



Tips for Trainers

Centre for Refugee Research, UNSW

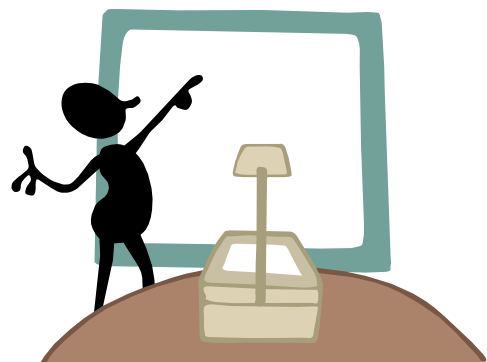
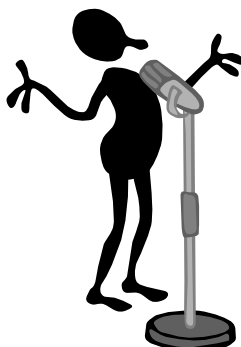
Written by

Assoc. Prof. Eileen Pittaway

Prepared and edited by

Judi Tucker and Tashi James

University of New South Wales, Australia - 2012



Introduction

The training course you will be leading is designed to be participatory.

We hope that the participants will be actively involved, really enjoy the course and will learn a lot of skills and knowledge which will assist them in their future endeavours.

It is important that the course is not run as a series of lectures, nor in an authoritarian manner.

You are a facilitator, not a lecturer.

Remember – the participants will probably bring a wealth of skills and knowledge to the course and you will learn as much from them as they do from you.



Confidentiality

Very near to the beginning of the course draw up a confidentiality agreement with the participants. Explain that this is necessary to build trust and the sharing of stories and experience.

Negotiate the agreement with the group and write it up on a flipchart.

Make sure that you cover things such as 'personal stories' that are shared in the course will not be repeated to anyone outside the course.

Disputes or disagreements over sensitive issues such as abortion will not be shared outside the group without the express permission of the people involved.

Note that as the trainer you will have to provide a report back of the sessions to UNHCR but that this will be shared with the participants.

Add anything else that the group agrees on.

Put it upon the wall, sign it yourself and ask all participants to sign it.

If you are using interpreters also ask them to sign it.

At the end of the session give the confidentiality agreement to the relevant leader in the group.



Tips for Trainers

1. Prepare all material in advance



Before you begin a training session read right through all of the training session and the background notes.

Make sure you have all the materials that you need for each session, such as flip charts, marker pens and all the things the participants will need.

Check the space you have and make sure it is big enough for exercises and small group work.

2. Be familiar with all of the training materials.

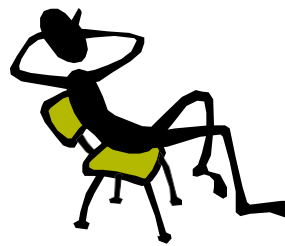


When you read the training material make sure you understand what each session is about.

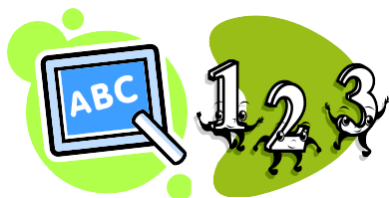
If you are not sure about something, ask someone. Do not attempt to teach something you are not confident to explain.

3. Build your own resources with a good supply of relevant stories and examples

Make sure that you have personal stories and relevant examples to illustrate key points in the training. If you do not have one, use those presented in the ToT or ask colleagues. Be prepared to 'act' the stories out in a theatrical manner to engage participants, e.g. if you say, "I was really sad" pretend to cry. Sit on a chair with your feet on another chair looking very lazy when describing 'Laissez Faire' management styles.



4. Keep language clear and simple



Don't use jargon (unless you explain what it means and why you are using it) and avoid complex language. It is possible to explain all the material in the training session in everyday language.

5. Make the materials relevant to participants



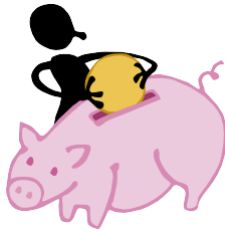
Whenever possible bring in examples from your work or the places where the refugees are living. Take examples from the recent local news or from newsletters from relevant organisations.

6. Make the training interesting and exciting



Use lots of stories, theatre, role-play, games, music and poetry. Get the participants involved in activities. If they enjoy the training and the sessions are interactive they will remember the material much better than if they passively sit and listen.

7. Build a bank of good exercises



Before you start training make sure that you have relevant exercises for each session. For example, if teaching management skills get the women to describe their daily routine – then analyse it in terms of the management activities they undertake just to “manage” a home and family.

8. Prepare handouts in advance

Make sure that you have all of the handouts for the participants printed out and ready in advance – you will be too busy during the training to try and get this done then.

