you are listening to the other person? It should be.

Suppose you are aware that you have trouble keeping your audience's attention. Is a repetitive gesture distracting them? If people are tuning out during a question-and-answer period, how can you know that you bounce nervously on your toes whenever you are asked a question? How can you take your temperature for these things that are completely unconscious? The answer is the greatest of all feedback tools: videotape.

No coach could ever be as impartial or convincing as video. Granted, many lenses make us look like ghoulish versions of our worst selves, but that is a discomfort that must be accepted. The truths that video reveal are indisputable and profound.

One way to use video is to watch your presentation on fast forward. Do you seem to be dancing around the screen as if infected with a medieval disorder? Or perhaps your silhouette never moves at all except for an occasional flick of a hand. In either case, the tape is saying you need to work toward integrating your energy and body movement.

Video reveals other barriers we erect between ourselves and our listeners, such as eye contact. For years I faced audiences thinking that I was not nervous. I talked to them, entertained them, taught them, and I loved doing it. If someone had asked me what barriers I erected between my audiences and myself, I would have said "None!" Videotape showed me that, of course, I did have barriers. I was, I can now confess, a darter.

A darter is someone who makes direct eye contact but darts his or her eyes to the next person just before establishing a real connection. To this day I continue to work on slowing down my darting. Thanks to videotape, I now strive for a full five seconds of eye contact before moving to the next person.

Play back the videotape of your presentation and try to concentrate on it 100 percent. This is especially difficult because our minds race ahead of our words. People commonly feel they speak too fast, but that usually is not the case. The human brain can process almost 500 spoken words per minute. The average rate of American speech is about 125 words per minute. Listen to your pace on the tape. Are you engaging the audience with your energy? The odds are you can pick up your pace without losing them.

These three feedback tools are ways you can increase your awareness of yourself as a presenter. Engaging other people in your development is an interactive, energized way to take your temperature. Audiotape and videotape feedback are other thermometers that, as Hamlet said, "hold the mirror up to nature." Whichever ones you work with, remember that you are striving consciously to choose your behavior, then consciously to repeat or change it.

CONCLUSION

This article has taken the form of a persuasive presentation. Its goal was to persuade you that removing barriers between your audience and yourself is not only possible, it is critical for your success. Additionally, there was an attempt to persuade you that presentations can be seen as something other than fearsome ordeals.

Remember the story about Richard Dreyfuss asking for a doctor in the middle of a play? The audience did nothing because they refused to stop believing in him. If fifteen hundred people can accept an actor walking into the audience asking for a doctor as natural, you can persuade your listeners that everything you do is part of your grand plan. Such willing, trusting people surely must be your friends. So remove the barriers. Look people in the eye and tell them all the valuable things you have prepared.

TRAINING FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RESULTS: HOW TO GET THE MOST VALUE FOR THE TRAINING DOLLAR

Kevin Daley

Abstract: Training no longer can be regarded as a luxury in organizations. These days, trainers must demonstrate that what they do improves performance and contributes to organizational success. This article offers new insights into approaching training from this viewpoint. Examples include identifying training needs using the technique of Socratic questioning, training a critical mass to effect organizational change, considering various forms of training, using managers and individual follow-up to reinforce training, and evaluating training in terms of organizational results. Examples of innovative solutions in actual organizations also are presented.

CHANGING ORGANIZATIONAL REALITIES

Organizational realities are changing the ways in which professional trainers approach their jobs. Senior management is looking at training expenditures with a more critical eye than ever before. Under these conditions, training cannot be regarded as merely an added expense or a luxury to be undertaken when time and budgets allow. Nor will it do to have managers think of training as remedial, as a matter of shoring up weak employees or fixing problems. Successful trainers will act less like physicians who administer to organizational ills and more like agents of change who understand the organization's strategic direction and who can design and implement creative ways of moving people in that direction. The necessity of gaining the full support of senior management cannot be emphasized enough. This is a crucial foundation that allows trainers to provide training to a critical mass, which will effect change within the various organizational cultures. Above all, today's trainers must be focused, able to take risks, and willing to put a business agenda before their personal ones.

Many organizations have already shifted their thinking about the training function. They have seen for themselves that training is where ideas and attitudes are changed and skills are developed. In the course of learning the skills that will increase sales, promote customer satisfaction, or build effective teams, employees learn the attitudes and aptitudes that will revise the corporate culture even as they improve operations.

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The Monsanto Protiva Answer

When the stakes of training are so high, and the benefits so critical, it becomes imperative to provide the most for each training dollar. At Monsanto's Protiva division, for example, where virtually all salespeople have received selling and communication-skills training, there is emphasis on the needs of the individual. Different classifications of employees, including administrative staff, are given budgets of between $2,000 and $5,000 each for training. Each employee selects the training to meet his or her particular needs. One individual may take an organization development course while others study time management, media relations, or computer operations. The organization recognizes how to maximize its training impact through individualized instruction.

WHAT IS GOOD TRAINING?

Of course, almost every organization has war stories about training that just did not work. Everyone gave the personable and perky communications trainer top ratings, but communication is still the primary problem, or the customer service people came out of their telephone-skills training feeling insulted because the course was so rudimentary that virtually any of the attendees could have taught it. In another scenario, a change-management training session backfires because all it accomplishes is the fueling of rumors about plant closings.

Professional trainers know that training that makes people feel warm and good is not necessarily effective training. Training that makes people feel uncomfortable is not necessarily ineffective training. How employees evaluate the training is not the most important gauge of how successful the program is. The only thing that really counts is what happens afterward.

Good training is based on having fully answered the following questions:

- Is there actually a need for training? What is the need?
- Who needs to be trained?
- Who will provide the training?
- What form will the training take?
- How will the training be transferred from the session to the job?
- How will the training be evaluated?

When training is regarded as a strategy for effecting change, different answers come up than when training is regarded as a cure for perceived weaknesses.

Identifying Training Needs

Training needs can be expressed at the organizational, divisional, departmental, team, or individual levels. Much of the best training is "just-in-time," in response to a felt need. For example:

- A cross-functional team sees that it is becoming bogged down in miscommunication and arguments and asks for training in communication skills. A needs assessment verifies that the problem is a lack of good communication skills among the membership, not a deeper group issue.
- A sales manager realizes that her group is losing out to the competition because of poor presentation skills and asks for training.
- The corporate communications group sees that it could cut costs and save time if its staff had some training in desktop publishing.

It is important to remember that when there is no immediate need to practice and use what is learned, training is almost doomed to fail.

Using Socratic Questioning

The first, important step in the training process is clearly identifying needs. A useful tool in gleaning such information involves the technique of Socratic questioning. This technique is derived from Socrates' ancient philosophy, which held that asking a series of simple, easily answered questions would ultimately lead to a mutually beneficial conclusion. Whether it is used by an in-house human resources manager surveying his or her various business groups or an outside trainer interviewing a potential corporate client, this technique is an excellent means of uncovering real needs.

In Socratic questioning, the information gatherer constantly plays back information that is given in the conversation to ensure understanding. Probing phrases such as "What else should I know?" and "Why did you ask that?" are used to uncover the real issues and needs.

The following is a hypothetical conversation between a trainer and a potential client. The two have been discussing human resource consulting services when the client suddenly moves to a specific area:

Client: Do you provide prepackaged training programs?

Trainer-Consultant: That is one of several services we offer. Why do you ask? (Instead of launching into an in-depth description of this one area, the consultant probes for further information.)

Client: Well, last year we tried that approach with another consultant and it just didn't work.

Trainer-Consultant: Tell me more about what happened.

Client: Well, we were trying to teach computer skills that were specific to the telecommunications industry, and the trainer didn't really cover them.

Trainer-Consultant: So what you are saying is that the trainees didn't learn the kind of skills they needed in order to do their jobs better? (The consultant plays back what has been said in order to obtain clarification and begins to uncover the real concern.)

Client: Exactly, and they got frustrated, lost their motivation, and tuned out early in the session.

Trainer-Consultant: Perhaps a customized training approach is something you might want to consider. We can develop a program suited to your particular industry that would give your employees the specific skills they need.

The use of Socratic questioning throughout this conversation allows the questioner to get at the crux of the problem. By digging deeper, the trainer is able to obtain more information about the past and uncover the client's real concern, the need for a tailored training program. Ideally, the two parties will end up at the same place with a potential solution.

Training a Critical Mass of Employees

Once training needs have been clearly defined, the trainer needs to decide which people will receive the training. In order to create change, a critical mass of employees needs to receive the information. Getting a lot of people on the same wavelength accelerates desired change. Instead of viewing the new methods and attitudes with suspicion, the employees will be able to make them "the way we do things here." It also is vital that the managers of the employees who will receive the training also receive it. Nothing kills new learning as fast as the failure of the boss to understand and support it. Newly promoted and newly hired members of a group should also receive any training that was provided to the original group.

The Example of Penske Truck Leasing

When all members of a critical mass receive the same training, the benefits almost invariably extend beyond the acquisition of the skills taught. At Penske Truck Leasing, for example, all salespeople receive communication training, and the training does more than improve their communication skills. Being better communicators increases the confidence levels of sales representatives and, with more confidence, they can take on more responsibilities. Providing communication training has effectively created a pool of potential managers and enhanced the company's ability to realize its goal of promoting from within.

Deciding Who Will Deliver the Training

The choice of who will deliver the training requires much creative and strategic thinking. Is there a time constraint? Even if the internal training department is large, the time it takes to develop a program may not meet the pressing need to have a group of employees trained in a new method or skill. Human resource managers need to evaluate whether developing a new program is the best use of the internal trainers' time. Particularly if large numbers of newly hired people need to be trained on an ongoing basis, the use of an outside trainer should be considered.

Using Outside Trainers

An outside training consultant can efficiently develop programs that can be implemented quickly. Particularly if they are familiar with the specific industry, most such consultants have a quick learning curve when it comes to assimilating business information and developing appropriate programs. The human resource manager must evaluate whether the materials a consultant uses fit the organizational culture and the skill levels of the employees to be trained. A great deal of training misses the mark because employees are unable to relate to the people shown in videos or to examples provided in activities and discussions. Bringing in outside training services is not like buying office supplies; it is not about getting a good product at a good price. It is establishing and maintaining a productive relationship that will accelerate change.

Determining the Form of the Training

The form that training will take is another crucial issue. One recent, positive trend is focusing on training of individuals. This sometimes is based on assessments completed by the employee, his or her manager, and his or her peers or subordinates (360˚ feedback). This process, which is usually an accompaniment to broad-based training, allows the individual to choose skills that he or she wants to improve. This affects the form the training will take. Recognizing that different individuals learn in different ways, good training departments offer a variety of ways of acquiring skills, including computer-assisted learning, self-study programs, books, videotapes, seminars, and mentoring/apprenticeship programs such as shadowing an employee who excels at a particular skill. When employees understand how their performance impacts the strategic direction of the organization, their wisdom can be tapped by enabling them to help to choose what, when, and how they will learn in order to improve their performance.

Transferring the Training to the Job

Perhaps the most important consideration is how the learnings and insights from the training will be integrated into each individual's day-to-day job. Working on real tasks and problems as part of the training can help to ensure that the training "takes."

Spreading out training over several months or weeks gives employees adequate time to practice and solidify each new technique or skill.

More radically, making an actual, pressing problem the basis of the training program and devoting the training activities to working on and solving the problem not only meets a corporate goal but also teaches people skills that will transfer to future performance. At the very least, it may be advisable to include an individual action plan, delineating the steps the employee will take when he or she is back at work. Following up on the action plan helps to monitor results in terms of the employee and the overall training program.

Management Must Reinforce the Training

The managers of the employees who are receiving the training should be completely familiar with the content of the training and committed to supporting and reinforcing the new learnings. This means being able to answer employees' questions and concerns, allowing extra time to do things in a different way, praising and rewarding the use of new skills, and creating environments in which the new ways can take hold.

Chadbourne & Parke's Experience

Chadbourne & Parke, a leading New York law firm, recognizes that training must be supported. All the partners and associates receive individualized follow-up training with the firm's marketing director at predetermined intervals after they participate in presentation-skills training as a group. This allows each of them to work on potential "trouble" areas they may encounter after their initial instruction.

Evaluating the Training

Ultimately, training must be judged on its impact on the organization. This requires hard data on measurable objectives such as increased sales, market share, reduced operating costs, lower rates of absenteeism, or whatever the training was designed to achieve. Although it is recognized that other forces affect these measurable criteria, it is nonetheless important that training be tied to corporate objectives all the way through to the payoff stage.

"Temperature taking" during and immediately after the training is also important. If the trainer is dull or "puts the trainees off" in some way, if there is too much information to absorb, or if the material or the approach is off-target, this needs to be known immediately. Using this information to modify the training already in progress and to make the next round better will maximize the investment in training. Participants and their managers all should be involved in the evaluation—in ways more meaningful than filling out little checklists at the end of the day. Group evaluation sessions and discussions not only reinforce what was learned, they also underline the serious purpose of the training and stimulate employee ownership of the results.

WIDENING THE FAST TRACK: FIVE WAYS TO MOVE FROM EXCLUSIONARY TO INCLUSIONARY TRAINING

Mindy L. Zasloff

Abstract: Little note has generally been taken of a form of discrimination in organizational training policies. Often organizations focus mainly on their high-potential employees—the "stars"—and miss the benefits of broadening training to include all employees.

The article gives five steps necessary to an inclusionary, instead of exclusionary, training strategy for widening the "fast track" to a "mass transit lane": survey the landscape (broaden the scope), pave the way (do a cultural assessment), give directions (help employees help others), keep on the path (maintain the new pattern), and provide roadside assistance (develop measurement and reward systems). A chart outlines the necessary cultural shifts in order to create an organization full of high-potential employees.

Training that includes the majority of employees will help everyone prepare for a challenging future.

Given all the emphasis placed on diversity training these days, it's remarkable how little note is generally taken of a deep-seated form of segregation in organizational training policies themselves. But the truth is that by giving the main emphasis of training to high-potential employees—"shining stars" and "fast trackers"—many organizations turn the majority of their employees into second-class citizens.

Discrimination in training undermines several core values of organizational effectiveness. Teamwork takes a backseat to preferential treatment, and the commitment and self-esteem of the "halo-less" majority suffer. Flexibility decreases when the best opportunities go to those most likely to replicate the characteristics of current leaders, rather than to all employees charged with facing the challenge of an ever-changing future in which employability is key.

Truly inclusionary training is built on a foundation that rewards team development and shares information that nourishes the growth of relevant skills. It emphasizes concepts of personal mastery (Senge, 1990), in which special levels of proficiency are rewarded and recognized.

Personal mastery cannot be achieved unless training processes are created that map learning opportunities against competencies needed in the future. This mapping process helps ensure that employees will learn the necessary skills to thrive in their roles and to remain employable. To guarantee that these skills get learned and used, members of the workforce, including managers, must be trained in the coaching and mentoring practices that bring out the star qualities in all employees.

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FIVE STEPS TO INCLUSIONARY TRAINING

Inclusionary training involves five steps for encouraging equal participation, by widening the fast track into a mass transit lane that allows as many employees as possible to travel on it.

1. Survey the Landscape

Many companies write a vision, articulate their mission and goals, and possibly identify their core competencies. But they stop short of the real challenge, which is to link these competencies to organizational learning and skill development. Instead, everyone in your organization can be encouraged to act as a savvy surveyor.

Spread the Mission

Spread the mission, vision, goals, and core competencies to everyone through word and deed. Ask employees to identify how they can personally contribute to the goals of the company, and reward them for putting those ideas into action.

Dialogue Sessions

Host dialogue sessions between department heads and employees for the purpose of identifying the skills that the organization will need in the future. A competency is not a single skill or technology, but an integrated group of processes providing benefit to customers (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994). It is necessary for everyone to share perspectives to determine what is needed to keep those customers in a perpetual state of delight.

Use these sessions to personalize corporate goals, so that employees understand their own accountability for acquiring the skills that will enable them to make a valuable contribution. During these sessions, have department heads list the skills that they see being needed in the future and ask employees to focus on how they can work together to develop these skills and others that the group may identify.

Next, have employee subteams meet to compare notes on the managerial and technical skills, as well as personality traits, that the organization will need to support the employee competencies of the future. These recommendations are like the traffic signals on the mass transit track: management must heed them carefully to avoid crashing.

Identify Learning Opportunities

Next, identify learning opportunities available to develop these skills. Learning opportunities include special employee teams and volunteer groups, existing formal training, informal training, and developmental assignments that encourage utilization and development of each specific skill.

Publish Skills

It is important to communicate and publish the skills needed for the future, along with behavioral examples and some suggestions for methods to acquire these skills.

2. Pave the Way

Recognize and act on the cultural and business changes that will need to take place to support the new competencies. Do a cultural assessment to identify an action plan for creating an environment that enables employees to be involved in inclusionary training. Examples of cultural changes that may need to take place in your organization are outlined in Chart 1.

3. Give Directions

Help employees and managers gain the coaching and mentoring skills needed to guide others toward achieving their goals. Typically, training is done by the human resources staff or "training experts." Instead, employees from each department can work together as training teams to train others. Mentoring skills such as active listening, advising and influencing others, giving feedback, networking, presentation skills, and organizational "truth-telling" need to be taught and nourished.

4. Keep on the Path

Despite careful planning, organizations may slip back into the old, comfortable, exclusionary training patterns. To make sure that the paving on the wider track remains in good repair, emphasize on-the-job learning opportunities that build skills. Most organizations, for example, have job posting systems, but few post opportunities for developmental assignments or explain how the posted job will lead toward acquiring a valuable skill.

5. Provide Roadside Assistance

Develop measurement and reward systems that encourage the use of inclusive training methods. Gear performance evaluations to recognize the new, useful skills employees obtain. Rewards and recognition need to benefit those who share their knowledge, not those who hoard it. It is important to emphasize that encouraging everyone's high performance is truly at the core of competence.

CONCLUSION

Organizations need to use inclusionary training to empower all employees to become a part of the team. Employees who have opportunities to learn and are encouraged to do so will become more accountable for their own skill development. Training that includes

the majority minimizes the effects of downsizing and prepares everyone for a challenging and rewarding future.

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Chart 1. Substantial Shifts to Create an Organization Full of High-Potential Employees

SUBJECT	FROM	TO
Training Focus	Train the fast trackers/ high-potential employees. Training is an event.	Train everyone to work in high-potential teams. Training is an integrated process connected to acquiring competencies.
Training Approach	Most learning takes place in a classroom away from the job.	Learning is largely experiential with an emphasis on a variety of methods including developmental assignments.
Training Assessment	Training is planned by human resources. A select few make decisions about course content and structure.	Training is planned by everyone at all levels; HR organizes and supports the process. Employees routinely participate in design of learning opportunities.
Leadership	Individuals are empowered. The goal is swift action of a select few.	Teams are empowered. The goal is action combined with patience.
Communication	Skills needed in the future are left to guesswork. Employees don't understand how to avail themselves of learning opportunities.	There is active communication about projects and skills needed in the future. Employees are aware of developmental opportunities and how to "sign up" to learn.
Change	A few select superstars drive change.	Everyone drives change; change agents are trained and encouraged.
Processes	Change in processes via reengineering and restructuring are driven from the top of the organization and left to the high-potential employees.	Employee teams drive change with coaching from employees with change-management skills.
Diversity	High-potential employees are like those at the top. Leaders are younger, more "ambitious" employees. Emphasis is on the "right" education (e.g., an Ivy League school).	High-potential employees offer different perspectives from those at the top of the organization. Leaders are a combination of junior and senior employees. Life education as well as scholastic education is emphasized.

