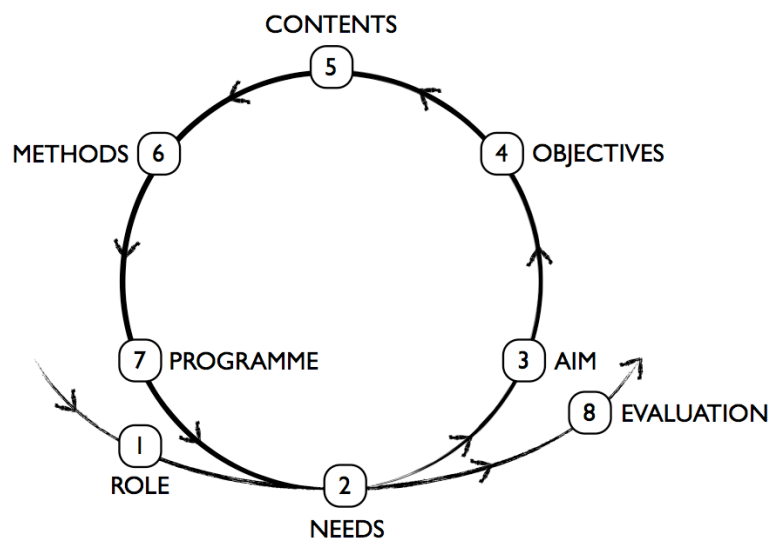




Planning Training Events

1. The Systematic Approach of Training



When entering a new job or responsibility, adults usually have already acquired a certain amount of knowledge, skills and attitudes. These are a result of previous education, of the influence of their social and cultural background and of their personal experience in life.

The training they will take to perform better their job or responsibility will constitute a learning experience - or a series of learning experiences - which should introduce a positive, and - hopefully - durable change in their knowledge, in their skills and in their attitudes.

This is difficult and will only be achieved if the training event has been carefully designed to meet the needs and expectations of each individual. Not everything can be planned, but the facilitator should try to provide a learning environment (resources, content, methods) taking into account the learners' previous experiences, needs and expectations and oriented towards learning objectives coherent with those needs and expectations.

In designing and planning a training event, it is useful to follow a step by step process called "a systematic approach to training/learning". The following diagram will give a general idea of this step by step process and each step will be developed in the following paragraphs.

2. Role analysis

The close relationship between the learning experience and the actual role of the participant (what he or she has to do) is one of the keys to success in the training of adults.

Step 1 in our approach to training will therefore consist in a detailed role analysis. This will in fact be the answer to a basic question: *what are these people to be trained for?*

The answer is not easy because we, as trainers/facilitators, only have the first half of the puzzle, the other half being retained by each of our future participants.

For example, I can describe in general terms the role and functions of a teacher or a youth worker having to teach young people on development education/global education. But I do not know the precise role of Charlie Brown, teacher in a high school in some place of my country. I can only analyze the job description developed by my organization (if it exists). I can also imagine the various knowledge, skills and attitudes required for a such role. Although the analysis I shall do will be detailed, it will not include this 'individual half' that only Charlie Brown has, and this will have to be taken into account during the first phase of the training process.

Here, you will be able to find some approaches to ensure quality in planning a training event.

3. Identification of needs

From the role analysis, I can list all that is needed to fulfill this role: things to know, skills and attitudes to have :

- To know (knowledge)
- To be able to (Skills)
- To be (Attitudes, behaviors)

But, once again, this is only one half of the puzzle. I can list the required knowledge, skills and attitude in general but I do not know what amount of knowledge and skills, what attitudes Charlie Brown or Jane Watson already has as a result of their previous education and personal experience. This will also have to be dealt with during the first phase of the training process.

4. Definition of aims

An aim is a general statement of intent, expressed from the point of view of the trainer (or of the organization). Example :

- To provide an opportunity for the participants to get a clearer idea of what is their responsibilities in teaching development education/global education
- To provide them with teaching tools and resources
- To help them develop appropriate methods to get the interest of children and involve them in an active learning process

5. Objectives

Definition

A learning objective is a precise statement, expressed in terms of what a person is expected to be able to do by the end of the training activity.

In other words, it is a precise definition of the *expected change* that the person should get in his/her knowledge, skills or attitudes, as a result of the learning experience.

Example¹ :

At the end of a learning process of 4 days, the participants (teachers and youth workers) will be able to :

1. Explain the cycle of learning to be used in educating children for development (exploring, responding, taking action)
2. Explain the five global concepts that are basic to Education for Development and that are equally relevant to learners in both industrialized and developing countries (Interdependence, Image and Perceptions, Social Justice, Conflict and Conflict Resolution, Change and the Future)
3. List the knowledge, skills and attitudes that children should acquire in reference to these five global concepts
4. Develop the necessary attitudes to listen to, encourage, guide and support young learners
5. Prepare and run learning activities adapted to several ages and relevant to these objectives

In the above example, we can identify three different types of objectives which corresponds to the three areas of learning :

- 1, 2 and 3 are related to knowledge (cognitive objective)
- 4 is related to attitudes (affective objective)
- 5 is related to the ability to implement (skills - psychomotor objective)

Characteristics of a good objective

An easy way to remember the characteristics of a good objective, is the acronym, "SMART." It stands for "Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound."

- **S**pecific - The objectives is clear and well-defined ("precise statement");
- **M**easurable - The objective quantifies or qualifies the results to be achieved ("what a person is expected to do");
- **A**chievable - According to the resources and the capacities we have, the objective is within reach;
- **R**elevant - The objective is aligned with strategies and higher goals
- **T**ime-Bound - The descriptions of the objective should include timescales of what is required by when ("at the end of a training activity of x hours")

¹ "Education for Development, A Teacher's Resource for Global Learning", Susan Fountain. UNICEF. 1995

6. Definition of contents

This will consist in writing a list of all the items to be included in the course syllabus or in the training programme in order to achieve the stated objectives.

