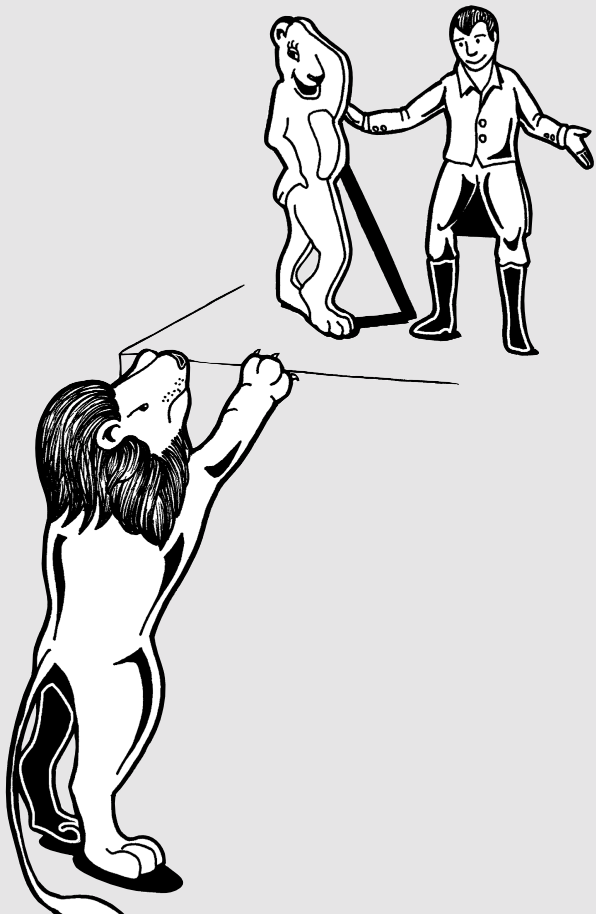
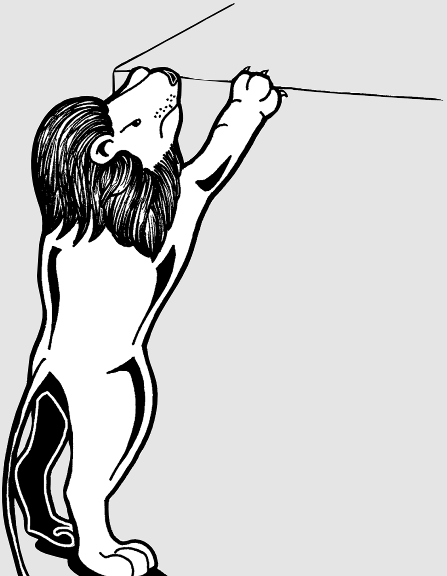
SECTION SIX

Training techniques





SECTION SIX

Training techniques

This section considers the practical side of organizing training programs. If you've had any concerns that theories discussed in earlier sections might not be so easy to incorporate in training, we hope to dispel those worries in the following pages. Here, we wish to stress one important thing–the development of a consistent model of planning. The procedures employed in training should be systematic, based upon the logic of adult learning, and aimed at producing changes in behavior on the job. This does not mean that everyone should plan training activities using exactly the same methods. Individuals naturally have personal differences that shape the character of their work in the training room; some people work more effectively using one method, others perform better using another. The main thing is to devise a strategy that is comfortable for the trainer and one that remains consistent from training activity to training activity.

Preparing your session

It is customary to plan an activity by breaking it down into a series of sessions. As such, the session becomes the basic building block of a training program. Indeed, most training programs can be thought of as a sequence of sessions that collectively encompass the activity's subject matter. Typically, each session is made up of a self-contained presentation on a single topic . The length of the session can vary from a few minutes to several hours, perhaps even an entire day–the duration is not as important as the requirement that each session cover its topic thoroughly. Individual sessions should link together or fit into a logical pattern within the training schedule.