Chart 1 continued.

SUBJECT	FROM	TO
Rewards	Individual incentives and recognition exist for fast trackers.	There are rewards and incentives for everyone who builds needed skills.
Culture	The emphasis is on selecting and separating out high-potential employees. An individual commitment to the organization is fostered.	Building a high-performance culture that uses all of its human resources is emphasized. A shared commitment to the organization is encouraged.
Information Technology	Systems focus on succession planning. Information is hoarded for a few select fast trackers. Systems do not support training processes.	Systems reinforce and enable learning for all employees. Shared information helps support skill growth. On-line systems routinely communicate upcoming learning opportunities and provide on-line training and support.

LIABILITY AND THE HRD PRACTITIONER

John Sample

Abstract: Organizations should be prepared for civil and criminal litigation relating to a variety of areas in human resource development. The article discusses areas of potential liability for HRD professionals: negligent training and OSHA; EEO and training; adventure and experiential training programs; and corporate due diligence for criminal activity.

General concepts and practices as they apply to HRD programs in business, government, and associations are discussed; suggestions on how organizations can meet governmental and legal requirements and avoid litigation are offered. Particular attention is paid to a case involving an adventure-based program, including areas of potential liability that organizations offering such programs may face.

INTRODUCTION

The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 drastically changed the process of human resource management (HRM). During these past three decades, human resource development (HRD) professionals and their managers have been seemingly exempt from the long arm of the law and judgments in civil and criminal courts.

Unfortunately, that trend is reversing, and organizations should expect litigation well into the next century. HRD professionals must add a new set of skills to their list of competencies. This article will summarize areas of potential liability for the HRD profession. The following topics will be reviewed:

- negligent training and OSHA
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and training
- adventure and experiential training
- corporate due diligence for criminal activity

Tables 1 and 2 provide a partial summary of who may recover damages and who may be liable for damages (Sample, 1993).

In the previous era, the *primary reason* for providing training was to increase the probability of correct and consistent performance on the job. Managers of HRD units in business and government are now becoming concerned because of a *second reason* for training: to prevent or reduce an or-ganization's legal liability. In this context, training becomes a defense against the charge of failing to adequately train employees and their supervisors and managers. *If employers more consistently and effectively attended to the*

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primary reason, the need for the secondary reason would be significantly diminished (Sample, 1995, 1996).

Table 1. Who May Recover Damages

■ **EEOC/ADA Violations** Privacy and freedom of religion issues (nontraditional and "new age" training) Discrimination in selection of trainees for advanced and specialized training Training that results in a disparate effect on a federally protected class of employees Testing that unfairly discriminates against employees who are non-English speaking or culturally diverse Failure to provide assistive devices or to reasonably accommodate trainees with disabilities ■ **Injuries to Trainees** Training facility Unsafe simulation/laboratory equipment Unsafe workplace (OJT) ■ **OSHA Regulatory Requirements** General duty to train to standard Warning of workplace hazards & toxins	■ **Recovering Damages** <u>State Government:</u> Workplace health hazards Safety violations Criminal negligence <u>Federal Government:</u> OSHA violations Industry regulations (Nuclear Regulatory Commission, etc.) Environmental Resources Act ■ **Loss of Benefits** Anti Drug Abuse Act of 1988 Workers' Compensation Third Parties ■ **Personal Injuries** Training facility Workplace Off-site location ■ **Property Damages** Real or personal property in the vicinity

Used with permission from Sample, J. (1993). *INFO-LINE Legal Liability & HRD: Implications for Trainers.* Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training & Development.

Table 2. Who May Be Liable

Trainers ■ Negligent design of program, delivery of program, vendor selection, trainer selection, and/or facility supervision
Owner/Employer ■ Negligent program design, supervision of training and facility, instructor selection, implementation of mandated training, and/or vendor selection ■ Course content that is discriminatory ■ Vicarious liability ■ Invasion of privacy
The Employer ■ Negligent program design, selection of instructors/vendors, supervision of training activities ■ Failure to implement training mandated by statute ■ Discriminatory course content ■ Discriminatory selection of trainees ■ Vicarious liability - intentional acts of supervisors or trainers ■ Invasion of privacy
Outside Contractors/Vendors ■ Negligent program design, supervision of training facility ■ Misrepresentation of a safety record, credentials, experience, or other requirements, such as bond or insurance ■ Contractual agreement - failure to meet specifications or breach of an indemnification agreement

NEGLIGENT TRAINING AND OSHA

Negligence is generally defined as "unintentional conduct that falls below the standard of care that is necessary to protect others against exposure to an unreasonable risk of foreseeable injury" (Blackburn & Sage, 1991, p. 3). The elements of negligence include a legal duty, a breach of the duty, proximate cause, and injuries resulting in damages.

An example of negligent training involves a medical center and its duty to train nurses in their expected performance if an emergency, such as a fire, should occur. In *Stacy v. Truman Medical Center* (1992), the medical center had a policy on fire safety and evacuation procedures; however, the nurses in this instance were not trained on the policy. A breach of duty occurred in not removing a patient from a room that was on fire. The proximate causal link between the death of the patient and the duty to train the nurses was adequate to sustain a judgment against the medical center.

A related area of responsibility for employers concerns compliance with OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Act (1970). OSHA has promulgated a general duty requirement of an employer

> to furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees . . . . (OSHA, 1970)

The general duty clause "includes training of employees as to the dangers and supervision of the work site *(General Dynamics v. OSHARC, 1977).* This requirement speaks clearly to the special case for training supervisors, for they must always be regarded as the first-line trainers for their employer. Sage (1990, p. 10) sums it up best when he recommends that "If there is a failure to exercise reasonable care in performing this duty, either in the commission or omission of an instructional act or training activity, and that failure results in an injured trainee, the trainer or . . . [supervisor] is assumed liable."

Training and Job Performance

The following suggestions will assist employers and trainers in linking training directly to job performance:

- Review the organization's mission, strategic plan, corporate values, principles of service, operational goals and objectives that are related to training, and train for impact (Robinson & Robinson, 1991).
- For training requirements, complete a job-task analysis and performance criteria for the knowledge, skill, and attitudes needed at the micro level. Review macro-level goals and objectives for functional areas (customer service, quality improvement, manufacturing, sales, new product design, etc.) to determine job-related training requirements.

- If necessary, use systems and process documentation, survey questionnaires, interviews, or observations to document training requirements at the macro level. This is especially important for moderate- to long-range change requirements (i.e., corporate restructuring, downsizing, etc.).
- Use a logically structured analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation approach. Link instructional methods and media to job-related requirements at both micro (Dick & Carey, 1996) and macro (Rothwell & Kazanas, 1993) levels within the organization. Consider the importance of learning styles in the development of regulatory training (Eshelman & Woodacre, 1996).

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) AND TRAINING

Selection Procedures

Managers throughout a business must understand that selecting an employee for training, development, or education falls within Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines. Consider for a moment the following EEOC mandate from the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR):

> These guidelines apply to tests and other selection procedures which are used as a basis for any employment decision. Employment decisions include . . . promotion, demotion, membership (for ex-ample in a labor organization), referral, retention. Other selection decisions, such as selection for training or transfer, may also be considered employment decisions if they lead to any of the decisions listed above. (Underlined for emphasis. 29 CFR 1607.2B)

Significant employment decisions must be job-related! Deciding who will or will not attend training may be an "employment decision," and such decisions must conform to EEOC requirements. If training and development are a prerequisite for promotion to higher-level positions, then such decisions are probably "employment decisions," and procedures for selecting trainees should conform to EEOC requirements. Adverse impact, also known as differential treatment, could be the result of poorly designed and managed procedures for selecting trainees (Cascio, 1991).

Good and honorable intent is not the issue in this context; impact is the bottom line. Well-intentioned attempts to meet EEOC guidelines are incidental to the adverse impact that occurs because of poor analysis and design of selection procedures for determining who will attend training.

Training as a Selection Component

A second guideline impacting the training arena has to do with validating selection procedures when training is a significant component of the selection process. For example, performance in training may be used as a criterion (or standard) by which future performance on the job is predicted. Again, EEOC guidelines are useful in guiding managerial decisions:

> Where performance in training is used as a criterion, success in training should be properly measured and the relevance of the training should be shown either through a comparison of the content of the training program with the critical or important work behavior(s) of the job(s), or through a demonstration of the relationship between measures of performance in training and measures of job performance. (Underlined for emphasis. 29 CFR 1607.14B(3))

According to EEOC requirements, measures of success in a training program include instructor evaluations, performance samples, or tests (but note that paper and pencil tests will be closely reviewed for job relevance). Bartlett (1978, p. 181) states that "unless training could be demonstrated empirically to make a difference in job performance, training requirements if showing adverse impact can be ruled discriminatory. Thus, training measures would be required to have demonstrated relationship to later performance before they could be used for any employment decisions."

ADA Implications

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is another example of federal legislation that impacts human resource development. The following implications are suggested (Sample, 1995):

- Determine the "essential functions" for HRD positions and use them to recruit, select, train, and supervise training and development personnel. Although affirmative action to recruit and hire is not a requirement of ADA, role modeling by hiring disabled trainers demonstrates leadership.
- Accommodate those with disabilities in their training and development requirements. Expect employees to request reasonable accommodations when attending organization-sponsored HRD programs. Large-print type for the visually impaired and listening devices for the hearing impaired are examples.
- Teach supervisors how to work with employees returning to work with a disability. Supervisors may fear managing the disabled employee, carrying out performance appraisals, and making work assignments.
- Train company recruiters and supervisors in what types of interview questions are legal. From an attitudinal perspective, interviewers will be expected to feel comfortable in interviewing the disabled job applicant.

ADVENTURE AND EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING

Certain constitutional issues, such as the rights to privacy and religion, and issues about personal safety have a possible impact on the design and delivery of adventure-based and experiential types of programs (Vogel, 1991). Included in this category is classroom instruction of an experiential nature, such as role plays; ice breakers (e.g., improvisational theater); small-group strategies that promote anger, stress, or conflict; and adventure-based experiential programs. Adventure programs typically involve

wilderness treks, off-shore jaunts, or other forms of individual or group survival experiences.

These experiences are designed to instill self-confidence and promote team building.

Three civil court cases involving adventure and experiential approaches have been reported. In *Hiatt v. Walker Chevrolet Company* (1987), the plaintiff alleged wrongful discharge for refusing to participate in an experiential training program. Hiatt, the plaintiff, believed that the program countermanded his religious views and he refused to fire sales personnel who would not adopt the tenets of the company's program as delivered by a vendor. Although the state court summarily ruled in favor of the auto dealership, the plaintiff has appealed the lower court ruling

The *Dong Shik Kim, et al., v. The Dekalb Farmer's Market, Inc.* (1988) case was settled out of court, thereby precluding a determination on the facts by a state civil court. In this instance, managers who participated in an outdoor adventure program were terminated when they refused to require lower-level managers also to participate. The terminated managers alleged wrongful termination and constitutional infringement of their rights of privacy and religion.

The third case involved a contract trainer who, while working for a large telecommunications company, became a codefendant in a civil negligence case (Sample & Hylton, 1996). During a trust-building and planning exercise in which participants were balancing on a swinging log, a 59-year-old female employee fell from the log and broke her leg. The company-sponsored program was mandatory; however, the contract trainer testified that any participant not comfortable with a particular exercise could "challenge out" of direct participation.

The plaintiff alleged negligence on the part of the contract trainer and her employer, the telecommunications company. During the civil trial, the contract trainer was on the witness stand for over eight hours. He convinced the jury that he had followed the requirements of safe implementation for the swinging log exercise. His ability to educate the judge and jury on his credentials and experience and on the purpose of each exercise, coupled with his extensive record keeping, resulted in no finding of negligence on the part of the contract trainer.

The telecommunications company, however, was not so fortunate. A civil judgment in excess of $800,000 was found against the company. Two issues seemed to be in the minds of the jury members as they deliberated this case: the nature of injury sustained by an older woman and the fact that attendance was mandatory. (The judgment was later ruled excessive and reduced.)

Potential Liability

These cases suggest several potential areas of liability:

- Personnel injuries could occur, leaving the corporation and its insurance company liable for damages due to negligence and for workers' compensation claims.

- Stress-related illness may result in workers' compensation claims or civil suits for "emotional distress" or "intentional infliction of distress."
- Constitutional rights to privacy and religious freedom may be infringed on when participants are forced to discuss personal values and religious convictions. Pressure to adopt values inconsistent with individuals' personal values and religious convictions may place an organization legally at risk.
- Termination of employment for failure to participate in organizationally mandated programs could result in wrongful termination suits.
- Federally protected rights could be abridged if participants are not selected because of a handicap or for reasons based on race, nationality, sex, age, etc.

The following suggestions will help prevent or minimize potential litigation (Sample, 1994):

- Make participation voluntary in extensive experiential (overnight wilderness adventure) training. Require a written consent that discloses the contents of the program. Any other type of consent may not be interpreted as "informed" and is therefore unenforceable.
- Provide nonpunishing alternatives for employees who do not wish to participate in experiential activities that may intrude on constitutionally guaranteed rights, such as privacy, religion, or handicap. Design alternative developmental approaches that result in the same learning and performance outcomes.
- Never force an unwilling employee to continue an experiential activity or exercise, and make every effort to avoid embarrassing an employee, both during training and back on the job. This caution includes general classroom facilitation as well as extended residential or other forms of extensive experiential training.
- Do not punish those who do not volunteer for such programs when their performance appraisals are due or when promotions are being considered.
- Choose your private vendors/contractors carefully. Check their references, program content, and if possible observe one of their programs in progress for safety and emergency precautions. State in writing how you expect the vendor to handle instructional content and conflict. Based on job-related data, expect the vendor to modify the design and development of media and the content of the curriculum to meet the work-related requirements of the organization. Consider requiring performance bonds for vendors and contractors.
- Educate senior management and corporate legal counsel on the potential legal pitfalls of experiential approaches that are not linked to micro or macro job requirements.

CORPORATE DUE DILIGENCE FOR CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

White-collar crimes, such as tax evasion, deception, embezzlement, and other forms of business fraud, have forced the federal government to take an active role in preventing and curtailing such business practices (Albrecht, Wernz, & Williams, 1995). Powerful criminal sanctions now exist for a business convicted of a felony or serious misdemeanor under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines (Title 28, ss 994 United States Code). These sanctions would be levied against an individual business's corporate officers, board members, and other employees for violations of the law, depending on the culpability of the business as measured on a culpabality index (Gruner, 1993).

In 1991, chapter eight was added to the Federal Sentencing Guidelines to provide for sentencing of businesses whose employees commit crimes, because the companies are "vicariously liable for offenses committed by their agents," i.e., employees. The guidelines are used by judges for assessing criminal penalities when individuals are convicted of violating federal law. Chapter eight of the Sentencing Guidelines is designed to provide punishment, adequate determent, and incentives for businesses to maintain internal mechanisms for preventing, detecting, and reporting criminal conduct.

Directors of HRD services may be called on to assist in the development of a unique and highly specialized type of program for their employers. Such program development will require collaboration with human resource management, security personnel, corporate attorneys, and senior management.

Example of Criminal Activity

If an employee, while acting on behalf of the business as a loan officer in a bank, violates the law by intentionally discriminating against qualified applicants, the business is automatically linked as a co-defendant to criminal penalities if charges are brought and a conviction obtained. The position that the employee was acting on his own will not by itself absolve the bank from being sanctioned under chapter eight of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines.

Criminal Fines

Depending on the culpability, nature, number, and history of prior convictions, criminal fines range from court-ordered community service and simple restitution to fines in the range of $70 million, including the possibility of prison terms. A sliding scale assists the federal court judge in assessing monetary penalities. The Sentencing Guidelines also allow for higher fines than the published amounts. If the convicted party is a threat to the environment or the economic market, an upward departure from the published penalties is warranted and possible under the Guidelines.

Elements of a "Program" Under the Sentencing Guidelines

The Sentencing Guidelines describe in detail how culpability will be determined: in part by the measures to prevent and detect criminal conduct that the organization took prior to the offense; the level and extent of involvement in or tolerance of the offense by certain personnel; and the organization's actions after an offense has been committed (Federal Sentencing Guidelines).

The requirements for an organizational program to prevent criminal activity, according to the Sentencing Guidelines, are stated in Table 3.

In addition to the requirement of training and publication, the sentencing guidelines require the development of compliance standards and procedures and the assignment of responsibility to high-level corporate employees; they must provide monitoring and auditing to achieve compliance through consistent internal enforcement, including appropriate discipline for those responsible for infractions and those who fail to detect an offense. Finally, if an offense is discovered, the business must take reasonable steps to respond appropriately and to prevent future similar offenses.

DEVELOPING A CORPORATE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

The advantages of developing a corporate compliance program for due diligence include the prevention of criminal activity by agents and employees of the business, lowered penalties and reduced legal costs, positive public relations, and improved morale. Disadvantages to such a program may include the existence of an auditable paper trail that may force a mandatory response if criminal activity surfaces, and the adverse publicity that follows such a revelation (Davis & McFarland, 1996).

Table 3. Requirements for Training Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines

An "effective program to prevent and detect violations of law" means a program that has been reasonably designed, implemented, and enforced so that it generally will be effective in preventing and detecting criminal conduct. Failure to prevent or detect the instant offense, by itself, does not mean that the program was not effective. The hallmark of an effective program to prevent and detect violations of the law is that the organization exercised due diligence in seeking to prevent and detect criminal conduct by its employees and other agents. Due diligence requires at a minimum that the organization must have taken the following types of steps . . .
(4) The organization must have taken steps to communicate effectively its standards and procedures to all employees and other agents, e.g., ***by requiring participation in training programs or by disseminating publications*** that explain in a practical manner what is required.

Source: Federal Sentencing Guidelines Manual, Chapter Eight, Sentencing of Organizations, Sec. 8A1.2 (p. 341).

The following suggestions are designed to guide a business in developing a compliance program:

- Determine the business's level of risk and potential legal problems. Interviews and focus groups of senior management and key personnel are a good starting point. Consider industry standards and regulatory requirements of state and federal agencies. Require that corporate legal counsel provide a legal assessment based on statutory requirements and case law.
- Based on an assessment, prioritize issues according to risk potential. For some types of businesses, safety issues could be a pressing issue, especially if compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act is mandated. For other businesses, compliance with environmental regulations, sexual harassment, or mergers and acquisitions could be the highest priority.
- Having prioritized issues, select the most expedient medium for communicating clearly the position and expectation of the business relative to criminal activity. For some businesses, publication of policies and procedures in employee handbooks and other distributed documentation will be sufficient. The use of classroom instruction may be necessary in some settings. If training is required, utilize a standard instructional systems approach (Dick & Carey, 1996). Especially important will be documentation of who attended each training program and the extent to which the instruction was evaluated for effectiveness (Sample, 1995).
- Monitor the compliance program for compliance, just as business practices are monitored for compliance. The potential for liability will change with the passage of time, and the program will have to be adapted to comply with new laws, regulations, and evolving case law.
- Document all phases of the program: the development of policy statements and training programs, investigations, and follow-up disciplinary reports for violation of compliance requirements. If compliance documentation becomes a financial and practical burden—assuming no laws or regulations to the contrary—consider a documentation retention program that allows for the destruction of records after a period of time.