9. Make sure you have all the materialsthat you need for each session



At the beginning of each day, organise all that you need for each session into separate piles ready to pick up and use at each session. Participants will want to talk to you every second that you are not training, so you need to be well organised!

10. Use a good 'ice breaker' to start the session

A good icebreaker allows participants to get to know each other and quickly gets people interacting. This is very important for this participatory style of training. I like to ask participants to give their first names and either it's meaning or a little story about why their name was chosen. Start by telling them about your name. You could also ask them to give themselves an adjective before their name. For example, in English this might be "Marvellous Mary" or "Sweet Susan" If this suits the language you are training in, it can help everyone remember each other very quickly. You may have your own favourite 'Ice-breaker'.



11. Introduce yourself and all participants



Once people have said their names, do another round of introduction, asking where they come from and which part of the camp or suburb they live in. Introduce yourself, and tell something about your background. This will establish your credibility as a trainer and will help them to remember each other's names. On the second morning, ask someone to name all participants and do this a couple of times. It will cause a lot of laughter and by the end of the game, most people will know everyone's name.

12. Use name tags with big groups



If you have a big group, use name tags to help people get to know each other quickly. Give people bright markers to write their names so that they can be seen across a room. An alternative ice breaker is to ask them to use a colour or to draw a flower or something else on the name tag which is significant to them. When you go around the circle ask them to explain what the significance is of the drawing on their name tag.

13. Make sure that all participants know what the training is about and why they are there



It is very important to go through the program at the beginning of the course and to make sure that all of the participants are clear what the training is about.

14. Encourage punctuality- make sure you are punctual yourself

NEVER be late. Make a contract on the first day about all arriving on time. Point out that the most important part of each session is usually described in the first five minutes. Suggest that if people constantly arrive late for sessions it is a sign of disrespect for both the trainer and the other participants, who have to sit around waiting for them.



15. Mobile phones



If some participants have phones insist that these be either off or on 'silent'. If participants have to accept a call, they have to leave the room. Make a joke of it – suggest that participants will be fined if their phone rings and the money will go to charity. If anyone continues to let their phone ring speak to them privately in the session break.

16. Practise good timing when training



Make sure that you have timed the material that you will present each session. Make sure that you know where you can 'make up' time if one session runs over time. Have a couple of 'back up exercises' ready in case one session goes very quickly.

When you give the participants' exercises be very strict with timing. On the first couple of days just cut them off after the time you have given them for feedback. They will soon learn to time their own work.

17. Make sure participants understand the exercises you are giving to them

Go through the exercises slowly with participants. Write them onto a flip chart. Go around each group and check that they are clear. It is a waste of time if they do the wrong thing.



18. Make sure participants have sufficient time for exercises



Having decided to be strict on timing you need to be sure that you have given sufficient time. Try to do the exercises at home in advance and work out how much time the participants will need. Watch the groups on the first day – some groups work quickly, others are very slow. Adjust your exercises if necessary

19. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to speak



In every group you will find some people who want to talk all the time and others who are very quiet. Make sure that you give all participants an equal chance to contribute. Actively seek responses from quieter people. When getting feedback from individuals or group work, rather than let one person give several responses, go around the group asking each person (or groups) to give just one response at a time, until there are no more points of feedback. That way every one (or every group) has an opportunity to have their say.

20. Control talkative participants

Ask talkative participants to hold their comments until others have had an opportunity to speak. If necessary, speak to them in the session break and ask them to assist you to give others a chance to contribute. If they still insist in talking over others, politely but firmly tell them they must be quiet until you give them permission to speak. Explain that letting others talk is a mark of respect. Remind them that we are talking about respect as a key attribute for good communication and that they should be practising it in the training.



21. Control disruptive participants



If a participant is consistently disruptive, ask them politely to stop what they are doing, then talk to them in the break and ask them to be more considerate of other participants. If the behaviour continues, tell them that they will be asked to leave the training course if it happens again and report the matter to UNHCR. In the worst case they will have to leave.

22. Be non-judgmental about participants comments

If you gain the trust of participants and encourage discussion, people might make comments about things that make you feel uncomfortable. It is very important that you are not seen to judge these comments, or the people who make them. They may be more liberal than you are comfortable with, for example an acceptance of abortion, teenage pregnancy or homosexuality, and you may not feel comfortable with this. If it really worries you, discuss it with the NGO who is employing you, or with UNHCR.

The comments may be very negative – racist, classist or saying bad things about teenage mothers, homosexuals etc. You need to question these attitudes and challenge them gently. If you do not have experience doing this it is important that you seek help from the NGO or UNHCR. Perhaps an expert in this area can come in and conduct a session with the participants. You cannot 'just ignore' negative comments about the community from the participants.



