**Training Methods**

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| Method | **Characteristics** | **Pattern of Participation** | **Special Usefulness** | **Limitations** | **Hints** |
| Activity Centres | Everyone doing activities | Everyone is active – doing and learning actively – often at own chosen level. | * Learn through experience at own pace
* Learners able to find own weak points
 | * Large amount of activities and equipment required
* Monitoring of learning achieved
 | * Activities need to be set up prior to doing
* Prepare sets of instructions for all activities
* Indicate time allowed & movement pattern
 |
| Brainstorming | Everyone contributes spontaneously.  | Spontaneous comments. Recorded for all to see. | * Involves all participants
* Quick activity
* Encourages creative thinking, generates lots of ideas, can piggy-back on others ideas
* Can be a means of assessing needs
 | * Some ideas submitted may not be relevant or suitable for what may be next
* Some participants can get carried away
* Quieter people may not speak up
 | * Appoint someone to be a “scribe”
* Everything said is written down
* No judging or comments
* No speeches
* Encourage one word comments
* Can group ideas into categories later
 |
| **Buzz Groups** | Short discussions on a given topic. | 2-3 people talk together for a short time on a given topic. | * High degree of participant involvement
* Useful in theatre style seating – little movement required
* Obtains large number of ideas in a short period of time
 | * Easy for misinformation to be shared as there are no group leaders
* Can be a noisy “buzz” activity if group is large
 | * Ensure groups understand the task
* Allow only 3-5 minutes
* Ask all groups to report back, but discourage repetition, and summarise
 |
| **Case Study** | Description of a real life situation | Small groups decide possible solutions to problems they identify with. | * Provides experience in problem solving in an objective, logical and systematic manner
* Improves skills in understanding and working with people
 | * Basic requirements must be covered in the situation provided – identifiable problem, person who is handling the problem, clear detailed description of incident or main issues
 | * Prepare case study with anonymity
* Prepare presentation – handout, video, poster
* Have clear outcomes
* Allow plenty of time and for each group to present solution
 |
| Continuum | Use this method to explore the group’s range of opinions on an issue. | Draw an imaginary line representing a continuum of opinions. Participants make statements by standing on the line somewhere  | * Use this method to explore the group’s range of opinions on an issue.
* Can use individual worksheets.
 |  | * Can be used with only 2 opposing answers red/blue, yes/no, or more commonly, as a continuous line with gradations between.
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| **Debate** | Stimulates analytical thinking  | Two opposing teams present differing view points | * Can be used when issues need sharpening
* Presents both sides of an issue, viewpoint
* Can be a form of reporting back after using research method
 | * Rebuttals can occur
* Information provided may not be correct or relevant to the training and can be from a personal perspective.
* Time required for presentation
 | * Ensure there can be 2 sound sides to topic and that each team is aware of their argument
* Variation can be provided by allowing question time to the debaters
 |
| **Demonstration** | Learning through seeing | One doing, rest observing. Practice after demonstration. | * Physically shows a point of learning, step by step
* Great for practical tasks and new techniques
* Activities that are complicated and difficult to learn from written instructions are more easily mastered
 | * Must be followed up with learner practise and participation. Suits small group or needs other instructors
* Sufficient materials needed for everyone
 | * Make sure everyone can see and hear you
* Prepare and rehearse demonstration beforehand
* Repeat demonstration in stages for all to grasp
* Use skilled learners to assist others
 |
| **Discussion** | Gives everyone an opportunity to speak up, exchange ideas and opinions on a selected topic | Small groups often reporting back afterwards | * Gives everyone a chance to contribute
* Ideal for problem solving exercises
* Combines well with other methods
 | * Control of what is said
* Time limits
* Hearing within groups and when reporting back
* Some participants may dominate while others opt out
* Allow the groups freedom to get on with the discussion but be ready to assist if needed
 | * Use “input” prior to putting into groups – video, talk etc
* Prepare a “starter” – questions, scenario, open-ended question
* Decide on how groups will be made
* Appoint a group leader
* Indicate time allowed and reporting back method
* Arrange seating so participants can see and interact
 |
| **Dramatisation** | Participants develop ideas for given situations  | Situation acted out by members of the group in a fun way. | * Involves participants actively
 | * Could turn into merely an entertainment skit
* Shy participants
 | * Ask for volunteers to do the dramatisation
* Follow-up discussion
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| **Excursion** | First-hand knowledge | Group visits a location to observe an activity first hand | * Helps learners to relate theory to practise
* Provides a real instead of contrived learning experience
 | * May be difficult to arrange for maximum learning
* Subject to uncontrollable factors such as weather
 | * Prepare learners so they know what to look for.