CONCLUSION

Managers of HRD programs can expect more intrusion by the law and courts as time passes. Balancing employee rights with the mission of the organization is a responsibility of senior management and the organization's human resource management and training professionals. The safest strategy is always to link training and development to job tasks and the corporation's vision, mission, and strategic and quality initiatives.

There is a caveat to the concern about liability as presented in this article. One way to interpret the potential for liability is to adopt a conservative posture that precludes risk taking or creative individual and team performance. However, it is important to remember that "meeting the vision and mission of a dynamic business enterprise requires a certain amount of risk taking. Employees must not be frightened into non-performance of their jobs because of the potential for litigation" (Sample, 1995, p. 205).

Note to Readers: This article is designed to provide descriptive and illustrative material on general concepts and practices as they may apply to HRD programs in business, government, and associations. While the information in this article is accurate and timely, it does not constitute legal advice. *Readers are advised to consult competent legal counsel for specific advice on situations involving their organizations.*

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EVALUATION OF HUMAN-SERVICE PROGRAMS

Karen Sue Trisko and V.C. League

The word evaluation conjures up fearful images in the minds of many people. But it need not be perceived as a complex evil that only highly credentialed statisticians should be allowed to do. Those responsible for the planning, development, and implementation of human services and educational programs should be the people involved in evaluation.

Workers in all fields constantly seek feedback to reinforce certain behaviors that seem to work well on the job and to modify others that do not seem effective. Administrators and office staff would like to identify the most efficient ways of doing their work, and continual interaction with their working environments yields this feedback. An example of such feedback would be the number of word-of-mouth referrals made to a human-service program or a sudden drop (or rise) in the number of people voluntarily seeking services.

Throughout the implementation of a program, staff members will be asking themselves, "How am *I* doing?" and administrators will ask, "How are *we* doing?" At the end of a fixed period of time, some external person or agency will ask, "'How well did it go? Should it be done again? Was it worth the effort?"

In anticipation of these judgmental questions (and evaluation is, by definition, a judgmental process), it makes sense to build in, at the outset of program implementation, the mechanisms needed to answer them. "Self-correcting" mechanisms enable progress to be monitored throughout the life of the program. Monitoring, quite simply, is the process of checking the road map (the program plan) to verify location and getting back on the path or selecting an alternate route for getting to the final destination—achievement of program objectives and goals.

Depending on who is asking evaluation questions, and for what reasons, either "process evaluation" or "outcome evaluation" will be chosen. Process evaluation assesses a program's *means*, and outcome evaluation measures its *end results.* Program staff members are likely to seek "process" or "formative evaluation" to monitor how well day-to-day tasks and activities are carried out. Program administrators and outside people are likely to seek "outcome" or "summative evaluation."

Evaluation activities should take place in the same sequence as the implementation of the program: (1) *tasks* should be *monitored;* (2) *activities* should be *assessed;* (3) *outcomes* (achievement of objectives) should be *enumerated;* (4) *goal attainment* should

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be *measured;* and (5) a judgment as to whether the *problem* has been reduced should be made (Figure 1).

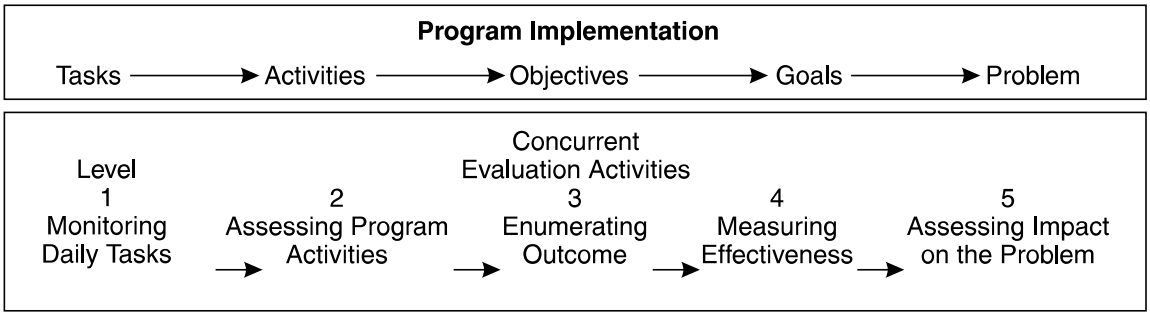

Figure 1. Sequence of Program Implementation and Evaluation Activities

LEVELS OF EVALUATION

Each level of evaluation builds on the previous one. Information obtained at level 1 supplies the groundwork for level 2; level-2 information provides the basis for level 3; and so on. Figure 2 illustrates all five levels and the central questions addressed at each level.

Level 1: Monitoring Daily Tasks

The internal workings of a program are under scrutiny at level 1: accounting and financial records and procedures, organizational functioning and staffing patterns, rules, regulations and procedures, timekeeping, staff training and development. An assessment, formal or informal, could be made of the organization's structures and tasks by asking staff members: "What's right around here? What's wrong around here? What would you change about the day-to-day operations to make it better? What would make it easier for you to do your job?"

For the most part, management problems are uncovered and dealt with at level 1. The depth of evaluation activity depends on the number of problem areas suspected or the seriousness of malfunctioning within the organization. Probing of specific problem areas is undertaken. Work analyses, resource expenditure studies, management audits, procedural overhauls, and audits are considered level-1 evaluation activities.

Level 2: Assessing Program Activities

Before it can be determined how to improve program activities, the characteristics of current activities need to be known. Level 2 assesses numbers and types of program services, the recipients of those services, the timing and appropriateness of activities, and the efficiency with which they are carried out. Client-satisfaction measures and assessment of public image are common level-2 activities. Some determination of what

Process/Formative Evaluation		*Outcome/Summative Evaluation*		
Level 1 *Monitoring Daily Tasks*	**Level 2** *Assessing Program Activities*	**Level 3** *Enumerating Outcome*	**Level 4** *Measuring Effectiveness*	**Level 5** *Assessing Impact on the Problem*
Are contractual or service obligations being met? Is activity taking place where and when it should? Are staff members working where and when they should? Is the program administratively sound? Are daily tasks carried out efficiently? Are staff adequately trained for their jobs?	What is done to whom? What activities are taking place? Who is the target of activity (numbers and types of people with what problems/needs, from what areas, etc.)? How well is the activity implemented How could it be done more efficiently? Were clients satisfied? Does the program have a favorable image?	What is the result of the activities described in level 2? Should different activities be substituted? Have program objectives been achieved? What happened to the target population? How is it different from before? Have unanticipated outcomes also occurred and are they desirable? What activities might be repeated to ensure their future occurrence?	What would have happened to participants in the absence of the program? What are all the factors that may have contributed to the changes documented at level 3? How cost effective is the program, compared to others with the same goals?	What changes are evident in the problem? Has the problem been reduced as a result of the program? What new knowledge has been generated for society about the problem or ways to solve the problem?

Figure 2. Evaluation Levels

seems to work best with what types of people is made at this level. Obviously, evaluation activity at the first two levels is highly subjective, requiring the heavy involvement of program staff members, to whom the judgments are most valuable. The underlying premise in evaluation is that problems cannot be solved if they are not recognized.

Level 3: Enumerating Outcome

At this level of evaluation, it is possible to determine whether program objectives—the immediate short-term outcomes—have been achieved. To ascertain what resulted from the activities described in level 2, some through-time measures are needed. How is the

target population different now from the way it was before participating in the program? Behavior, attitudes, skills, information level, legal or employment status, or other characteristics of the clients need to be documented. Changes that occurred simultaneously with the program's existence cannot, however, be attributed to the program. For example, a repeated juvenile offender might "straighten out," i.e., get a job and manage not to get arrested during the time of participation in a juvenile-services program. But the reason for the change in behavior could be that the young person's family relationships improved and thus offered motivation not to get into trouble. Another example of the cause-effect fallacy would be the academic improvement of students enrolled in a tutoring program during a year when grading policy at the school changed.

If objectives are not being met, then more questions should be raised. For instance, have the wrong activities been selected to achieve this particular objective? Was the objective realistic and measurable in the first place? Conversely, if objectives are being met, level-3 evaluation activities help program staff to reinforce what works.

Level 4: Measuring Effectiveness

Effectiveness measurement tells us whether program goals have been accomplished. The major questions addressed are "What would have happened in the absence of the program? Is it better than no program at all? Does it make a difference?" To answer these questions, a cause-effect relationship must be established, meaning that a "control" group or program is needed for comparison. That control group must match as closely as possible the group participating in the program. It is important to identify and match as many of the other variables that could be influencing a change in conditions or behavior. As close a link as possible needs to be established between cause and effect to measure effectiveness of goal attainment—the long-range, ultimate outcomes desired.

Level 5: Assessing Impact on the Problem

If a program is worthwhile and perfect in every way, an improvement in the problem situation should be evident. The reality is that most programs do not have the necessary resources to carry out evaluation activities at this level. Nor is it possible to make the environment stand still in order to enable us to ascertain whether a program effort caused a reduction in the problem. So many external variables exist that it is virtually impossible to determine real impact on social problems resulting from program intervention. Social value changes, new public policies, changes in economic conditions, and the multitude of factors that influence society and individuals all have an impact on the problems in the world. Nevertheless, program staff members are forced every day to try to answer the ultimate question: "Did the program reduce the problem?" Usually the person asking the question actually needs other information, and it is the program staff's responsibility to cull it out. Usually these information needs are political or economic and can be satisfactorily answered with information gathered at the first four (probably the first two) levels of program evaluation.

Evaluation Needs and Intensity

The time and resources needed to carry out all five levels of evaluation would be phenomenal, even for a small, community-based human service program. To determine how far to pursue evaluation, the guide in Figure 3 can be used.

Circle the number on each continuum that most closely describes your program. This guide can help you determine at what level you actually can or need to evaluate:

Expectations: Who has expectations for evaluation: staff? board? funding source? What questions need to be answered? Is process or outcome evaluation needed?

1	2	3	4	5
NO EXPECTATIONS				HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Quality of Goals and Objectives: Do those of your program meet these criteria: specific, time limited, measurable/observable, and realistic/attainable statements of end result?

1	2	3	4	5
MEET NO CRITERIA				MEET ALL CRITERIA

Availability of Data: Are the data needed to evaluate at each successive level available? (Refer to the questions encompassed at each level.)

1	2	3	4	5
NO DATA AVAILABLE				EXTENSIVE DATA AVAILABLE

Resources: What technical skills and staff commitment exist? What level of financial resources is available?

1	2	3	4	5
NO RESOURCES				UNLIMITED RESOURCES

The lowest number you circled on each of the four continua will dictate at what level you realistically can evaluate:

1	2	3	4	5
Monitoring Daily Tasks	Assessing Activities	Enumerating Outcome	Measuring Effectiveness	Assessing Impact on the Problem

Figure 3. Evaluation Needs and Intensity Guide

QUALITY OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The greatest task in evaluation is to shape goals and objectives so that they can be evaluated. They must be end statements that are (1) concrete and specific, (2) realistic and attainable, (3) measurable, and (4) time bound.

In order to be measurable, goals and objectives must be operationally defined. This means translating them into observable indicators of success. For example:

Goal

To reduce by one-half the number of employment-service clients who are unable to locate jobs because of their lack of job-finding skills.

Objective #1

To increase employment-service clients' ability to complete job-application forms by the end of a four-week training program.

The objective is not operational until "increased ability" is defined.

Operational Definition

Clients' overall scores on four job-application forms as measured against the criteria of completeness, legibility, and accuracy, will reach an average level of 70 percent or better.

Another objective related to the same goal:

Objective #2

To increase participants' skills in using the public transportation system.

Operational Definition

Participants will demonstrate skill in using the public transportation system as evidenced by using public transportation to arrive on time at two prearranged interviews.

An operational definition is behavioral, recognizable by anyone, and not subject to broad interpretation. It specifies the conditions or events that signal success or failure.

It is important that both evaluator and program implementer agree on operational definitions for their particular program goals and objectives. Otherwise, an evaluator may measure one thing, while a program implementer is striving for something entirely different. This is true for in-house evaluators as well as for external evaluators, although the need for absolute agreement is heightened with external evaluators.

EVALUATION RESEARCH DESIGNS

Once goals and objectives have been operationally defined so that they are measurable, the next step is to select a research design.

Single-Group Postprogram Design (Program → Measurement)

A group of program participants (either the whole population or a representative subgroup) is measured against predetermined criteria (according to program objectives). This design is probably the one most often utilized in human-service programs for a variety of reasons.

For instance, evaluation may have begun after the program started, thereby eliminating the possibility of measuring participant characteristics before the program

began. Or the program activities may be such that access to participants is impossible before they become involved in the program.

Single-Group Preprogram/Postprogram Design (First Measurement → Program → Second Measurement)

Again, a group of participants is measured against predetermined criteria, both before involvement in the program and again after completion of the program. The same kind of measurement must be used, so that evidence of change can be traced. There may be more than one postprogram measurement in order to identify the lasting effects of change upon participants.

Split-Group Preprogram/Postprogram Design (First Measurement, Group I → Program → Second Measurement, Group II)

Basically the same as the previous design, this design measures one group of participants before and a different but matching group after program participation. The groups must be similar. This design is used when the same group of people is not accessible for pre- and postprogram measurement.

Control-Group Postprogram Design (Program Group → Measurement) (Control Group → Measurement)

No preprogram measures are taken. Two separate groups of people are measured against the same predetermined criteria. One group consists of program participants, the other of people who have had no exposure to the program but who are characteristically similar. This design would enable testing the hypothesis that one type of program was better than none at all.

Control-Group Preprogram/Postprogram Design (First Measurement → Program Group → Second Measurement) (First Measurement → Control Group → Second Measurement)

Two separate but matching groups of people are measured before and after a program. This design makes it possible to track participants' changes through time, as compared with nonparticipants' changes through time. A sound cause-effect relationship can be established by using this design if proper control of all variables is established. For example the effects of a program to reduce in-school dropouts could be compared to the situations in like schools with no such programs. This design will work only if all characteristics of the school systems are alike, i.e., suspension and expulsion policies, teacher-student ratios, grading policy, and the multitude of other variables that could affect a student's decision to drop out.

Variation of Control Group Preprogram/Postprogram Design (First Measurement → Program I → Second Measurement) (First Measurement → Program II → Second Measurement)

This design could be used to compare two different programs with like goals. Such a design would yield information as to which program produces better results, given the same conditions and target populations. It would also tell which type of program is more cost-effective, or which program seems to work best with what types of target populations.

DATA COLLECTION

After selecting an appropriate research design that will yield answers to the questions posed, it is time to determine how to collect the necessary data: What data will be collected? From/by whom? When? In what format?

What Data?

The answer to "what data?" is determined by the operational definitions of objectives. Data could be specific behaviors or events to be observed, items on a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, interview questions, police or hospital statistics, and so on.

Data can be considered "hard" or "soft." Hard data are quantitative: dollar amounts, number of people served, number of days of effort, scores on paper-and-pencil questionnaires, behavior indicators (such as numbers of arrests, days absent from school, grades, hospital admissions, recidivism rates, deaths, overdoses), either/or indicators (such as "drug free," "employed," etc.). Soft data are qualitative: self-perceptions, attitudes, client satisfaction measures, types of interactions between people, changes in "climate," judgmental observations, etc.

In either case the data must be valid (Does it measure what it is intended to measure?) and reliable (Does it measure consistently, over time, and with different types of people?). Validity has to do with previously discussed absolute agreement between evaluator and program staff regarding indicators of success. For instance, measuring change in attitudes toward criminals would not be a valid measure for a program for which an objective is to increase participants' usage of local community referral sources.

Reliability has to do with whether several observers, for example, are looking for the same phenomena or whether items on a questionnaire are interpreted alike by everyone reading them. An unreliable measure, for instance, is the I.Q. test because it may not be applicable to all groups because of given language and cultural considerations.

Data from/by Whom?

Whoever is closest to the source should collect data, and usually the closest are program staff members and participants. The phenomenon of bias, then, must be addressed. The

mere fact that staff members know why data are being collected is likely to cause them, either subconsciously or consciously, to present only positive data. Self-report data by participants could be biased if they wish to be perceived in a favorable light. For these reasons, outside evaluators are hired to collect data. To eliminate bias, verification by other sources could be used. For instance, self-report by youngsters in school about their learning could be verified by their teachers, or by grades, a source of hard data. The surest way to collect unbiased data is to use several sources that can collaborate.

Data: When and Where?

When and where data collection occurs is largely determined by the research design being implemented. If it is a pre- and postprogram design, then there must be access to participants prior to any involvement with the program, as well as on completion of that involvement. When to collect data also must be considered with respect to program activities. For example, observations of groups must be made at times that are not disruptive to the process of the activity; otherwise, the occurrences in the group are likely to be different from what they would have been without a disruption. Where to collect data is usually a matter of convenience, but ideally those supplying data should be afforded a comfortable setting that is consistent for all data suppliers.

The "experimenter effect" must also be taken into account. It simply means that the act of collecting data (observing a group, administering a questionnaire, photographing evidence of vandalism with the principal's permission) influences the results.

Common Errors in Data Collection

Many efforts to gather data are sabotaged because of failure to:

1. Pretest items on surveys and questionnaires to correct weaknesses in format, directions, grammar, completion time, etc.
2. Select and train data collectors, interviewers, observers.
3. Introduce and explain the study to respondents.
4. Ensure confidentiality or anonymity where appropriate.
5. Establish rapport with data providers, use the language of the respondent.
6. Clarify unclear responses with nonsuggestive probes; avoid "leading" questions.
7. Record data at the time of collection to ensure accurate recall.
8. Review questionnaires for completeness before respondents leave.
9. Describe the reporting procedures that could have affected the data, especially when collecting existing data.
10. Use comparable scales and rates (avoid comparing apples with oranges).
11. Control and standardize analysis procedures.
12. Utilize the findings.

Ideally, evaluation efforts should be characterized by the following conditions:

1. Evaluation should be built in at the start of project planning.
2. There should be honesty between the program staff members and the evaluator.
3. A clear understanding of evaluation purpose should exist.
4. The project's goals and objectives should be clearly understood and stated in measurable terms.
5. Agreement on "success indicators" and "failure indicators" must exist.
6. There must be an understanding of the evaluation design: when data will be collected and by whom, what interventions are likely to interfere with project activities, etc.
7. The evaluation design should be flexible enough so that time lines and data-collection methods can be altered midstream, if necessary.
8. There should be joint consultation regarding study results, and a joint interpretation of results before conclusions are drawn and resulting decisions made.

SUMMARY

Some ethical guidelines and suggestions can be helpful in presenting evaluation findings:

- Delineate the complete program picture (problems, goals, objectives, activities, tasks).
- Outline the entire evaluation design, including what prompted the study and what decisions are likely to result.
- Present the limitations and weaknesses of the design for what they are.
- Present raw data in the final report, allowing audiences to draw their own conclusions.
- Ensure confidentiality when it has been promised.
- Establish authority over the findings.
- Apply the findings to future program development.

