**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 |