23. Practise active listening



Listen carefully to what the participants say – do not jump ahead and give answers without checking back that you have understood what they have said. Model active listening as something that they will need to do as effective communicators.

24. Use interpreters effectively

If you need to use Interpreters when training, make sure that you use them effectively.

a. Go through the training material with the interpreter before the sessions begin to make sure that they are comfortable with the language and concepts you are using.

b. Talk to the participants and make sure that the participants talk to you, by maintaining eye contact with them even if you are using the interpreters. If you or the participants talk directly to the Interpreter, then you are giving control of the interaction to them.

c. You still use the first person even when using an interpreter. For example:

“What would you like to do?” asked direct to the person

NOT

“Ask them what they want to do?” asked to the interpreter.

d. Place the Interpreters discreetly, where they can be heard clearly, but so that they do not dominate the session, e.g. do not have them standing in front of you.

e. If participants look puzzled when the interpreter has translated something that you have said, check with them that they have understood. Maybe the interpretation was not correct. You can tell a lot from watching the participant’s body language.

Remember more than 60% of communication is through body language.

25. Respond supportively to participants if they become upset



In some of the discussion participants may become upset. This might happen when discussing the conflict that made them refugees, or issues such as single teenage mothers. One of them may have had a relative who became a teenage mother and had a very hard time. It is very important that you respond to the person who is upset. Give them words of comfort and understanding. If necessary, take them to a separate room. If they need additional help seek counselling through an appropriate NGO.

26. Document important stories, information and feedback from exercises

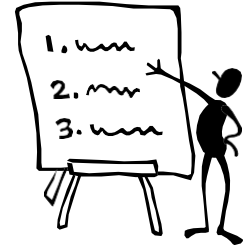
The outcomes of the training may provide very important information to guide the formation and ongoing management of the project.

Make sure that you document relevant stories and examples given by the participants and feedback from the exercises



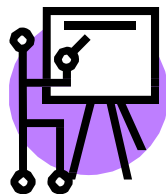
27. Use flipcharts effectively

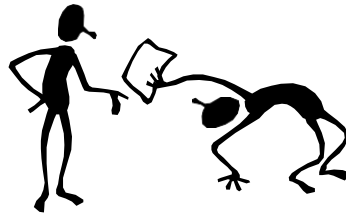
Have plain paper flip charts for recording the outcomes of discussions and exercises. Ask a participant to help you write these up and check that you agree with what is written. If there are two languages being spoken, use two flip charts. Put relevant work that you may want to refer to as the training continues on the wall of the training room.



28. Use a variety of training methods

Make sure that each day contains a variety of training methods to keep the participants engaged. Avoid lecture style presentations and if you have to present a large amount of material, break it up with individual or small group exercises. Make sure that there is an active session after lunch each day as this is when participants will be most sleepy. The middle day of the training is often the one when participants have least energy. Make sure that the presentations on the final day are exciting and enjoyable.





29. Be adaptable

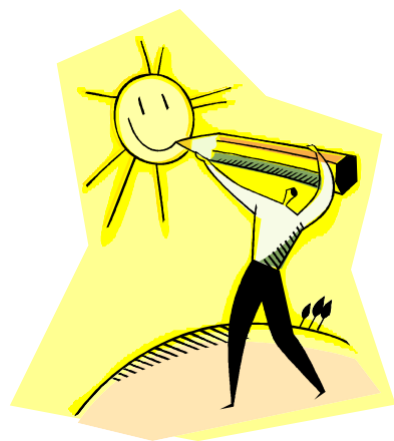
Things do not always go as we plan them!! You may find that the participants are already familiar with much of the material you are presenting. In this case set them a series of exercises to apply it to their work.

You may find that they do not have the level of basic knowledge that you assumed they would. In that case do an 'audit' of what they have and what they need. Meet with UNHCR to decide which skills and knowledge you should focus on for the course.

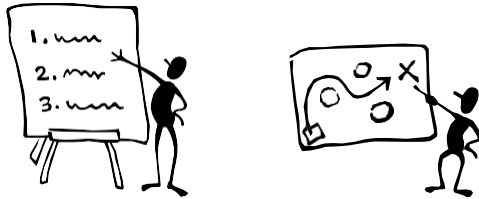
They may just need some additional work in one small area. Look at how you can organise the materials to assist them it states in the manual that some of the sessions can be left out if necessary, decide with the participants which of these you can leave to another time.

30. Draw diagrams to illustrate key points

Do not always rely on Power Points or printed flipcharts. It can help to explain a point if you draw as you go even if you only use 'stick figures'.



31. Note future training needs



As you go through the course note down any additional training needs that you think that the participants may have. Pass these on to the relevant NGOs and UNHCR