It is important to remember that program development and evaluation logic is a circular process (Figure 4) that continually answers four questions in sequence:

1. What outcome is expected? (program plans)
2. What is the actual outcome? (evaluation)
3. What is the discrepancy between the two? (evaluation)
4. How can the discrepancy gap be closed? (revised program plans)

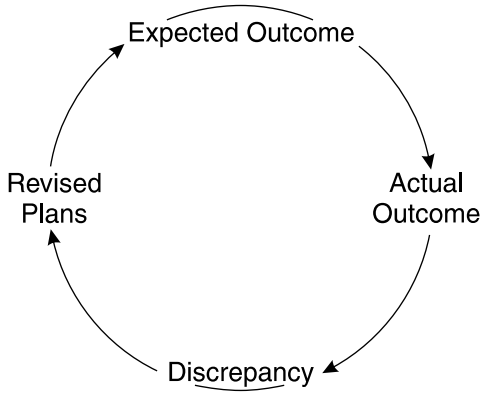

Figure 4. Circular Evaluation Process

If this concept is applied to every level of program plans and evaluation, the success of human-service programs can be greatly increased.

EVALUATION: ISSUES FIRST, METHODOLOGY SECOND

Phyliss Cooke and Ralph R. Bates

Many organizations require evaluation of training in terms of the "bottom line" in order to make judgments about future resource allocations to human resource development (HRD) efforts. The problem is that complex, bottom-line indicators are not the same types of data or couched in the same language as the behavioral criteria used in training. It would be virtually impossible to design, conduct, and control a research project that could account for and "evaluate" all forms of organizational and behavioral change. However, this is what would have to be done in order to assess the true impact of training on the bottom line. Professionals in HRD continually are forced to respond to the challenge of trying to assess training effects and to provide useful data to the decision makers in organizations. Yet few organizations are willing to invest the dollars, time, and talent needed to engage in complex cause-and-effect evaluation projects; and many trainers seem reluctant to advocate more easily attainable but "soft" evaluation data such as participants' and trainers' self-reports, test scores of accuracy on discrete tasks, observations during training sessions, retention scores on performance tasks, and so on.

Although most of us believe that providing training ultimately results in higher productivity and job satisfaction, we know how difficult it would be to have to try to "justify" training costs exclusively on the basis of return-on-investment (ROI) analysis. Few researchers who have written about training evaluation have proposed strategies for viewing training effects strictly on the basis of financial analysis. Those who have proposed strategies have cautioned that establishing direct links between training and complex organizational factors can be misleading. We practitioners need to help our organizations come to grips with that reality.

We can and should be promoting more appropriate guidance in terms of training evaluation. We should be working to find ways to support our conviction that we are necessary to the accomplishment of our organizations' long-term objectives. What we should not do is be caught in the trap of trying to justify our existence by using inappropriate indicators or promise increased productivity outcomes when much of our training is not primarily designed to provide technical skills acquisition. Because the primary function of most training is to provide opportunities for people to learn potentially useful ideas; to practice and acquire relevant skills that are the basis of improved performance; and to explore attitudes toward themselves, others, and their

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work that ultimately affect their on-the-job performance, we need to operate and evaluate within these boundaries. We can and should educate the users of our services about appropriate strategies for evaluating our contributions.

This article proposes a sequence and a structure for the dialogue that needs to take place when one is considering a training-evaluation project. In addition, a model is proposed for guiding the planning of the project.

STEP 1: DECIDE WHETHER TO EVALUATE

The first step for HRD practitioners is to help all who are involved to gain greater clarity about the purpose of a proposed training and evaluation effort—what it is realistic to expect from the data once they have been generated. The HRD person can explore a number of questions with the intended users of the assessed data in order to determine the true purpose of the evaluation project. The first question to be discussed is whether the training should be evaluated. Then, and only then, should questions concerning the appropriate methodological approach be addressed. Beginning with the question of whether or not training should be evaluated suggests that there are several legitimate reasons not to evaluate. This question should be explored carefully, because once an evaluation project has been started it begins to take on a life of its own.

It is important to remember that even the most sophisticated and well-implemented evaluation process can provide only information. The practitioner, or the people who ultimately will be using the information, must decide ahead of time the questions to be answered or the decisions to be made once the data have been generated. If the intended users of the data do not know specifically why the data are being generated, it might be better to rethink the decision to evaluate.

Other questions to be addressed at this point are as follows:

- What resources (time, money, access, personnel, materials) are needed and/or available to support the evaluation?
- Does it seem likely that there will be a commitment to actually use the data for the original purpose once they have been generated?

If the answer to either of these questions is negative, one should advise against proceeding. If the answers are positive, proceed to Step 2.

Ideally, the planning of the evaluation procedure should take place in the sequence shown in Figure 1.

STEP 2: CLARIFY THE TYPE OF EVALUATION PROJECT DESIRED

Once the decision has been made that the effects of training are to be evaluated and there is commitment to use the data, the next step is to decide the type of evaluation desired, that is, whether the evaluation is being undertaken for purposes of justification or determination.

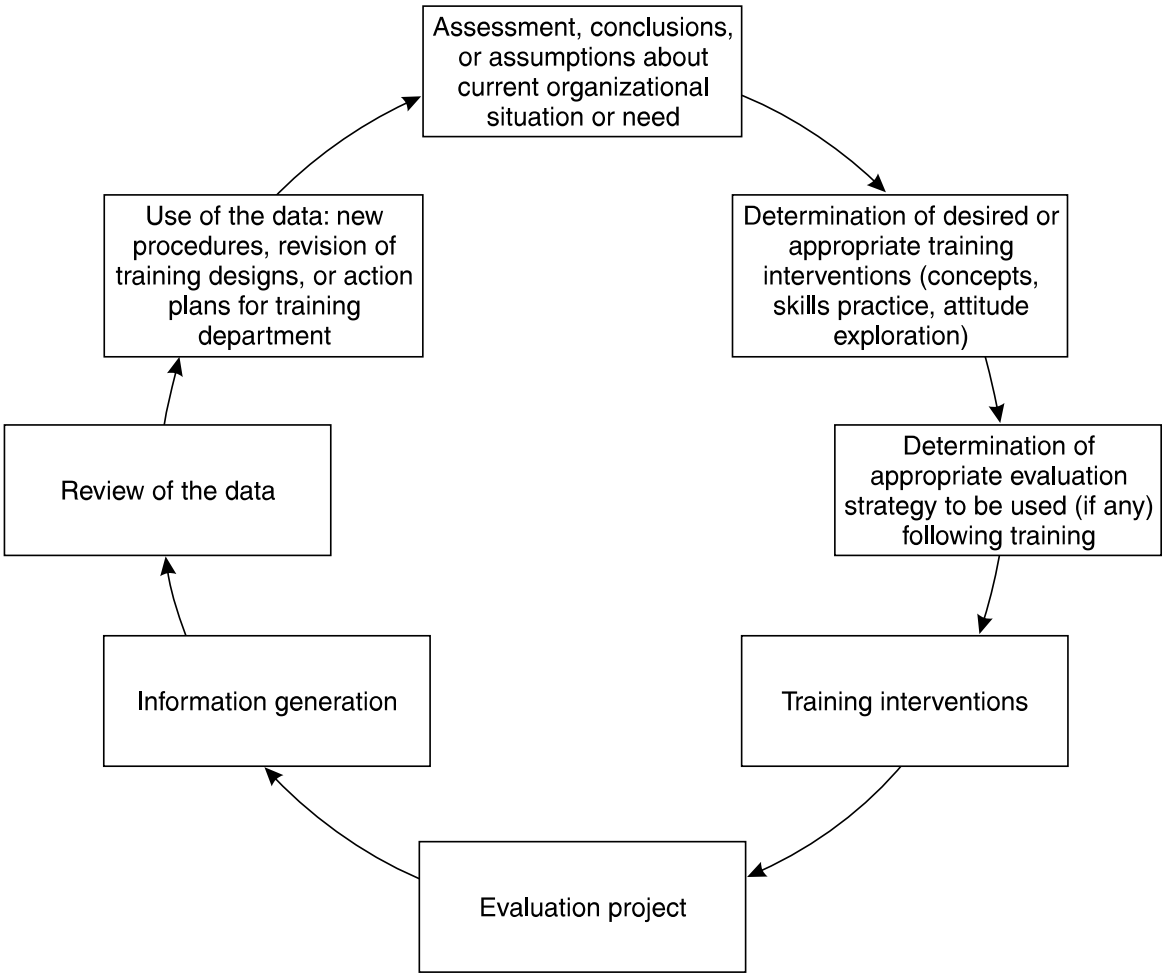

Figure 1. The Sequence for Planning an Evaluation Procedure

1. *Justification.* Purposes having to do with justification include the following:
   - Demonstrating through the use of carefully thought-out criteria and assessment strategies that situations or events occurred;
   - Verifying that a specific outcome was reached;
   - Supporting a predetermined conclusion or expectation; and
   - Establishing the supportive documentation for a positional statement.

In other words, evaluation for purposes of justification assumes that one is planning to generate a predetermined type of information that will support a desired interpretation, conclusion, or objective. This is not unethical; it simply differs from generating information that will be used for purposes of determining if something occurred or was experienced. It is intended to show a relationship between training efforts and a desired or predetermined outcome. For example, one could set out to document that a predetermined number of hours of training had been delivered, or that the training delivered had been requested by a certain percentage of the participants.

2. *Determination.* Determination purposes are those in which the information provided is to be used as a factor to aid in future decision making. Typically, this type of data is viewed as more objective than justification data, although it is recognized that even these more "objective" data always must be interpreted and that some subjectivity is inherent in using data for decision making. To enhance objectivity, these evaluation designs typically utilize preset levels in response categories so that decision makers will not be unduly swayed by the data during the decision-making process.

For example, a typical evaluation-for-determination format might request that participants rate the perceived value of a training session by assessing it as good, fair, or poor, or by providing a numerical rating on a scale of 1 to 10. Data reviewers then decide if trainees' needs were met based on a preset level of expressed satisfaction such as "A mean of seven on a ten-point scale will indicate satisfaction." Another example is a post-course examination in which items on a test are answered either correctly or incorrectly. From these answers, one could determine the content areas that need additional attention. The design of this type of evaluation project also could begin by establishing retraining skill levels or concept familiarity in order to compare these data with post-training measurements to determine whether or not learning occurred. By determining participant satisfaction with the trainer, and/or participants' perceptions of the job applicability of the skills taught, trainers, designers, and training managers could make decisions about the following items: future training content; future skill emphasis; changes in trainers or trainer style; changes in learning methods; or changes in materials, design, selection, etc.

Each of these two main types of evaluation purposes is legitimate; each requires behavioral-science methodological sophistication. It simply is different to construct an evaluation for purposes of generating data that will be used to determine something in the future than it is to construct an evaluation in which the data will be used to justify a predetermined or desired outcome. Clarity of purpose is essential because it directs the evaluation strategy and the design and construction of the evaluation project.

STEP 3: CLARIFY THE SPECIFIC INFORMATION NEEDED

Not only is this important to the ultimate effectiveness of the evaluation project: It also eases the burden of planning the evaluation methodology and design. If one's purpose is to justify a particular point of view or action, one will find it much easier to plan an effective evaluation design; also, it will be much easier to utilize the data than if one merely collects some data and later tries to manipulate them to serve the purpose. Similarly, if one is trying to generate information to be used in making decisions (determination), it will be much easier to plan an effective evaluation if one knows what specific decisions are to be made; how the evaluation data are to be used in that process; what types of data might be useful; what data sources might be best; what levels of quantity, quality, and accuracy are needed in the data; and what might be the best way to compile the data for effective review. When the question to be answered or the kind of

data needed is unclear, it is unlikely that an appropriate data generation format will be used in the evaluation process; consequently, the data are likely to be inaccurate, irrelevant, or misleading and may be a hindrance rather than a help.

At this point the evaluation project designers should clarify these issues:

- What should be assessed?
- For whom are the data being generated? Who will be involved in the decision making process for which the data will be used? Might there be different purposes to be served if there are to be several users of the data? Might separate evaluations be needed for different users?
- Who should collect the data? Who has the necessary skill, credibility, access, and objectivity?
- From whom should the data be collected? How many sources of data are needed to generate the quantity and/or quality of data needed?
- When should the evaluation take place? How many samples will be needed and over what period?
- How should the data be collected? Should the collection procedure include interviews, paper-and-pencil questionnaires, surveys, tests, observation(s)?
- Where should the evaluation (observations, interviews, and so forth) take place (in a private room, an on-the-job setting, a lunch room)?

All these factors must be coordinated so as to yield the quantity and quality of data needed in order to serve the intended purpose. The model in Figure 2 may be useful in conceptualizing these points and the other steps to be taken in planning the evaluation project.

The sampled data become more complex as the sources of the data expand and/or comparative data are introduced into the analysis plan. Should the design of the evaluation project call for an assessment of behavioral or attitudinal change(s), adequate time must be allowed to elapse for post-training sampling and/or for change(s) in the sampled criteria to become apparent.

In cases in which the intent of the evaluation project is to determine whether or not training and changes in behavior or attitudes on the job are related, control-group data would have to be generated. Although this adds to the complexity of the evaluation effort, it definitely enriches the quality of the data that can be used to determine causal effects. Training is not typically designed with clear and measurable enough criteria to account for complex organizational impacts such as improved morale or fewer customer complaints. But training can help to improve performance in these areas when and if the pretraining organizational need can be linked logically and directly to the participants' lack of relevant knowledge or lack of opportunities to practice necessary skills or to examine attitudes relevant to on-the-job performance variables. Just as importantly, these positive impacts occur when and if the concepts learned, the skills enhanced, and

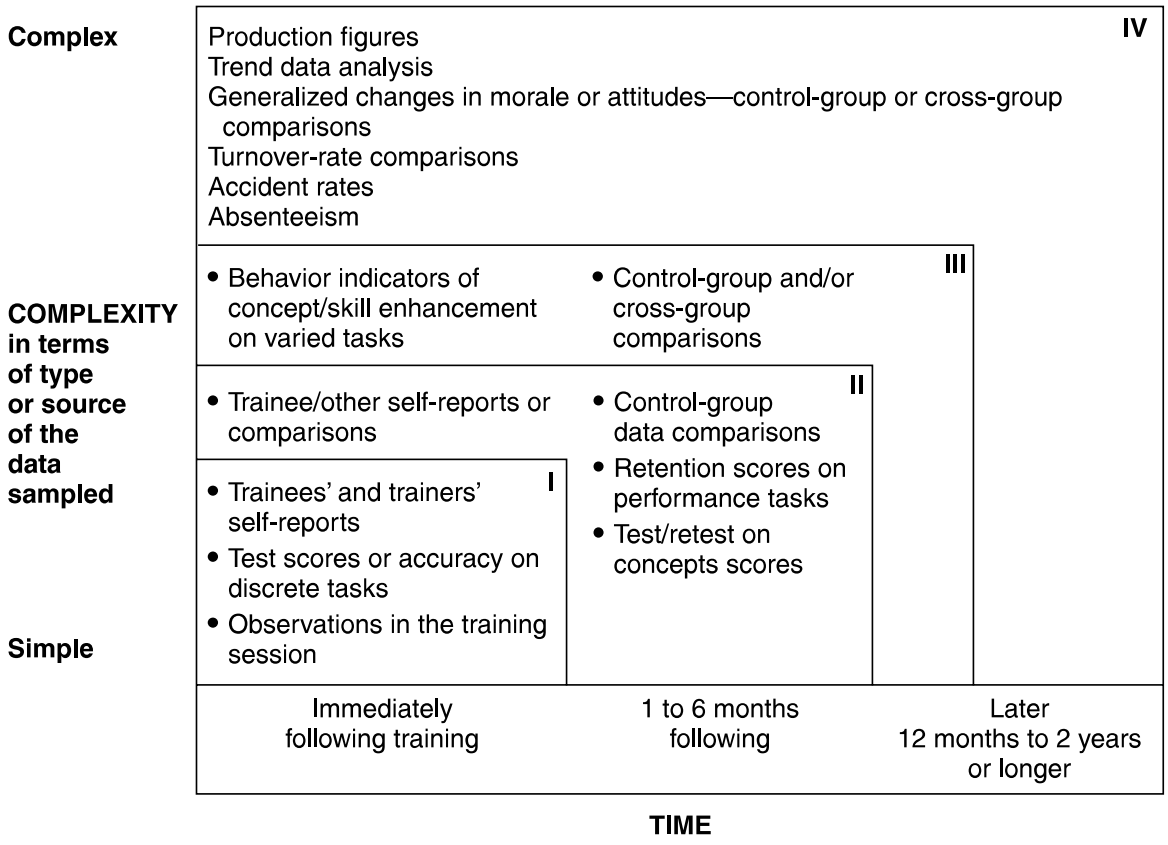

Figure 2. A Model for Planning Evaluations

the attitudes revised are actively supported and reinforced when the participants return to their work settings. This point should be emphasized when it seems that the ultimate users of the evaluation data will be attempting to determine if training had the desired impact on very complex organizational factors.

STEP 4: DETERMINE HOW BEST TO PREPARE DATA FOR INTERPRETATION

One can strive for objectivity in design and administrative procedures, format, statistic models, and so forth; but the numbers obtained in evaluation have no meaning in and of themselves. People give numbers their meaning, and doing so involves subjective decision making and interpretation. For example, even if a rating scale of one to ten is used to measure participant satisfaction, someone must determine the cutoff of the lowest rating acceptable.

It is important for the designers of evaluation projects to acknowledge the inherent subjectivity of numerical data and to guard against its potentially negative influence. One way to do this is to predetermine decisions or actions that will follow the review of the information—especially when using numerical data. For example, interpretative limits or categories could be established prior to gathering data. Project designers could

arbitrarily say that they would count as relevant only the first three items in a survey. Or, when using a survey employing a ten-point scale, they could view the data on satisfaction levels in relationship to a desired, preset satisfaction level such as "8." Or it could be decided that if actual satisfaction levels fell below 8, decision makers would interpret it to mean that participants were not sufficiently satisfied and that revisions to the training should be made.

Additional questions to be addressed during this step in the planning are as follows:

- Who should prepare the data for feedback and in what format?
- Who should provide feedback of the data? How, when, and in what format should it be provided?
- Who should distribute the data? How should the data be stored and for how long? Who should have access to the data? What should be done about confidentiality?

Once the evaluation-project designers are clear on these points, the actual design of an effective and useful data-generation process can be accomplished.

As depicted in Figure 1, The Sequence for Planning an Evaluation Procedure, the steps "review of the data" and "use of the data" set up the next round in the cycle of assessing, diagnosing, and planning action steps for improving current situations through training interventions. The human factors always are the ones that are critical to enhanced productivity, so human resource development—training—matters to managers and workers who want to see their organizations prosper.

Because HRD is a support function, it typically has no clear position power within an organization. Therefore, it seems advantageous to depict it as outside the management level yet deriving its authority from the CEO level (see Figure 3). Human resource development personnel can learn to use that fact to their advantage and press for authorization and role and function clarity from the authorizing source so that there will be less anxiety within our ranks. We can help our users to decide what they need to know in order to make sound decisions and then help them to obtain the information they need through sound evaluation processes.