* Precede the visit with a preparatory session before and a discussion session afterwards.
 |
| **Fishbowl** | A circle within a circle discussion. | Inner group talks while outer group observes and listens. Group change places and procedure is repeated. | * Allows group to report on tasks or discuss plans or feelings
* Allows group to observe group process
 | * A fairly complicated method
* Advisable for new trainers to avoid until they feel comfortable with group work methods
* Not suitable for large groups
 | * Have one or two empty chairs in the inner circle so outer circle members can come and comment briefly
* Select an important or controversial topic and formulate several discussion-provoking questions and give to one person in the inner circle
 |
| **Games** | Enjoyable and fun learning experience | Learning experiences are approximating those found in the real job situation. | * Provides some type of hands-on activity by which the learner gains insight into many skills
* Excellent for peer learning and can aid skill development
 | * Players become too engrossed in game and winning to see desired learning outcome
* Relationship between time to play the game and what participant learns may not always be logical
 | * Ensure players are debriefed afterwards to process the learning outcome
* Ensure all understand rules, timing etc
 |
| **Graffiti Sheets** | Evaluation of learning, feelings, identify and explore misinformation and myths, | Individuals express words, phrases, symbols on large paper sheets up on wall. | * Allows for written expression in free atmosphere
 | * Not everyone may contribute.
 | * Have felt-tip pens or coloured pencils available near the paper
 |
| **Ice Breaker** | Short game/activity to mix and energise | Everyone involved in non-threatening introductory activity | * Gets people talking and actively involved
 |  | * Make it fun
 |
| **In-tray** | Decision making skills | Group read in-tray items (letters, notes etc) decide on action and do. | * Provides practise with typical everyday problems.
* Develops decision making skills
 | * Items need to be well prepared beforehand.
* Time consuming exercise
 | * Items should be as authentic as possible.
* Provide each participant with copies of items.
* Participants could be asked to prioritise items needing action.
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| **Jig-saw**  | Putting the pieces together | One expert learns then teaches a small group of peers | * Ideal for when there is too much learning for one person to absorb.
* Covers a large amount of material quickly
* Introduces learners to different perspectives
 | * Requires contribution from everyone
* Groups need to be carefully formed
 | * Ensure sufficient material available for all groups
* Expert groups need to fully understand their task
 |
| **Lecture** | Giving out of information | One person giving to whole group. | * Passing on of accurate and correct information
* Combines well with other methods – charts, slides etc.
 | * One way method – may not reach everyone.
* Limited recall – 50%
 | * Know your subject thoroughly.
* Keep short and to the point. Vary voice patterns. Gain immediate attention with an anecdote.
* To be more effective – use pictures, slides, graphs etc.
* Rehearse your lecture.
 |
| **Panel** | Facts, knowledge presented by experts | Planned presentation by a number of experts on an assigned topic in front of a group. | * Presents opinions of qualified people
* Can be used with large groups
* Audience’s learning extended further with question session afterwards.
 | * May be difficult to get sufficient expert panel members
* Little involvement by participants
 | * Have all panel members summarise at the end of the discussion.
* Conduct a question and answer time after the discussion
 |
| **Power point Presentation** | Facts presented via computer program. | Variety of information given either to small groups or on screen for large groups. | * Can be stopped at any time to match learning pace.
 | * Time consuming to prepare
* Expensive equipment
* Easy to do badly
 | * Keep presentation simple.
* Ensure lighting is suitable for all.
* Few important words, large font, don’t read the screen, interact
 |
| **Research** | They find out for themselves | In small groups 2-3 or alone | * Exchange ideas.
* Pool resources.
* Share knowledge.
* Carries topic from one time to another eg Homework.
 | * Materials available
* Correct material
* Can be side tracked.
 | * Prepare assignment carefully, explaining it on a handout.
* Set a time limit.
* Indicate reporting back procedure. – written, drama, verbal etc.
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| **Role Play** | Simulates human activity and can practice skills and behaviours. | Spontaneous portrayal of a situation, condition or circumstance by selected members of the group.Role Play is the exploration of how people might behave in a given situation by acting out that behaviour in practice. | * Excellent problem solving technique while allowing real problems to be considered
* It gives participants practice in predicting and responding to human behaviour in certain circumstances
* Actual problems can be presented
 | * Must be conducted by skilled instructor
* Can be highly emotional – exercise caution and sensitivity.
* Involves only some of the participants
* Adults playing child roles may be difficult
 | * Allow enough time for learning to be derived from completion of project
* Clearly define roles – use signs
* Conduct a discussion at the end
* Can use as triads – 2 participants and an observer.
 |
| **Story Telling** | Gets a main point across in story form. | Story teller with listeners. | * Good for medium size groups
* Story props add to the learning dimension
 | * Suitability of story for purpose intended
* Story teller must be confident
 | * Practise telling story before
 |
| **Worksheets** | A tool for individuals or small groups | Handouts give guidelines for thinking or working through a complex issue. | * Provide opportunity and structure for learners to analyse information, to examine, question, evaluate, categorize, extrapolate, generalize, synthesize, compare, and contrast parts of the content
 | * Learning directed by the Trainer
 | * Ask another to proof read.
 |
| **Whip** | Exercise in listening | Pose a question, usually about an opinion or feeling, and asks each participant to respond quickly in turn⎯either one after another around the circle or when pointed to at random | * The most valuable effect of this process is that the group hears a pattern of response, or more easily hears contrasting opinions or themes.
 |  | * Allow participants to pass if they choose
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