In a flexible approach, part of this should be an open ended list, to be used as a guide by the participants when composing their own training programme, in relation with their own training needs.

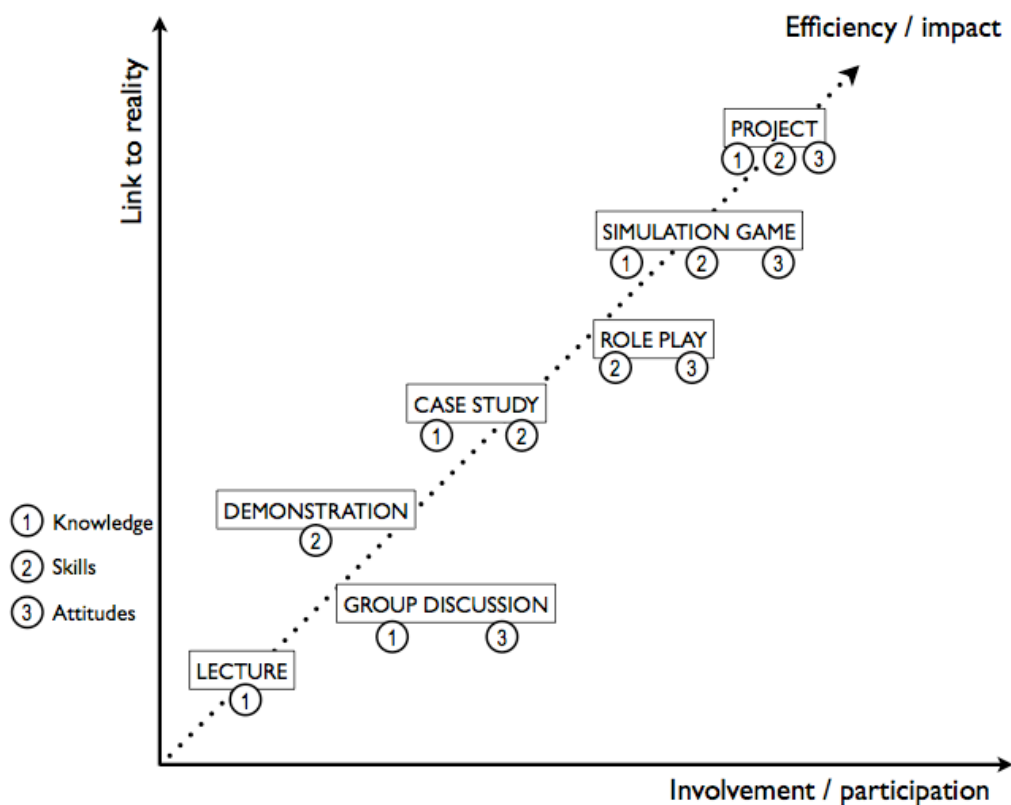
7. Selection of methods

Considering each item in the possible content of the course and the objectives stated for each of them, it is possible to select the most appropriate method for each of them. The following diagram gives an idea of the relationship between objectives and a limited number of methods.

Each of these methods are placed on the diagram (next page) according to two criteria : the degree of involvement / participation they allow to participants and in which extent they are close to the reality.

More a training method is closed to reality and more it involves the participants into an active participation, more it is efficient in terms of learning:

- **Lecture** just requests from participants to listen, it is a very passive training method. Besides it is by definition far from the reality. It can be used to acquire knowledge (1), but it is not very effective.
- **Group discussion** is more participative but it is still far from the reality. It can be used for knowledge (1) and attitudes (3) but it is not very efficient.



- **Demonstration** involves participants in observing an action made by a trainer or a technician. It is very close to reality but does not request an active participation. Its efficiency is not very strong.
- **Case study** is closer to reality because it involves participants in analyzing a case presented through a written document or a video. It can be used for knowledge (1) and skills (2) with a stronger efficiency.
- **Role play** is a kind of case study where the situation is not read on paper or seen on a screen but played by participants. It involves them in active participation but can still be far from reality (a video case study describes the reality in a better way). It can be used mainly for attitudes (3) and a little for knowledge (1).
- **Simulation game** is closer to reality than a case study because it is more interactive. Also it involves a more active participation. It can be used as well for knowledge (1), skills (2) and attitudes (3). It is a powerful training method.
- **Project** involves directly the participants in doing something in the reality. So, it has the bigger score in terms of reality and participation. It can cover knowledge (1), skills (2) and attitudes (3) but it cannot be used with beginners. It is a powerful training method for advanced learners.

8. Programme

When we have a clear idea of what we wish to achieve and what methods we would use to achieve it, we have to compare this with the available resources and prepare the actual development of the course of the training programme.

Because we know the methods we wish to use, we also know the time, equipment, expertise, facilities (learning environment) we need.

The available (or non-available) resources may force us into some modification. However, it is better to modify a project which has been designed the right way - that is : based on participants needs - rather than consider the resources first and base the entire project on their limitations.

9. Evaluation

The programme will then have to be experimented, or the activity carried out, and at the end of the activity - or experimentation period - an evaluation will be made to determine the extent to which the objective have been achieved (quality) and therefore the extent to which the need have been satisfied (impact).

As a result of this evaluation, new need will appear, rectification will have to be introduced in the training programme, and the spiral will go for another round : the systematic approach to training is a continuous process.