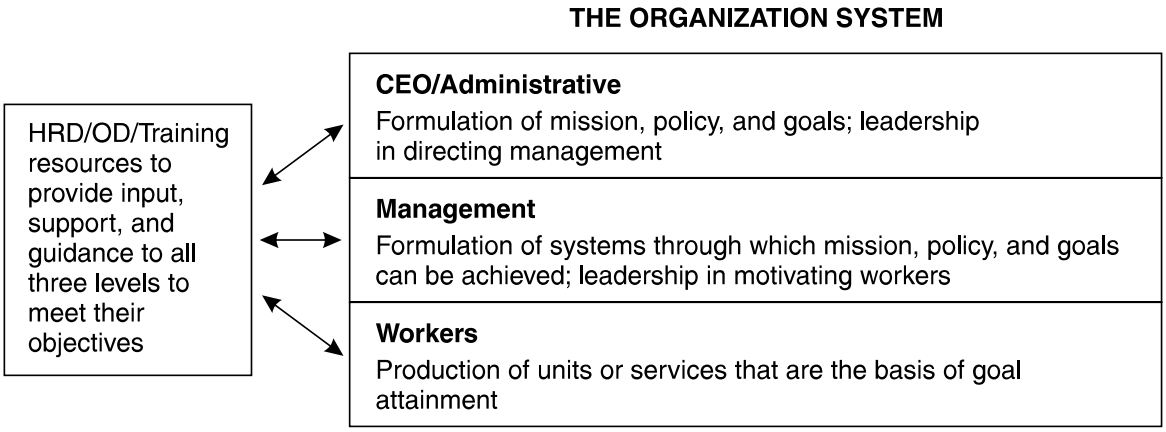

Figure 3. Model of Typical Levels Within Organizations

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR HRD PRACTITIONERS

Suggested actions are as follows:

1. *Know something about evaluation, its uses and abuses, and what data can and cannot do.* One can learn by reading books or by taking courses in research methodology. Develop skills and familiarity with the language of behavioral-science research design.

2. *When key decision makers begin to sound serious about evaluation, engage them in a discussion of their purposes and expectations before agreeing to execute their instructions regarding evaluation.* Find out what information they need in order to make what decisions; also explore with them their expectations about the effects of training.

3. *Help the key decision makers to explore other options for answering their questions.* For example, have them attend courses as full participants. Experiencing the training firsthand may give them all the data they need to evaluate it.

4. *Educate the key decision makers.* Explore with them the types of evaluation possible and the costs/benefits of each. See what they are willing to spend in terms of time, money, documentation, and so forth.

5. *Try to negotiate and clarify who makes decisions about the evaluation process.* If this responsibility is given to others, join the evaluators in order to learn from or even influence the scope and design of the evaluation.

6. *If the key decision makers are concerned with establishing cause-and-effect impacts, take charge by informing them of the cost of various evaluation strategies and what longitudinal evaluation data can and cannot demonstrate.* (If necessary, go back to Item 1.)

7. *Promote the notion of bringing in a carefully chosen evaluation expert who will not try only to "sell" his or her services, but who will be an ally in educating everyone about the process.* Another alternative is to distribute brief articles like this one to the key decision makers and to discuss their reactions to the points presented. Demonstrate an interest in the issues.

8. *If it seems that a decision is being made on political grounds to proceed with a "hard" evaluation and/or that someone is trying to make training efforts look bad, take a political approach.* Rally supporters and lobby the skeptics. Go on the offensive by declaring "This will be a great opportunity to evaluate all the conditions that need to exist within the system in support of training to help organizations to achieve their missions and goals." Support this position by bringing in experts in systems theory who can talk convincingly about the need for reinforcement throughout the system to promote and maintain behavioral changes that are initiated through training.

9. *Always be prepared to decline an offer of funds for evaluation projects unless key decision makers are committed to using the data and agree to accept their responsibility to support the changes that they decide to make.*

10. *If faced with certain defeat, knowing that the proposed evaluation process will not yield useful and relevant data, declare loudly and vigorously that this is one of those times when "there is no good reason to evaluate; it would waste the organization's time and money."* It is better to state an unpopular but supportable position than to keep quiet and have to live with a lie that one has helped to manufacture.

It is extremely important that HRD professionals be well educated in the subject of evaluation, so that they do not promise something (in terms of evaluation) that they cannot deliver and so that they can deliver what they set out to deliver. If an adequate evaluation design cannot be created or implemented, if the cost of the evaluation would be greater than its benefit, or if there is no expectation that the evaluation will be used to indicate needed change, it would be wise not to evaluate. If evaluation is required, however, prior to designing the evaluation project, the HRD professional must be able to help the decision makers in the organization to determine the specific purpose of the evaluation, the methodology to be used, the resources required, the way in which the data will be prepared, and the way in which the data will be used. With these expectations clearly understood, there is an increased chance of conducting an evaluation that will be both appropriate and useful to the organization.

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EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Nancy M. Dixon

Management development broadly refers to the learning events directed at managers in an organization. However, in most organizations those learning events are extremely varied and involve many types of learning outcomes. Gagné and Briggs (1979) classify learning outcomes into the following five categories: motor skills, intellectual skills, verbal information, attitude, and cognitive strategies.

Motor skills refer to the physical movements that are performed to accomplish purposeful actions. An example of a motor skill is setting up and operating a video camera. An outcome is classified as a motor skill when the motor component of the task is nontrivial. Motor skills are connected to almost every task; however, in many cases they are trivial in relation to the total task. For example, participants in interview training use the motor actions of talking, shaking hands, and so on, but these motor components are not the focus of learning how to interview. In that sense they are trivial to learning the task of interviewing. Other examples of motor skills that are nontrivial include soldering a connection, lifting a heavy weight, or guiding a projectile.

Intellectual skills refer to learning how to do a skill that is mental rather than physical. Intellectual skills permit the learner to carry out the procedures and processes of a discipline. Examples of intellectual skills are running a computer program, creating a business case, and drawing a line analysis. Intellectual skills require learners to solve problems or perform tasks by using information they have already learned. Balancing a checkbook is an intellectual skill that employs the previously learned knowledge of addition and subtraction. However, knowing math does not sufficiently enable someone to balance a checkbook. The additional learning is an intellectual skill that requires carrying out a procedure. Gagné and Briggs describe five levels of intellectual skills, each with increasing complexity: discriminations, concrete concepts, defined concepts, rules, and problem solving (see Figure 1).

Verbal information refers to the facts and organized knowledge that the learner stores in memory. Examples of verbal information outcomes are the definition of the term “group technology,” the principles of just-in-time manufacturing, and the formula for determining standard deviation. Verbal information is often referred to as knowing “that” something is, rather than knowing “how” to do something, which is an intellectual skill.

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Intellectual Skills	Defined as the ability to:	For example:
Discriminations	Differentiate two things along one or more physical dimension.	To distinguish the sound of a functioning motor from one that is malfunctioning.
Concrete Concepts	Determine that a concrete object is a member of a category.	To recognize a number of three-sided objects of differing colors and sizes as triangles.
Defined Concepts	Demonstrate the meaning of some class of objects, events, or relations.	To identify the department's internal customers.
Rules	Apply a concept in a number of different situations.	To use commas correctly in sentences.
Problem Solving	Use rules (often more than one) to invent solutions to problems that are new to the learner.	To find a way to motivate a specific employee.

Figure 1. Levels of Intellectual Skills

Attitude refers to the internal states that influence the course of action a learner chooses. For example, a manager's attitude toward quality affects the choices he or she makes about shipping a product that has not been fully tested when pressured by end-of-quarter goals. Other examples of attitude include commitment to pushing decisions down in the organization, valuing the use of statistics in process control, and believing that just-in-time manufacturing is needed in the organization.

Changes in attitude are legitimate outcomes that instructors teach toward and expect from learning events. Attitudes can be evaluated through attitudinal rating scales such as semantic differentials. A major concern in using rating scales is that they represent what Argyris (1985) calls *espoused theories,* versus *theories-in-use.* Espoused theories are those that individuals say—both to themselves and to others—guide their actions. Theories-in-use are those that actually guide a person's actions. The individual often is not even consciously aware of his or her theories-in-use, and the two theories very often are incongruent. For example, managers could indicate and believe that they favor equal opportunity in hiring, yet not choose to hire females into managerial positions when the opportunity arises. Attitude scales are limited to collecting information about espoused theories.

Cognitive strategies are a subset of intellectual skills that govern the individual's behavior in learning, remembering, and thinking. They are a kind of control strategy for learning that is not related to a specific discipline; unlike other intellectual skills, they apply across disciplines. Examples of cognitive strategies are problem reframing, critical reflection, and creative thinking.

As new and more creative solutions have become increasingly valued in organizations, learning events with cognitive strategies as the outcome have proliferated.

Learning events that deal with cognitive strategies may teach how to break a problem up into parts; how to work backwards from a goal; how to seek inconsistencies in an argument; or how to use analogies in thinking.

OUTCOMES OF MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Using the categories described by Gagné and Briggs as a starting point, the outcomes of management development can be categorized in the following four areas: verbal information, intellectual skills, attitude, and development.

Verbal information. Examples of learning-event topics for managers that have verbal information as an outcome include information on policy and procedures, information on how the organization is doing financially, and theories of motivation or leadership. Management development that is primarily verbal information is evaluated with objective measures.

Intellectual skills. Examples of learning-event topics that involve intellectual skills include how to use a personal computer, how to conduct a financial analysis, how to use a specific decision-making model, and how to carry out a new set of procedures for a performance-review process. Management development that has intellectual skills as an outcome is evaluated through performance demonstrations.

Attitude. Examples of learning-event topics that pertain to attitude include the value of participative practices, an appeal for leadership, and taking personal responsibility. This type of learning is often measured by attitude surveys and questionnaires.

Development. Although development is not one of the outcomes referenced by Gagné and Briggs (1979), it is a distinctly different type of outcome. Development refers to a change in self-knowledge and a concomitant change in how one perceives and acts on the world. It implies a change in a positive direction, toward growth or maturity. Examples of management courses that have development as an outcome are displaying sensitivity to others, giving negative feedback in a way that reduces defensiveness, making empathic responses to others, handling conflict, coaching others, and dealing with ambiguity. Management development often implies a learning outcome of this nature. This type of learning has also been the bane of evaluators. Development has proven bewildering to evaluate; when evaluation has been accomplished, the results have been generally discouraging.

RESULTS OF EVALUATION OF MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, and Weick (1970) conducted the major review of the literature on management development. After examining eighty-four studies published over the previous two decades, they found no evidence that participating in training and development was related to success as a manager. In most cases this finding resulted from the fact that job performance was not measured. For example, thirty-five of the

studies were attempts to produce an employee-centered attitude change in managers. Surveys administered to subordinates showed attitude changes in 80 percent of the cases, but the studies did not examine whether the attitude change influenced job performance.

A group of five studies conducted with T-groups resulted in significant changes in 20 to 25 percent of the participants in areas such as increased openness, receptivity to and tolerance of differences, and increased skill in interpersonal relationships. The primary tools for determining change were open-ended questions asked of subordinates or associates one year after the laboratory experience. However, eight similar studies, which used measures of change administered to the participants themselves, showed no significant difference over control groups. With one exception, the T-group studies did not attempt to evaluate influence on job performance.

A third group of seven studies concerned with problem solving and decision making produced largely negative results in terms of improved job performance.

Looking more broadly at training and development, Campbell (1971) summarized personal beliefs of what is known about management development:

> What do we know? We know that management development can change managers toward more employee-centered attitudes. We know that laboratory education probably can change behavior in the work-role, but the nature and implications of these changes are unclear . . . . We know almost nothing about what makes orientation, sales, or team training effective . . . . We know that technical training, as well as remedial training in basic skills, does produce significant increments in knowledge. (p. 593)

Nine years later, Goldstein (1980) reviewed the literature and found increased interest in evaluation, but generally the same results. Other reviews of management development (Clement, 1981; Miles & Biggs, 1979) reached similar conclusions about the limited impact of management development on performance.

An in-house study by Martelli (1987) examined the performance-appraisal ratings of twenty-three first-line supervisors in light of the amount of management training they had undergone either during the preceding twelve months or throughout their careers. This study's conclusion was that supervisory training did not have a significant influence on performance as judged by performance-appraisal ratings.

Two studies provide some explanation for why management development seems to have little proven effect on performance. The first, conducted at Honeywell (Zemke, 1985), concluded that 50 percent of what a manager needs to learn is gained from job experiences and assignments; 30 percent is learned from relationships with supervisors, peers, consultants, and upper-level managers; and 20 percent results from training.

In a second and more extensive study of executive development in six corporations, Lindsey, Homes, and McCall (1987) tied specific learnings to a range of developmental events. The thirty-four leadership qualities they identified as typical topics of development (for example, dealing with conflict, ambiguity, stress, uncertainty, and use of power) were not learned from courses but from on-the-job experiences such as

assignments, projects, and personal failure. Course work was a factor in learning only the following five leadership qualities:

1. Specific technical knowledge;
2. Problem solving and problem framing;
3. Management models and theories;
4. Self-confidence in skills and abilities (a result of being selected for prestigious programs); and
5. Perspective on life and work (gained from hearing other participants' points of view).

After decades of studies on management development, a discouraging but realistic picture is emerging. The difficulty in proving the effectiveness of development courses may not lie in ineffective measurement techniques; it may be that development courses simply produce so little change in performance that no appreciable difference results. It may be time for human resource development (HRD) professionals to consider that they can effectively teach managers verbal information, intellectual skills, motor skills, and even attitudes, but that development is not learned in a typical course or workshop.

Brush and Licata (1983) reviewed the literature on the effectiveness of managerial training to examine the "learnability" of managerial skills. They conclude that:

> Most managerial skills are comprised of knowledge and behavioral components which interact with noncognitive variables. To the extent that non-cognitive and social-interactive factors play a large and critical role in the skill, there is less probability that an individual weak in this particular skill will become competent through training.(p. 36)

Several management theorists (Argyris, Putnam, & Smith, 1985; Revans, 1980; Schon, 1987; Weick, 1983) would support that position. Vaill (1989) builds a strong case against considering managerial competencies as techniques to be taught, holding that all competencies are interwoven with the here-and-now perceptions of the manager, which are in turn deeply rooted in character and personality. Vaill asks "What bet are we making when we teach competencies without dealing with this deeper phenomenon?" (p. 38).

Yet this separation of action and self is what occurs in most management development courses. A three- or five-day course with twenty-five managers provides neither the time nor a suitable environment in which to delve into the personal values and beliefs of the managers. Rather, the courses are designed to teach managers competencies or skills that are viewed as being separate from the individual's belief system. The difficulty that arises when such actions are stated as competencies is they become intellectual skills that are rule directed, rather than responses to interactions. For example, two typical competencies follow:

- "The listener will be able to reflect back to the speaker the underlying feelings expressed in the speaker's statement."

- "The manager will be able to establish trusting, dependable relationships with subordinates."

Most employees have interacted with managers who attempted to implement the rule-directed responses learned in a training course. Typically, the managers recited stock phrases, such as "What I hear you saying is . . ." or they implemented standard processes, such as first give praise, then give corrective feedback, then end with praise. The employee's response to such rule-governed interaction is to feel manipulated. The recipient of the phrases or processes often notices an incongruity between what is said and what he or she intuitively feels is believed by the manager. Interpersonal interactions reflect a person's beliefs and identity; to separate the interaction from the person leads to counterfeit interactions.

Without a corresponding belief system to guide the interaction, managers have only standard phrases or processes in their repertoires. They have trouble inventing new responses for unfamiliar situations. A typical sequence then is for the manager to try the skills for a few days and then revert to former, more comfortable, responses.

Thus, although development skills can be described in measurable statements and although they can be taught and even measured at the end of a learning event, they do not constitute development. Nor do they appear to have a lasting effect.

PROCESSES THAT LEAD TO DEVELOPMENT

Development results from on-the-job experiences as illustrated in the Lindsey et al. (1987) and Zemke (1985) studies. Development can also result from purposeful learning experiences, but only if learning and work are integrated. Development does not occur in isolation from real life. McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1988) make the following point:

> An individual can demonstrate an ability only when the job demands it. The ability to come up with a workable and strategic agenda is only tested when a manager has sufficient scope of responsibility and the latitude to establish a direction. One's values aren't demonstrated until one faces a dilemma that forces action either consistent or inconsistent with a value. The ability to cope with ambiguity is difficult to assess in an unambiguous job; how one will handle a mistake is hard to know until a mistake is made. (p. 166)

The conditions for management development in the work environment appear to be as follows:

- The manager is engaged in a real work problem that is personally meaningful;
- Someone (peer or facilitator) or something (feedback from the results) challenges the way the manager is thinking about the problem; and
- The experience occurs over time so opportunity is available for both action and reflection.

The challenge to HRD practitioners is to create new ways to help managers develop ways that bring learning and work closer together, rather than treating learning as a separate event. An obvious way to begin is to make better use of job assignments and on-the-job experience. McCall et al. (1988) provide suggestions aimed at executive development, but many of the processes are equally appropriate for the development of all managers.

Several development processes that blend work and learning have gained acceptance in the last few years. Often, however, these initiatives have come from line management, not HRD. Examples are action learning (Revans, 1980), action science groups (Argyris et al., 1985), and participative action research (Whyte, 1989). Each of these processes is briefly described here, not as answers, but as illustrations of formats that merge work and learning.

Action Learning

Action learning, as pioneered by Revans, is a management development process that has been implemented widely in Europe. Managers take on problems that provide them with challenges. In some situations the challenge is to work on an unfamiliar problem; for example, a production manager may try to solve a problem in human resource development. In other situations the problem is familiar but the organization is unfamiliar; for example, a marketing manager for a chemical company may examine a marketing problem in a bank. As they work on the problems over a period of several months, the managers meet weekly in small groups (usually four to six members) to discuss the problems they are trying to resolve. Revans refers to the members as "comrades in adversity." Groups are often made up of individuals from differing departments or organizations to add new perspectives through which the members can hear and challenge each others' assumptions.

Development occurs as managers learn more about themselves through the results of their own actions and the challenges of their comrades. The payoff to the organization is creative solutions to difficult problems that have resulted from applying a fresh perspective.

Action Science

Action science, as developed by Argyris (1985), involves managers' meeting with a facilitator trained in "Model II" skills, for two purposes: (1) to resolve a difficult business problem on which the group or individual feels stuck and (2) to try to understand what "defensive routines" exist in the group or organization that prevent the resolution of such problems. This second understanding Argyris calls "doubleloop" learning. For an in-depth look at the problems, group members construct minicases that describe their attempts to resolve the problems. A specific set of strategies, Model II, is modeled by the facilitator and practiced in the group to help members examine the cases and uncover the group's defensive routines. Again the payoff is twofold: managers learn

about themselves and the unproductive ways they may be interacting, and the organization gets a thorny problem unblocked.

Participative Action Research

Participative action research is based on the work of Lewin and influenced by sociotechnical analysis and workplace democracy. Selected members of an organization, representing various functions, meet together over a period of months to diagnose a significant organizational problem, to collect data, and to implement a solution. The process is guided by a researcher skilled in action-research processes. The results are threefold: development of the individuals involved, a solution to an organizational problem, and research data that add to the literature on how organizations function. In reporting on the individual development that resulted from a participative action research project at Mondragon in Spain, Santos (1989, p. 578) notes "the development of a more open mindset, the explicit awareness of diversity in the system, the will to arrive at the root of problems, the enhanced capacity to listen and get beyond the obvious, the development of a greater capacity for analysis and reflection."

EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENT

In each of the preceding examples, three results can be measured: the effectiveness of the process, the development of the individual manager, and the organizational results. The self-knowledge that is gained in development is unique to each individual. That uniqueness makes the outcome of development unpredictable and the use of redesigned questionnaires or checklists impractical. The learning however can be described by the individual in case studies, logs, critical incidents, interviews, and so on. The data then can be analyzed through qualitative evaluation approaches to determine the overall effectiveness of the specific development activity.

The manager of the individual involved in the development process has the responsibility for determining if that individual has become a more effective manager as a result of the development process. As Jaques (1989) notes,

> Personal effectiveness appraisal is one of the prime acts of a manager . . . . [It] is the manager's judgment of how well a subordinate did in achieving a given output, with the shifts and changes that were imposed and with all the other unexpected and unplanned-for circumstances that inevitably arise in the course of working. How well (or how badly) a subordinate has done is a matter of pure judgment—and always will be a matter of judgment—and should be accepted as such. (p. 103)

Yet it is possible for managers to make such judgments for purposes of evaluating both the learning process and the individual. Finally, when learning and work are integrated, as they are in the three methodologies discussed above, there is a direct organizational benefit. For example, an action learning project involving ten London hospitals resulted in a quicker recovery rate for patients (Revans, 1980). A participative action research project implemented at Xerox resulted in a cost savings of 3.2 million

dollars in the wire-harness department (Whyte, 1989). The third evaluation for each of these integrated processes is the return on investment in terms of problems solved.

SUMMARY

The following conclusions can be drawn about evaluating management development:

- Human resource development professionals have been successful in producing results and in measuring those results when the learning outcomes of management development are verbal information, intellectual skills, or attitudes.
- Human resource development professionals have been less successful at both producing and measuring results when the learning outcome is development.
- Evidence indicates that development occurs when managers take action in real work situations and their thinking is challenged either by the results of their actions or by their peers.
- Human resource development professionals need to create new formats for development that integrate learning and work.
- Development is evaluated through the qualitative analysis of descriptive reports from managers themselves, performance appraisal from the manager's supervisor, and organizational outcomes.

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A MATRIX FOR EVALUATING TRAINING

Jeanette Goodstein and Leonard D. Goodstein

When human resource development (HRD) professionals try to improve productivity and the quality of work life, they must also find a means of measuring how successful their efforts have been. In some instances this question is relatively easy to answer—the company is producing more widgets at a lower cost; quality control is rejecting fewer items; customers are complaining less often; or recent organizational efforts have reduced employee absenteeism, grievances, or turnover. Improvements in other areas, however, are much harder to assess.

Most HRD efforts are difficult to evaluate. It is not easy to design and carry out a thorough and productive assessment, but the activity is essential. Human resource development professionals want to be viewed as responsible and contributing members of a management team, they want to help establish accountability standards that will be applied by managers throughout the organization, and they want their contributions to be valued by others. To achieve these ends practitioners must hold themselves accountable for their own work. They must earn their allocation of organizational resources with demonstrated results.

When an organization provides training for its employees, the aim is usually to enhance productivity or to improve the quality of work life. Many organizational activities directed toward these goals may be measured in financial terms or in terms of return on investment. Human resource development professionals are increasingly aware that they must integrate their activities with current business needs; demonstrate results in operational terms; and adopt business concepts and language, such as cost-benefit analysis (Jackson & Schuler, 1990; Jackson, 1989; Robinson & Robinson, 1989). However, it is not appropriate to measure training effectiveness solely on the basis of these considerations.

WHAT IS EVALUATION?

Evaluation of training involves more than simply documenting how many contact hours of training have been provided or what percentage of employees has been through a particular program. A collection of statements from satisfied participants, even when supplemented by a few complaints, is also insufficient. The positive comments are useful pieces of objective data and should be included in an accountability report, and the comments and criticism may provide welcome reinforcement for the training staff.

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However, genuine evaluation must contain more substance if it is to provide useful information about the impact of training and offer a meaningful basis for future decisions.

Evaluation is a systematic activity undertaken to determine the merit of something—in this case, the value of the training process. Both evaluation activities and specific training programs are part of the overall training effort, a closed-loop system in which the evaluation process provides continuing feedback on the effects of the training system (Goldstein, 1986). The training system is "just one component within a larger set of interacting organizational and societal systems" (Goldstein & Gilliam, 1990).

Although the final objective of training is the enhancement of performance, such a statement is far too general to be useful to an evaluator. Training is a complex process, and its effects emerge with varying degrees of clarity over an extended period of time. When deciding whether training has improved organizational effectiveness, the practitioner should view the evaluation itself as a continuing process, one that measures how responsive the training has been to individual and organizational needs and that records its observable effects at various points in time.

A variety of technologies can be used to evaluate training activities: the choice depends on the element of the training process under scrutiny, the purpose of the evaluation or the intended use of the information obtained, and the resources available. Although much has been published about evaluation technologies (for example, Phillips, 1983), there seems to be no conceptual framework to help the practitioner choose an appropriate technology for each situation. This article presents a matrix to guide HRD professionals in matching suitable technologies with the various elements of training. The matrix is designed to take into account the aims of the evaluation, resources, and timeliness.

WHY EVALUATE?

There are any number of reasons for embarking on an evaluation program, and most evaluation efforts reflect more than one purpose. For example, some evaluation programs are used to justify training enterprises in general and specific training programs in particular. Evaluations undertaken for this purpose should assess how well the training participants apply the new skills they have learned. Training evaluations might also address the following issues:

- The extent of participant learning;
- The level of participant satisfaction;
- The level of accuracy in targeting appropriate employees for a given program;
- The degree to which the training needs of the organization and of individual employees are being met; and
- The degree to which acquired skills are being used on the job.

Regardless of which question or questions are examined during a specific evaluation, it is essential to clarify the purpose of any given evaluation process at the outset. As Cooke and Bates (1989) point out, before selecting the methodology a practitioner must identify the issues to be addressed, the resources available for the project, and the intended uses of the information collected. (See also Pfeiffer and Ballew, 1988.)

The decision to evaluate should be accompanied by a serious commitment to use the data that the evaluation will provide. Large-scale evaluations—such as assessments of organizational training needs—are especially likely to take on a life of their own because they raise employee expectations. Participants may look forward to further opportunities for skill enhancement and career development. Even smaller or routine evaluations, such as the typical rating form completed at the end of virtually all training programs, may produce incomplete or inaccurate data if participants believe that their responses will be ignored or reviewed carelessly.

ELEMENTS OF TRAINING AND EVALUATION TECHNOLOGIES: A MATRIX

For the purposes of the evaluation process, the training system is divided into four discrete elements: (1) needs assessment; (2) course design and delivery; (3) participant learning; and (4) applications of learning. The seven most commonly used evaluation technologies are defined as follows: (1) individual interviews; (2) focus groups; (3) questionnaires; (4) rating forms; (5) pretests and posttests; (6) direct and indirect observations; and (7) staff analysis. Finally, potential sources of information (that is, the people who respond to evaluation queries) are divided into six categories: (1) employees in general; (2) those employees who have participated in the training program; (3) the participants' supervisors; (4) the participants' coworkers; (5) the training staff; and (6) senior managers. Figure 1, which presents the training elements and evaluation technologies in matrix form, helps practi tioners to analyze which technologies should be used when evaluating each of the training elements. The matrix also facilitates the selection of appropriate respondents or subjects and helps HRD professionals to assess evaluation costs and aims.

Elements of Training

Needs Assessment

The development of an effective training program should usually begin with a needs assessment (Ulschak, 1983; Wexley & Latham, 1981). An adequate needs assessment can provide the foundation for the training effort and, thus, for its success or failure. Needs assessment is itself a type of evaluation: It ascertains training needs. Yet the evaluation of the needs-assessment process is often ignored when HRD professionals are appraising the overall training procedure.

Although practitioners generally recognize the importance of needs assessment, this element of the training system is often weak because it is based on unexamined assumptions. One such assumption views training as a "magic bullet," a relatively easy solution to many organizational problems, for which training may, in fact, not be an effective remedy. At other times training may be indicated, but appropriate employees and useful training content must be selected first. Evaluation of the needs-assessment process must identify these assumptions and examine their validity.

Although a systematic assessment of training needs is important, practitioners should not assume that a costly, formal, large-scale study is always required. The scope of a needs assessment will depend on the extent of the training under consideration. For example, if a broad-based needs assessment is necessary or if top management has decided on a major expansion or restructuring of its training activities, a large and carefully designed training-needs evaluation is probably indicated.

If such an assessment already exists or if the need for training appears obvious, practitioners can still help to increase training effectiveness and organizational performance by selecting appropriate training content and by carefully evaluating targeted employees or organizational units. For example, many midlevel managers feel overburdened and generally harassed because of rapid growth or other organizational developments. A thorough needs assessment might reveal that training in delegation skills, in time management, or in stress management—or some combination of these three—would noticeably improve both the performance of the managers and the quality of their work lives. Or the assessment might reveal that the managers really do not need training at all, but simply more staff. In any case these factors should be considered when evaluating the process.

Regardless of the appropriate scope of any needs assessment, the categories of employees who should be consulted as part of the needs assessment remain the same: (1) those employees directly affected, i.e., the ones who will be trained; (2) their managers (a category that perhaps should extend upward to include senior managers) and (3) knowledgeable members of the training staff. Only the number of people questioned and the formality of the procedure will vary. Evaluation of the process itself should focus primarily on senior management and on the training staff; the evaluation might also assess, in a general way, how the employees view that process.

Course Design and Delivery

The elements of training most commonly evaluated are course design and delivery, and the appraisal typically makes use of the ubiquitous end-of-training rating form. Although these rating forms can be helpful when they are taken seriously by both training participants and training staff, they by no means provide a full evaluation of training-program design and delivery. Nor do rating forms address all the purposes that might be offered for evaluating these training elements.

There are several possible reasons for evaluating course design and delivery:

EVALUATION TECHNOLOGIES	ELEMENTS OF TRAINING			
	Needs Assessment	Course Design and Delivery	Participant Learning	Applications of Learning
Individual Interviews				
Focus Groups				
Questionnaires				
Rating Forms				
Direct and Indirect Observations				
Pretests and Posttests				

Figure 1. Matrix of Evaluation Technologies That Can Be Applied to the Four Elements of Training Programs

1. To determine whether participants found the course content beneficial and the presentation interesting and accessible;
2. To determine whether the course design addresses the needs identified in the needs assessment;
3. To determine whether the specified learning objectives of the training course were met; and
4. To appraise the performance of the training staff.

These are all important reasons for conducting an evaluation, and each requires a distinct approach. Because the evaluation of a single training element may take place for widely varying reasons, practitioners should clarify the intended use of evaluation data at the outset.

Evaluation purposes vary, so different categories of respondents should be chosen for each evaluation question. Although participants must speak for themselves about training content and delivery and the achievement of learning objectives, their views are not the only ones that should matter. Their supervisors can also help to evaluate the relevance of training content and to determine whether that content reflects the needs-assessment findings. Evaluation of this element of training should also draw on the professional expertise of the training staff. Practitioners who are conducting the evaluation should consult both those involved in planning and designing the training and those actually presenting the training. Finally, when the purpose of the evaluation is an appraisal of training-staff performance, those members of the staff who are the subjects of the evaluation should not be among the respondents; any potential conflict of interest must be managed with care.

Participant Learning

Even the most carefully designed and effectively delivered training program does not guarantee that participants will learn what is presented. Therefore, practi tioners should consider participant learning a separate element in the training-evaluation process.

The crucial issue when attempting to assess learning is “When should it be measured?” This question must be accompanied by a caveat: Training is not a discrete event. It is affected by many simultaneous and related events in the lives of the participants, and its effects are very difficult to disentangle from the other circumstances of their lives.

The timing of a participant-learning evaluation may vary. If practitioners are trying to determine how much learning was achieved during the training program itself, they should conduct the evaluation during and/or immediately at the end of training. If the focus is on continued development of the skills that were provided by the training program, learning must be measured later because knowledge can grow or decay with the passage of time. Regardless of whether the evaluation is focused on the training itself or on continuing progress (or lack of progress), the appraisal is dependent on data

provided by the participants themselves. Information collected from the participants' supervisors can also be useful.

However, even when practitioners verify that participants have learned what the training program was designed to teach, there is no guarantee that trainees will use their new skills when they return to the workplace. Application of learned material, therefore, is the fourth element in the evaluation process.

Applications of Learning

In order to apply what they have learned in training, participants need more than just motivation. Three other factors are essential:

The opportunity to use new skills. If trainees do not practice what they have learned, motivation falters and their new skills begin to decay. Successful computer training, for example, requires that trainees return to a workplace that has been provided with computers they know how to use—machines much like the ones on which they were trained. The trainees also need an opportunity to continue practicing their skills.

Supervisory encouragement. Trainees need support and constructive feedback from their managers. Support from coworkers is necessary as well. Appropriate materials or equipment will do little to help trainees apply their new skills without a sympathetic and supportive work environment. Unfortunately, trainers have all encountered instances in which the enthusiasm generated by training has been squandered by reluctant supervisors and/or threatened coworkers.

Senior management's commitment. If a training program is to succeed, senior management must be genuinely committed to the enterprise. Supervisors may set the tone for their particular units, but it is top management that establishes the general climate. A flexible and responsive work environment is more conducive to employee growth and development than a rigid, intolerant one.

After the initial training program is finished, the value of a thorough needs assessment becomes clear. Training courses are doomed to failure if they are designed to develop skills that will not be used or behaviors that will not be supported. Allowing the participants to evaluate their new skills as a part of the performance appraisal encourages them to develop and use their knowledge.

When evaluating how trainees apply their new knowledge, HRD professionals must take all these factors into account. Practitioners who are appraising participant learning will focus largely on the trainees, with additional input from supervisors and, possibly, coworkers. When checking how successfully trainees are applying what they have learned, practitioners must consider both the number and the timing of those checks. In some cases a single follow-up may be sufficient. In other cases observations must be made over a period of up to a year in order to make a fair evaluation.

Evaluation Technologies

Like the four elements of training, each evaluation technology has appropriate applications. For more specific details on how to implement these technologies, see Davis and Newstrom (1989, chap. 8), Phillips (1983), and Sashkin and Morris (1984, chap. 3). As indicated in Figure 2 (which provides a sample of the completed matrix used to coordinate evaluation technologies and elements of training) each of the technologies may be useful in evaluating more than one training element and several are suitable for each element. Practitioners can select technologies that suit the purpose or purposes of the evaluation, the amount of data desired, and the cost.

Individual Interviews and Focus Groups

Individual interviews provide an excellent opportunity to collect a great deal of in-depth information. But interviews are very time consuming and expensive, especially if conducted on a large scale. Focus groups are a less costly alternative. When choosing between these two technologies, however, practitioners should contrast their respective advantages in addition to considering cost. On the one hand, individual interviews offer respondents confidentiality, a factor that may make some participants more comfortable and forthcoming. On the other hand, the interactions in a focus group encourage respondents to reinforce or expand on one another's comments.

In either case, development of an interview schedule and maintenance of that schedule are essential for systematic data collection. The scope of the evaluation usually indicates how lengthy and formal the interview should be. Developing the schedule requires thinking through the purpose of the evaluation and deciding what information is necessary; following the schedule ensures that the same questions or discussion topics are covered with all groups or individuals.

Individual interviews are appropriately used in evaluating all four elements of training; focus groups are most useful for all elements except evaluation of course design and delivery. In order to keep evaluation costs at a reasonable level and to take advantage of both techniques, interviews and focus groups are often used jointly: some respondents are interviewed individually and others participate in focus groups. If the organization or its relevant subunit is large, using a sample rather than engaging all potential respondents may make the most sense.

In general, as indicated in Figure 2, interviews or focus-group discussions center on all employees potentially affected and their supervisors. A few others should sometimes be consulted as well. Although the members of the training staff may find it difficult to be completely unbiased when assessing planning and delivery, planners and presenters are directly involved in the training program and can make a valuable contribution when the enterprise is being evaluated.

Coworkers of participants can also contribute information about subsequent application of learning, though they must be approached with extreme care in order to protect participants and to avoid any implication that such an evaluation could be viewed as performance appraisal. Coworkers should be involved only in the more open

	ELEMENTS OF TRAINING			
EVALUATION TECHNOLOGIES	**Needs Assessment**	**Course Design and Delivery**	**Participant Learning**	**Applications of Learning**
Individual Interviews	■ All employees ■ Training staff ■ Senior managers	■ Participants ■ Training staff ■ Senior managers	■ Participants' supervisors	■ Participants
Focus Groups	■ All employees		■ Participants	■ Participants ■ Participants' supervisors ■ Participants' coworkers
Questionnaires	■ All employees			■ Participants ■ Participants' supervisors
Rating Forms		■ Participants	■ Participants	
Direct and Indirect Observations		■ Participants ■ Training staff	■ Participants	
Pretests and Posttests			■ Participants	■ Participants
Staff Analysis	■ Training staff	■ Training staff		

Figure 2. Sources of Information for Applying the Evaluation Technologies to the Elements of Training

focus groups, and the discussion should be strictly limited to an evaluation of support and the opportunities for using newly learned skills.

Most important is explicit and early consultation with top management. As observed earlier, the training enterprise exists within the larger organization and should reflect its values and goals. Both training and training-needs assessment must be responsive to this climate. Skills that will not be supported should be excluded, and skills that are desired and valued should be included. The authors were recently involved in developing a training design based on a sound needs assessment; the design was sent forward to the CEO for what everyone expected would be routine approval. It was returned to the training staff for further work because it lacked any attention to an area that the CEO considered critically important: ethics.

Questionnaires and Rating Forms

From face-to-face data collection techniques, the discussion moves to the most commonly used paper-and-pencil approaches: questionnaires and rating forms. A questionnaire is essentially an interview schedule adapted for independent use by individual respondents. The document usually offers structured or somewhat limited response alternatives rather than the open-ended possibilities available in the interview setting.

Questionnaires are always a less-expensive evaluation technique (per respondent) than individual interviews or focus groups. Questionnaires require less staff time to administer; because of response limitations, they are easier to tabulate and analyze. They also offer the respondent both confidentiality and anonymity. Although the responses are limited and there is little or no opportunity for follow-up or clarification of particular responses, what is lost in depth of data collected from each respondent may be balanced by surveying a larger number of respondents. The loss may also be remedied by supplementing the questionnaires with a sampling of individual interviews and/or a few focus groups.

Because questionnaires are usually filled out by individual respondents who do not have access to an HRD staff person, the wording of the questions is especially important. Items that are ambiguous or subject to misinterpretation will yield spurious information; therefore, clarity is crucial. At the very least, questions should be reviewed by a few people who have not been involved in writing them. When a large evaluation is planned, a small pilot study should be made with a careful review of the response patterns for each item in order to correct any potential misunderstandings.

One reminder must be added to this discussion of questionnaires: Not everyone will respond. This phenomenon raises the question of whether there are important differences between the individuals who do respond and those who do not. Obviously, the higher the response rate, the less likelihood that response bias will materially affect the information obtained.

It is commonly assumed that those who feel most intensely, those who have the strongest opinions or desires, are most likely to complete and return the questionnaires.

Nonrespondents, according to the same argument, feel less intensely about the issues being considered. The assumption is probably reasonable. Practitioners who are analyzing data, however, should remain alert for evidence of possible response bias. A noticeably low response rate from one segment of the organization might be evidence of such a bias, particularly if training is regarded with suspicion or even disdain in that group.

When the first round of questionnaires is administered, the response rates typically fall into the 33- to 40-percent range if administration is conducted in a careful and professional manner (Kish, 1967; Oppenheim, 1966). Research has demonstrated that careful evaluators should use high-quality paper and printing. The questionnaire packet should include an envelope, stamped if necessary, and addressed to a secure location. A hand-signed cover letter on letterhead from a senior executive is also necessary. Clearly expressed senior-management support for the evaluation engenders confidence that the information collected will be taken seriously and used constructively. Following up the initial distribution with a second written request and, finally, with telephoned requests to nonrespondents can often generate an even higher response rate, up to a realistic maximum of about 80 percent. Finally, the earliest reasonable deadline should be set for returning completed questionnaires. Allowing too much time is more likely to encourage procrastination than to promote care and thoughtfulness.

Questionnaires are frequently used to conduct large-scale needs assessments. A questionnaire is easy to administer and analyze and is efficient and economical when many people are being surveyed. As noted earlier, a small sample of those surveyed may be interviewed privately or may be invited to participate in focus groups that will add more individualized insights to the mass data. Questionnaires also offer a convenient means for following up on participants' learning and for evaluating how they apply their new skills in the workplace. Often two or more follow-up questionnaires, administered over a period of up to a year, may be appropriate. Participants themselves may be queried about both learning and application, and their supervisors should also be expected to provide valuable follow-up information on the use of skills learned in training.

The single most frequently used training-evaluation method is the rating form. Completed by the participants at the close of a training program, rating forms are simply one type of questionnaire. These rating forms may be generic for use with all training programs, customized for a particular program, or some combination of both. They may evaluate training design and delivery, participant learning, anticipated applications of that learning, or some combination of these three elements. A general discussion of the training content and design and of participant learning—in effect, a discussion that transforms the participants into a focus group—is often a useful complement to the pencil-and-paper rating form used at the conclusion of the training program. The appendix at the end of this article provides a sample generic rating form for use at the completion of training.

However, forms completed by participants at the close of training measure their attitudes only at that moment. As time passes, trainees may change their views of the training program, their opinions about their learning, and their expectations about how they will use what they have learned. As noted earlier, training should be the beginning of the learning process, not the end. When the training program is over and participants are considering how they will apply what they have learned, they often fail to take into account the level of support that they will receive when they return to their workplaces or the obstacles they may encounter. Participant evaluations used at the end of training are an essential first step in the evaluation process but are not sufficient in themselves. This initial step should be followed by further evaluation at later times, using a variety of the technologies described here.

Subsequent evaluations of training design and delivery are also useful when practitioners are designing follow-up training or trying to improve later iterations of the same course. After the passage of several months, if a practitioner asks the participants what skills they really remember and which presenters and components of the program they still recall (either positively or negatively), the questions often provide revealing and useful information.

Direct and Indirect Observations

Whether orally or in writing, asking training participants and others to explain what they have learned and how successfully they have used that knowledge is just one means of evaluating those elements of training. Learning and its utilization can also be evaluated by both direct and indirect observations. Direct observations are very straightforward: the practitioner simply watches the participants perform, either in the training setting as they are developing the skill being taught or subsequently as they are practicing and perfecting that skill in the workplace. Indirect observations involve a review of performance data: the practitioner might note a reduction in the number of customer complaints or an increase in the proportion of products passed by quality-control inspectors. The evaluator might also observe productivity measures, a reduction in absenteeism, or a change in employee grievances.

To use direct and indirect observation successfully, HRD professionals must develop a systematic observation process and must formulate criteria very carefully. That is, observers should know what they are looking for and why. Just as an interview schedule is essential to gathering a useful body of data from individual interviews or focus groups, so an observation program must be carefully planned to collect serviceable data. A hodgepodge of observations may be superficially interesting but cannot be analyzed and organized into a worthwhile report.

An evaluation can be conducted by direct or indirect means. For example, if employees are being trained in a new production process that is expected to increase worker productivity, the practitioner could evaluate the training program either by directly observing participants as they use the new method or by analyzing their productivity statistics. If improved customer service is the training objective, direct

observation might reveal evidence of greater politeness and responsiveness. Indirect measures could include examination of the number of customer complaints or a review of the time necessary to process shipping orders. When selecting an evaluation method, practitioners should remember that direct observations are generally more time-consuming and, therefore, more expensive than indirect methods.

Other methods of direct and indirect observation are especially relevant to HRD professionals. If the practitioner is evaluating a training course that was designed to train other trainers, the most obvious approach is to observe the participants when they conduct subsequent training programs themselves. Indirect observations regarding the learning achievements of the participants and the application of new skills will continue when the evaluator observes the subsequent performance of individuals who are trained by the original participants.

Direct and indirect observations may be used to evaluate both participant learning and application of that learning. In fact, observations will usually evaluate both simultaneously. Because learning itself is an internal process that is not directly observable, one must look for external evidence that learning has occurred. That external evidence is found in behavior, in performance on the job, or in tests.

Pretests and posttests are a special type of direct observation. Often the same test is administered prior to the training course, or as it begins, and again at the end. The pretest, when administered before the training course, can also serve as a screening device to determine which individuals need to be trained. Posttests may be given either at the very end of the training program or shortly after its completion.

The posttest may be administered again as part of a follow-up evaluation. Although pretests and posttests are primarily a method for evaluating participant learning, they can also be used subsequently to evaluate learning utilization. The tests can be particularly useful in assessing skills-training programs. Presumably, if training participants are actively applying what they have learned, their performances on follow-up tests should show even higher levels of skill than those recorded on the original posttest. A pattern of poorer performances on follow-up tests should raise the question of why the skills of the training participants have decayed since the end of training. One possible answer to that question, which should prompt further investigation, is failure to practice or use the newly acquired knowledge.

When an observing evaluator cannot find evidence of the new skills that were targeted in training, there are two possible conclusions: (1) problems in the training process itself, which probably indicate insufficient learning; or (2) subsequent problems in using what was learned. These two possibilities are not mutually exclusive. When the situation is ambiguous, the evaluator should use other technologies to diagnose the problem and to identify an appropriate remedy. The solution may not necessarily be more, or even improved, training. Focus groups or individual interviews, with their opportunities for discussion and open-ended responses, might be useful in sorting out just where the problem lies.

Staff Analysis

The last technology on the evaluation matrix is staff analysis. This general label refers to a specific obligation that must be fulfilled by professionals who design and present training courses. Often the responsibility is not explicitly recognized, although most effective training-evaluation efforts draw on the expertise of the training staff.

Members of the training staff can provide useful data for evaluations of all four elements of training. However, trainers will be most effective in helping to evaluate needs assessment and course design and delivery because it is in these areas that their professional knowledge and judgment are most relevant. As presenters, they are in a good position to identify the further training needs of their participants; as training designers, they respond to needs-assessment findings; and as both presenters and designers, they should share (as should all professionals) in critiquing their own efforts and the work of their colleagues.

For example, members of the training staff can provide useful data when the typical end-of-training rating forms are being analyzed. However, trainers should also be involved in analyzing and interpreting other evaluation data in order to determine how this information will affect future training activities. Such an analysis should include the findings of current evaluation projects and should review past evaluation data to identify trends and changing patterns of training needs.

Other Issues

Cooke and Bates (1989) used the subtitle "Issues First, Methodology Second" to emphasize how important it is to clarify the purpose of any evaluation. In addition to the issues already addressed here, two more must be an integral part of any effective evaluation process.

Confidentiality. If the information gathered is to be valid and genuinely useful, responses must be candid. Because some of that information will inevitably reflect negatively on the training process, the presenter, the respondents, and the respondents' supervisors and/or coworkers must be confident that the information they provide will not come back to haunt them. Although assurances of confidentiality are always important, the behavior of the evaluation staff and the training personnel must support those assurances. Practitioners should explain the evaluation process and its purpose or purposes clearly; design the evaluation process to maximize confidentiality; conduct evaluation activities openly; and, of course, keep the assurances of confidentiality that have been given.

Appearances can be as significant as reality when confidentiality is at stake, so both must be considered. Human resource development professionals can use several specific methods to preserve both appearance and reality. Because individual interviews and focus groups preclude anonymity, maintaining the promise of confidentiality is of great importance when using these technologies and should be particularly emphasized when conducting focus groups. Questionnaires should be anonymous and should be returned

directly to the evaluation group, not to the respondents' supervisors. To avoid the appearance of spying, practitioners should inform trainees if follow-up observations are anticipated that will evaluate learning and learning application; the trainees' supervisors should be notified as well when those observations are indirect. Finally, evaluations conducted to improve training should be clearly distinguished from those that are part of the performance-appraisal process.

Feedback. Feedback is also essential to productive evaluation. Once information has been obtained, it should be passed on to relevant groups or individuals. Having contributed to the effort, most respondents are interested in finding out what has been learned, especially when the information is likely to affect them directly. A respondent who has received feedback is usually more committed to the evaluation and training process.

Two cautions, however, are in order: (1) offering such feedback implies—in fact virtually requires—that appropriate implementation will follow; and (2) providing feedback must not jeopardize confidentiality. Practitioners can destroy the credibility of an evaluation process very quickly if they fail to take seriously and act on findings or if they compromise confidentiality. Memories of such outcomes are usually long-lived and damage not only current but also future evaluation efforts.

CONCLUSIONS

Over the past decade human resource planning has become increasingly sophisticated and better integrated with the short- and long-term business plans and objectives of organizations (Jackson & Schuler, 1990). Long-term planning has spawned short-term and intermediate programs, and the evaluation of these programs in turn generates reconsideration and modification of longer-range projects and plans. Training has emerged as an increasingly important component of effective and well-rounded HRD programs, which are themselves held in growing regard in the face of intensified accountability and productivity pressures. Evaluation, on the other hand, has lagged behind the planning and conducting of training. As these pressures are brought to bear on the training system, the spotlight—with greater frequency and urgency—is focusing on evaluation. Productive evaluation requires an expenditure of time, effort, and money; it also requires sound methodology and clarity of purpose; and it requires commitment to the integrity of the evaluation process. The matrix presented here provides a guide by which HRD professionals can meet these requirements while planning and implementing effective training evaluations.

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EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

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Change is everywhere. It is inescapable. Hardly a day goes by without news of the new world economy or the shift from a production to a service orientation. Indeed, change is necessary to survive in an uncertain world. Also, today's business environment is highly competitive. Because of the sweeping effects of change and competition, a great deal of interest has been placed on higher education and lifelong learning. Consequently, business is turning to training in order to cut costs and increase productivity among employees. In fact, according to Fulmer (1988) and Eurick (1985), in 1985 the United States corporate training and education efforts were estimated to cost 40 to 60 billion dollars annually, which is close to the amount spent on post-secondary education.

However, in the rush to train and educate people, many organizations have failed to treat the evaluation of such training as a priority. At best, the evaluation of training has been a perfunctory task with little analysis and usefulness. Yet evaluating the effectiveness of costly training efforts is paramount to the success of any program. This article reviews the current HRD literature addressing the evaluation of adult and workplace training programs, based on Donald Kirkpatrick's (1979) evaluation steps.

FACTORS AFFECTING ADULT EDUCATION

Before discussing the evaluation of training, it is important to explain the elements that serve as an impetus for adult education and workplace training. Merriam and Caffarella (1991) identify three major areas of change that influence adult learning:

- Demographic changes;
- Economic changes; and
- Technological changes.

Demographic Changes

One of the changing elements of demographics is age. According to Merriam and Caffarella, there are more Americans aged sixty-five and older than there are Americans aged twenty-five and younger. The aging of the population will continue well into the next century, and the demand for quality adult education will rise accordingly.

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The rapid growth of cultural and ethnic diversity in the U.S. is another changing element of demographics. The United States is now experiencing a wave of immigration, primarily from Asia and Latin America, that parallels the influx of Europeans at the beginning of this century. By the year 2000, minorities are expected to compose 29 percent of the U.S. population (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). In order to tap this valuable resource, employers will need to provide specialized training to help these people adjust to the American workplace.

Economic Changes

Economic changes are also having and will continue to have an impact on adult learning and training. Many experts, such as Naisbitt and Aburdene (1990), contend that the economies of the world are now interdependent. Consequently, major companies are allowing, encouraging, and sometimes subsidizing their employees' education in order to become more competitive and to increase their chances for survival in a world economy.

Another critical economic change is the shift from a manufacturing economy to a service economy, which has produced a change in the job market and has affected the kind of training that employees need. Moreover, changes in the composition of the U.S. work force itself are influencing training. For example, since World War II women have become an integral part of American organizations.

Technological Changes

Finally, the advancements in technology will continue to shape and define adult training needs, primarily because of the advent of the personal computer. Computers have revolutionized every aspect of corporate education, allowing people to produce, analyze, and manipulate data with greater ease than before. By some accounts (for example, Apps, 1988), every seven years the amount of information generated in the world doubles. Furthermore, about half of the information that most professionals learn will be outdated in about five years.

The implication of technological advancements is that learning is a lifelong proposition. Not only will there be a demand for training to keep up with technological advancements, but there also will be a demand to retrain the millions of Americans who will be displaced because of such advancements.

WHY EVALUATE?

Although for many years trainers have attempted to evaluate their programs, until quite recently there has not been a bona fide effort to use valid and reliable methods to conduct such evaluations. Furthermore, some trainers gather data for evaluation but do not analyze those data for trends or use them to improve existing training programs. Such an oversight can be costly, especially in light of the billions of dollars that have

been spent and will continue to be spent annually on training efforts as a result of the demographic, economic, and technological changes just discussed.

It is important to remember that effective evaluation is multifaceted. All of the literature recognizes the importance of evaluation in terms of client orientation and economic return. In other words, most researchers in the field understand that clients, whether they are those who have hired the trainer or those who have participated in the training, must be satisfied with that training. If clients do not perceive a return on their investment, whether measured in terms of time or dollars, they may not be willing to continue to invest in training.

LEVELS OF EVALUATION

There are several components to an effective evaluation program. One of the most comprehensive and widely referenced models of evaluation is Donald Kirkpatrick's (1979). The four levels of this model are as follows:

- Reaction;
- Learning;
- Behavior; and
- Results.

The balance of this article reviews the current research on evaluation in light of Kirkpatrick's model.

Level 1: Reaction Evaluation

Reaction is the term that Kirkpatrick uses to refer to how well the participants liked a particular training program. Evaluation of participants' reactions consists of measuring their feelings; it does not include a measure of actual learning. Kirkpatrick contends that although the evaluation of reactions is an easy measurement, many trainers do not follow these five essential steps for accurate measurement:

1. Determine what information is desired.
2. Devise a written "comment sheet" that includes items determined in the previous step.
3. Design the sheet so that reactions can be easily tabulated and manipulated by statistical means.
4. Make the sheets anonymous.
5. Encourage the participants to make additional comments not elicited by questions on the sheet.

Although Kirkpatrick suggests that participants should feel free and be encouraged to make additional comments, he also contends that this type of qualitative data is

extremely difficult to analyze. Thus, it is difficult to discern any patterns or trends in order to revise the training program.

Other researchers have different perspectives regarding the evaluation of participants' reactions. For instance, Antheil and Casper (1986) state that participant reaction is a measure of "customer satisfaction" indicating the level of effectiveness and usefulness of the training program at the time the participants are experiencing it and sometimes weeks or even months afterward. However, they are careful to stress that data collected regarding participant reactions reflect participant opinions and should not be considered proof of learning.

To determine what training-evaluation tools were being used by industry, Fisher and Weinberg (1988) of Bell Communications Research, Incorporated (Bellcore) conducted a phone survey in March of 1986. The data indicated that the typical instrument to gather information regarding reactions was a "short, quickly constructed, open-ended questionnaire" (p. 73). This "happy sheet" (p.73), as Fisher and Weinberg refer to it, provided subjective impressions and no data that could withstand statistical analysis or measures for reliability. Because there was no adequate tool for evaluation, the Bellcore System developed a new instrument with items addressing the trainer's behavior, the participant's experience, and other issues phrased as open-ended questions.

This questionnaire, like most such instruments, focuses on participant reactions—not learning or the transfer of learning. For instance, one item on the questionnaire reads, "The course presented useful information" (p. 76). The participants are then asked to rate the statement on a Likert scale. Fisher and Weinberg (1988) warn that while this questionnaire does provide a "general estimate of a particular course's success based upon the views of the participants" (p. 75), the data may be somewhat inaccurate because participants have a tendency to report what a trainer wants to hear. Also, some questionnaires have poorly constructed questions or items that predispose participants to respond in predicted ways.

Some trainers and researchers feel that measurements of participant reactions are inaccurate and counterproductive. For instance, Conway and Ross (1984) found that participants have a tendency to underestimate their pretraining skills and overestimate their posttraining skills in an attempt to justify participating in the training. Their research is consistent with research in the field of social psychology indicating that people have a strong need to justify their behavior and actions and consequently may alter their opinions and their interpretation of past events. Therefore, if trainers continue to use participant reactions as the sole means of evaluation—and management continues to allow such use—the outcome can be misleading and extremely costly.

Carnevale and Schulz (1990) go a step further. They claim that "participant reactions are easy to collect but provide little substantive information about training's worth" (p. s-15). They also claim that because data concerning participant reactions do not reveal the actual learning that has taken place, those data do not accurately indicate the return on investment for training efforts. They state that because of such unreliable data, many trainers have stopped using reaction sheets. However, Carnevale and Schulz

go on to say that most trainers believe participants' favorable reactions are crucial to a program's success and that participants whose reactions are favorable tend to be more receptive to the material and consequently more likely to use it on the job.

Dixon (1987, p. 108) claims that "the use of participant reaction forms can cause more problems than benefits for the training function of an organization." This statement is especially true when participant reactions are the only evaluation method used. Dixon contends that three major problems result from the use of reaction forms:

1. *The expectation that training must be entertaining.* Because reaction sheets measure how the participants felt about the training, the trainer may tend to emphasize participant enjoyment during the training rather than substantive information. As a trainer is often rewarded with high marks when the participants enjoy themselves, this relationship between evaluation and participant enjoyment can become a vicious cycle. The trainer's ratings are also a major factor in the rewards that the trainer receives from management or the client organization: renewal of a contract or a promotion. Obviously, under these circumstances the use of a reaction sheet can lead to a conflict of interest.

2. *Faulty instructional design.* The term "faulty instructional design" refers to a questionnaire design that asks for information that participants cannot legitimately provide. As Dixon (1987) states, the art of questionnaire design is to ask questions for which a participant can give informed responses.

3. *The perception that learning is passive rather than active*. This perception refers to the common belief that it is the trainer's responsibility to ensure that participant learning occurs. Measuring how well this responsibility has been met with a reaction sheet is problematic, as a reaction sheet asks questions about the trainer's performance and the course design without asking about the participants' efforts to learn. Dixon emphasizes that evaluation and learning are not complete unless both functions have been measured. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the trainer to provide information and the responsibility of the participant and the trainer to process the information. Reaction sheets rarely take into account the participant's role as part of the training program.

Level 2: Learning Evaluation

According to Kirkpatrick (1979), the second level of analysis in the evaluation process is that of learning. Kirkpatrick defines *learning* as the "principles, facts and techniques that were understood and absorbed by the participants" (p. 82) and identifies the following guidelines or standards for evaluation in terms of learning:

- Each participant's learning should be measured by quantitative means.
- A pretest and posttest should be administered so that any learning can be attributed to the training program.
- The learning should be measured by objective means.

- When feasible, a control group should be used so that comparisons can be made with the actual training group.
- When feasible, the evaluation results should undergo statistical analysis so that learning can be viewed in terms of correlation and/or levels of confidence.

Obviously, evaluation of learning is much more difficult to measure than reaction. According to Kirkpatrick's guidelines, a knowledge of statistical procedures is essential for accurate and meaningful measurement.

Endres and Kleiner (1990) state that pretests and posttests are necessary when evaluating the amount of learning that has taken place. Without a point of comparison, the measurement of learning at the end of the training program will not reveal exactly how much knowledge has been obtained from the training experience. Although paper-and-pencil tests are the most frequently used tools to measure knowledge, there are other means for gathering this kind of data.

For instance, when simulations, role plays, or demonstrations are used to measure knowledge, the trainer can use before-and-after situations in which participants can demonstrate or perform the knowledge and techniques that they have learned. This information is consistent with Kirkpatrick's research on the measurement of learning. In fact, like Endres and Kleiner, Kirkpatrick maintains that simulations and demonstrations can closely approximate the participants' work environment and can help them relate the learning in meaningful ways, especially when specific job skills are the focus of the training.

According to Carnevale and Schulz (1990), the measurement tools used to evaluate learning should reflect each training program's particular objectives. Also, measures of learning changes may be taken during or at the end of a training session. Carnevale and Schulz warn that such a measure of learning changes "may indicate that a program's instructional methods are effective, but it doesn't show whether or how participants' new learning will be applied on the job" (p. s-16).

A useful process for reviewing items on a measurement tool that evaluates learning has been suggested by Cantor (1990):

1. Determine the acceptable task level by objective.
2. Determine whether each objective is adequate.
3. Identify the items associated with each objective.
4. Determine whether the items match the objectives.

These steps are consistent with the instructional systems design method and will help ensure that items will be reliable and valid means for determining whether learning has occurred.

Research by Antheil and Casper (1986, p. 58) indicates that "evaluation of learning at this level closely resembles testing" and most often takes the form of paper-and-pencil tests. They suggest that the typical measurement tool includes gathering pretest and posttest data to determine the amount of learning that has been acquired. They also

stress that skill demonstrations in a learning situation merely indicate whether a participant *can* use the skills—not whether he or she *will* use them.

Level 3: Transfer-of-Learning Evaluation

Kirkpatrick's third level in the evaluation model is *transfer of learning.* In the HRD literature there are relatively few examples of studies that have specifically attempted to assess the transfer of training skills or knowledge to the job. Even Kirkpatrick (1979, p. 86) warns that "evaluation of training programs in terms of on the job behavior is more difficult than the reaction and learning evaluations . . . ." As a result, much training is delivered without a plan for measuring the transfer of training.

Kirkpatrick goes on to suggest a framework for evaluating training programs in terms of behavioral changes:

1. A systematic appraisal should be made of on-the-job performance on a before-and-after basis.
2. The appraisal of performance should be made by one or more of the following parties (the more the better):
   - The participant:
   - The participant's superior(s);
   - The participant's subordinates; and/or
   - The participant's peers or other people who are familiar with the participant's performance.
3. A statistical analysis should be made to compare before-and-after performance and to relate changes to the training program.
4. The post-training appraisal should be made three months or more after the training so that the participants have an opportunity to practice what they have learned. Subsequent appraisals may add validity to the study.
5. A control group (of people who did not receive the training) should be used.

Antheil and Casper (1986) propose a comprehensive evaluation model based on Kirkpatrick's four levels, which they call "program effects levels." Their three-step procedure for implementing the model is as follows:

1. Discuss the focus and goals of the evaluation study with the identified evaluation audience.
2. Design and implement data-collection strategies aimed at tapping one or more levels of program effects. These strategies should reflect the audience's expressed needs for information.
3. Communicate evaluation results to the audience through a process that incorporates various user needs and abilities to learn from and use results. Encourage joint interpretation of the data.

Antheil and Casper (1986) emphasize the importance of collecting and presenting the information in a way that will be meaningful and relevant for the specific audience involved. This level of evaluation not only assesses the performance of the person who receives the training, but also provides valuable feedback to those involved in redesigning existing training programs or in designing programs to meet future needs. This information is also useful to those who will be evaluating the effectiveness of the overall training program.

The collection of qualitative as well as quantitative data is encouraged by Antheil and Casper. They suggest logs, diaries, and observer narratives, for example.

Endres and Kleiner (1990) use Kirkpatrick's model in suggesting an approach to evaluating the effectiveness of management training. They caution against relying on in-house performance-appraisal systems as the primary measure of transfer of learning, as it is difficult to separate the effects of trainingefforts from those of other factors. Instead, they suggest setting initial performance objectives and monitoring accomplishment of those objectives after training. They offer an example in which participants write personal and professional objectives at the end of the training experience. These objectives are then sent to the participants approximately a week after the training. Two months later they are sent again, and the participants are asked to comment on their performance against these objectives. A certificate of completion for the training is issued only after each participant's feedback is secured.

Like Kirkpatrick, Endres and Kleiner suggest multidimensional on-the-job evaluations, including feedback from the participant, his or her subordinates, and peers. "By using all three forms of feedback," they say, "the built-in biases of the evaluator can be reduced as the number of evaluators having different perspectives is increased" (p. 6).

Finally, they remind evaluators that other factors can impact the effectiveness of management training and development, including the manager, the trainer, the organization, and the environment. As they state, "All four are complex creatures" (p. 7).

Nanda (1988) also looked at the transference of supervisory skills following training programs and found that most supervisory-training programs are knowledge based. However, to be of value to the trainee and the organization, that knowledge must result in a change of attitude, followed by a change in the supervisor's behavior. Unfortunately, the impact of most supervisory-training programs does not go beyond knowledge and awareness. One factor that often inhibits transference of learning is the organizational climate, which may be inconsistent with what is taught in the training program. This inconsistency often renders such training programs entirely ineffective. As Nanda (p. 28) says, "perhaps changes in attitude among top managers are key to the skill development of supervisors."

The instrumental impact of the on-the-job environment is consistent with Bandura's findings in the studies that led to the development of Social Learning Theory. Bandura (1965) found that any learning that may have been gained by observing the behavior of models was completely wiped out by the subsequent incentives received for the

performance of a specific response, leading him to conclude that "mere exposure to modeling stimuli does not provide sufficient conditions for imitative or observational learning" (p. 593).

Kelly (1982) starts with the assumption that typically only 10 percent of a company's training transfers skills to the job. What happens to the other 90 percent of training? She suggests that 40 percent is lost because the training function is often isolated or peripheral: "Therefore, management, who views anyone paid to do a peripheral job as a peripheral person, will not bring that person's ideas into the workplace" (p. 102). An additional 40 percent, she suggests, is lost because most trainers or management educators do not build transfer into the training programs. Finally, 10 percent may be lost when the course designer does not deliver the training.

For skills to be transferred to the job, Kelly believes that they must be built into the training "before the first specific behavioral objective is chosen, before the first course activity is imagined or before a packaged product is selected" (p. 104). In other words, the course should be designed with the specific intent of transfer to the actual job situation.

Kelly's comment stresses an important point. In order to study whether skill transfer related to training has in fact occurred, one must establish a baseline of current skills or knowledge before the training occurs. For example, six months after a two-day workshop on supervisory skills, Swierczek and Carmichael (1985) conducted a survey in which they attempted to measure whether participants in the workshop actually used the learned skills. They found that they were hampered by the lack of baseline information: "Therefore the results cannot be linked definitively to the workshop" (p. 97). Of course, following a good process for instructional system design would suggest pretesting, both to establish such a baseline as well as to determine the need for training in the first place.

Mahoney (1980) suggests that management training be evaluated using three criteria:

- Targets—working on relevant issues;
- Time—working efficiently; and
- Transfer—producing results on the job.

To optimize transference of management training, Mahoney suggests that a manager who wishes to train subordinates in supervisory skills should conduct a series of working meetings on specific issues. The issues selected should be ones that have been identified by the subordinates (thus meeting the "targets" criterion). Next, Mahoney suggests that the training be divided into a series of half-day segments. One criticism of training is that it takes too much time both for the participant and for the manager/trainer. However, if the working meetings are limited to four to eight times per year, they represent only a 1- to 2-percent investment of each subordinate's time (thus meeting the "time" criterion). Finally, Mahoney suggests that training be designed with an "action-research" process in mind. With proper selection of training topics and

content, the manager's subordinates will actually take their jobs with them to each training session. Thus, "the job and the training are separated only by the training setting, not by process and not by content" (p. 29) (thus meeting the "transfer" criterion).

A synthesis of the literature reviewed here suggests the following ten guidelines for designing training that ensures transfer:

1. Build a plan for transfer into the training program from the outset.
2. Make sure that the work environment provides positive incentives to apply the skills gained in training.
3. Consider the audience—the people who will use the evaluation results. Collect data and report results with the audience in mind.
4. Set initial performance targets based on the training needs identified in the assessment phase.
5. Use specific topics that are relevant and job related.
6. Use the work-group manager or supervisor to deliver the training whenever possible.
7. Keep training sessions short.
8. Ensure that practice during the training sessions clearly matches the on-the-job situation.
9. Plan for the assessment of skill transfer to be multidimensional, including the participant as well as the participant's subordinates, peers, and supervisor(s) whenever possible.
10. Do not consider the training to be complete until transference has been evaluated.

It is interesting to note that if transfer of learning is considered at all, this consideration usually occurs after the training has been designed or even delivered. However, most of the guidelines suggested above should be followed during the design phase.

Level 4: Results Evaluation

Kirkpatrick's fourth level of evaluation is *results* or impact on the organization. Attempting to measure results is not for the fainthearted! Although measuring training programs in terms of results may be the best way to measure effectiveness, Kirkpatrick himself (1979, p. 89) points out that "there are . . . so many complicating factors that it is extremely difficult if not impossible to evaluate certain kinds of programs in terms of results." The separation of variables to measure how much of the improvement is due to training is extremely difficult. Instead of offering a specific formula, Kirkpatrick simply reports anecdotal efforts to measure results. He does applaud attempts by researchers such as Likert to use qualitative data in measuring results, but he laments the fact that

current research techniques are essentially inadequate and that progress in this area is slow.

Zenger and Hargis (1982) recommend experimental-research designs using pretestingand posttesting of experimentally trained groups with untrained control groups. However, outside an ideal laboratory environment, this approach is not without its challenges.

Ban and Faerman (1990) report on their attempt to measure both skill transference and results following an intensive, twenty-four-day advanced supervisory-training program. They had hoped to study impact with an experimental design by surveying a control group of managers who had not participated in the training program. However, they had to abandon this part of their study because of logistical problems. They conclude that "the literature on training evaluation may be too optimistic in recommending experimental or quasi-experimental design for many field situations" (p. 278).

Similarly, Trapnell (1984, p. 92) remarks that "impact evaluation is not a science" because of the number of variables other than training that may affect long-term results. Despite this comment, though, Trapnell encourages the use of available secondary data, such as savings resulting from reductions in downtime, accident rates, absenteeism, customer returns, assembly-line rejects, staff turnover, and employee grievances.

In an update to Zenger and Hargis's 1982 article, Kelly, Orgel, and Baer (1984) recommend quasi-experimental designs based on samples and groups that exist naturally in the work environment. An example would be two similar departments, one that receives training and one that does not. Rather than evaluating performance differences statistically and presenting those statistics—which, according to them, few people really understand—they suggest demonstrating results visually through graphic presentations.

The literature offers an account of at least one attempt to apply an econometric model to the evaluation of costs and benefits of training. Schmidt, Hunter, and Pearlman (1982) adapted "linear-regression-based decision-theoretic equations" to estimate the dollar impact of "intervention programs designed to improve job performance" (p. 333). The models they used were originally developed to estimate the dollar impact of valid selection procedures on work-force productivity. Typical studies on the value of selection procedures are highly statistical. However, "in general, organizational decision makers are less able to evaluate these statistics than statements made in terms of dollars" (p. 334). The model developed depends on a number of key assumptions, several of which must be inferred or estimated because they are not typically available from prior research.

Using their model, Schmidt, Hunter, and Pearlman estimated the value of a training program for one hundred programmers at more than one million dollars. In general, they hypothesized that "the economic impact or intervention programs may be greater than industrial/organizational psychologists have realized" (p. 340).

Using Schmidt, Hunter, and Pearlman's procedure, Sheppeck and Cohen (1985) propose a somewhat less statistical "utility" formula:

UTILITY = YD x NT x PD x V—NT x C, where:

- YD = years of duration of effect on performance;
- NT = number of employees trained;
- PD = performance difference between trained and untrained employees;
- V = "value"—the standard deviation of job performance in dollars; and
- C = cost per trainee.

This formula still depends on estimates for several variables. The most obscure is the concept of "value," a statistic that is not readily available for most jobs. Sheppeck and Cohen provide several suggested estimates of "value" based on the few actual studies reported in the literature, but they suggest that Schmidt, Hunter, and Pearlman's range of 40 to 70 percent of annual salary is a reasonable estimate when actual figures are unknown. They suggest further studies in a variety of occupational settings to develop more precise, job-specific estimates for each of these variables.

Given the difficulty of results evaluations and the relative lack of objective, valid tools to use, are they worth pursuing? McEvoy and Buller (1990) suggest not only that it would be wise to think twice about pursuing such evaluations but also that not all training is results oriented. They describe their attempts to conduct a comprehensive, four-step evaluation of their training for developing executive leadership, which is similar to Outward Bound. They found that training is often used for purposes other than achieving a measurable impact on the performance of an individual employee or the organization. For example, sometimes training is seen as a perquisite for performance that has already been judged successful or as a cultural "rite of passage" that all those hoping to advance must complete. In these cases the value of the training is more symbolic than technical.

McEvoy and Buller even went so far as to use a utility formula similar to that described by Sheppeck and Cohen to assess the dollar impact of their program for one of their clients. Using the most conservative assumptions for the model, they still estimated a net benefit of over a half-million dollars! They decided not to share the estimate with the client—because they did not think the client would believe it. The formula is not at all intuitive, and they reasoned that sharing the figure would hurt their credibility rather than help it.

These studies suggest that evaluation training on the basis of results or organizational impact may not be the ultimate measure. In the years since Kirkpatrick proposed his model, little has been added in the way of specific, valid tools to objectively measure training impact. Most promising are the quasi-experimental methods suggested by Kelly, Orgel, and Baer (1984) using graphic representations of hard data. Unfortunately, we may see few examples of this approach in the literature, as it lacks the scientific rigor that most journals favor.

It would also be a good idea to conduct further studies in a greater variety of occupational settings to determine reasonable, more precise estimates of performance

differences between trained and untrained employees as well as value (that is, the standard deviation of job performance in dollars between trained and untrained employees). This research, however, may have some ethical hurdles to cross if it involves consciously withholding training from some people.

SUMMARY

Kirkpatrick's (1979) four levels of training evaluation—reaction, learning, transfer of learning, and results—are still a useful framework for considering evaluation techniques, as evidenced by the frequency with which they are referenced in the current training-evaluation literature. This article has offered a review of recent contributions in the literature as they pertain to Kirkpatrick's four levels.

The experience reflected in the literature suggests that trainers incorporate at least the first three levels routinely in the design of training programs. In fact, many authors emphasize the importance of considering early in the design process how each level of evaluation will be addressed. The ability to track and report regularly on the effectiveness of training programs beyond participant reaction (that is, to documentation of learning, behavioral changes, and transfer of learning) can be critical to the success of a training program. It can also cement organizational recognition of the value of training and can help to ensure continued support.

Kirkpatrick's fourth level of evaluation, results, is still difficult to measure. The difficulty here, as Kirkpatrick himself points out, is the ability to separate training from the multitude of other variables that can impact long-term performance. The econometric and utility models reviewed here may be statistically elegant but are not sufficiently intuitive to warrant widespread application. This fact suggests opportunities for further research into alternative approaches and methodologies for addressing results. The more qualitative, quasi-experimental approaches involving action research, critical incidents, and similar methods appear promising. These approaches offer the advantage of observing and documenting the impact of training activities at the site. The authors hope that the journals that target adult educators and organizational trainers will recognize the value of these approaches and will share studies based on such methods.

As can be seen from the existing literature, more research in the field of training evaluation is necessary. In fact, evaluation is paramount to the success of any training program. Training not only must be cost effective but also must teach participants skills and concepts that they can readily use in their organizations after the training has been completed.

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APPENDIX
POST-COURSE EVALUATION

We would be grateful if you would complete this form in order to help us improve the course you have just attended. Your sincere and constructive comments on the course will definitely enable us to build a better training program to meet the needs of our staff.

Title _____ Department _____

Course _____ Date _____

1. Did the course meet its objectives? (Please check.)
   1. ___ Not at all 2. ___ To a small extent 3. ___ To some extent
   4. ___ To a great extent 5. ___ Fully
   Please comment: _____

2. How much of the program did you understand?
   1. ___ None 2. ___ Not much 3. ___ Some
   4. ___ Most 5. ___ All
   Please explain: _____
   _____

3. How relevant was the course to your learning needs?
   1. ___ Irrelevant 2. ___ Slightly relevant 3. ___ Somewhat relevant
   4. ___ Very relevant 5. ___ Extremely relevant

4. Did this course develop skills necessary to carry out your current/future job successfully?
   1. ___Almost none 2. ___To a small extent 3. ___To some extent
   4. ___To a great extent 5. ___Very relevant

5. The learning from the course that I am most likely to apply to my work is (explain briefly): _____
   _____

6. What topics do you think should be added to the program, expanded, or deleted?
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

7. How useful and appropriate are the following training methods to this course? (Please circle where applicable.)

Quantity	Too much	Not enough	Good balance	Not applicable
Lecture	1	2	3	0
Video Presentation	1	2	3	0
Role Play	1	2	3	0
Group Discussion	1	2	3	0
Exercises	1	2	3	0

Quality	Poor	Below average	Average	Above average	Excellent	Not applicable
Lecture	1	2	3	4	5	0
Video Presentation	1	2	3	4	5	0
Role Play	1	2	3	4	5	0
Group Discussion	1	2	3	4	5	0
Exercises	1	2	3	4	5	0

Others (specify): _____

_____

8. What was your overall reaction to this program?

1. ___Quite negative 2. ___Neutral 3. ___Quite positive
Please comment: _____
_____

9. Please rate the trainer on the following areas.

Name of Trainer _____

	Poor	Fair	Excellent
a. Knowledge of subject	1	2	3
b. Organization and preparation	1	2	3
c. Style and delivery	1	2	3
d. Responsiveness to participants	1	2	3
e. Creating appropriate learning climate	1	2	3
f. Encouraging participation by all members of class	1	2	3
g. Provision of good feedback	1	2	3
h. Clear presentation of learning points	1	2	3
i. Enthusiasm	1	2	3
j. Pace and amount of learning	1	2	3
k. Handling questions and interruptions	1	2	3
l. Maintaining interest	1	2	3

10. How could the instructor's technique be improved? _____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for completing this form for us!