The first step

According to Hugh de Silva, long-time trainer and manager with AIBD, the first step in preparing a session is to consider the four key ingredients of training:
(1) Audience,
(2) Objectives,
(3) Resources, and Subject.
Decisions based on these components ensure that the plan will take into account the main issues that ought to be weighed in designing training programs.

The audience is made up of the training group. In order to make an effective plan, the learner's abilities, level of knowledge, and related aspects must be known. The trainer needs to be aware of their educational background, age, and the types of relevant experience they have had. Other considerations may be important as well, including the trainees' cultural backgrounds and language proficiency. All these things, and more, must be determined prior to finalizing details for a course. As a rule, the more complete the knowledge of a training group, the easier it will be to construct a good training plan.

Objectives should be drafted based upon the findings of the training needs analysis. Only after a review of needs has been made can one know the precise problems that training must address. As noted previously in this manual, large sums of money have been wasted in training activities that were based upon faulty assumptions about training needs. The end result of a training needs analysis is a set of objectives that the planned program is expected to adopt. Consequently, by means of the training needs analysis, objectives should connect directly with the audience–the training population of the course.

Resources come next. Within this category fall a range of resource considerations. Perhaps the training room comes to mind first, but included also may be equipment, hardware, communication facilities, not to mention expendables such as pencils, paper, and the like. Furniture, transport, and food may also need attention. Human resources, of course, are usually the most important. Who will be responsible for each session, and will other resource persons be needed? Finally, one should not forget that time is a resource too. How time is allocated within the limits set by the program schedule can prove to be one of the most difficult calculations in the planning process.

Last, the subject matter to be covered by the activity must be carefully evaluated. What is the scope of the program? Is it practical or theoretical in nature? Does it require extensive hands-on work or demonstrations? Does the subject lend itself to visual presentation? Is the subject effectively treated in seminar discussions? Are simulations or role playing exercises appropriate for any topic? These are only a few of the questions that the trainer must ask in constructing a detailed plan for each sequence within the training activity.

Sequencing

Arranging the order of topics within the session is often a problem. Putting the concepts in the right sequence demands careful analysis and thought on the part of the planner. Several strategies are available, however, and the best choice among them is often readily apparent. If the topics are related in some direct way, for example by order, then it is usually best to follow that order–step one, step two, step three, and so on. Some explanation to the participants of the reasons why the steps need to follow in the prescribed order is probably a good idea, in order to encourage the trainees to follow the logic in the structure of training and in the application of learning. In many cases, perhaps most, topics will not have any readily apparent natural order.

Another way of organizing sessions is to begin with the least complex then proceed to progressively more complicated topics. In other words, arrange the topics in an order from the simple to the difficult. If a trainer begins with a complicated point and the learners fail to grasp it, a shadow may be cast over the entire training session. It could mean that learners lose their motivation to follow the remaining portions of the presentation. By beginning with the easiest points first, trainees build confidence in their ability to understand the material and will put forth more effort to keep up with the presentation as it proceeds. Even if some participants fail to fully master the most difficult material, at least they will be able to learn from earlier points in the presentation. In most cases, learners will expand their capacity to manage progressively more difficult material, and will ultimately rise to the challenge.

A variation on the same theme is to arrange the sequence in a pattern that begins with the known, or familiar, and then advances to the unknown. By such an order, learners will be able to link their existing knowledge with newly-acquired learning. This is believed not only to make information more understandable but more likely to be retained and used later. The intent in most activities is to build on learners' existing knowledge. As we have often noted, adult learners bring a wealth of experience to the workplace and to the training room. Capitalizing on their experience will enhance training in many ways–the learners will be more cooperative when their state of knowledge is recognized and respected, the trainer will be able to meet more ambitious goals, and the entire efficiency of training will be greatly enhanced. Similarly, the order within a sequence could be arranged to move from the concrete to the abstract, or from the general to the particular. These approaches also begin with material matched to the learner's state of knowledge and extend from this to more unfamiliar information.

Regardless of the arrangement, the training schedule ought to be perceived by learners to be sensible and appropriate. It should be possible to move smoothly from one subject to the next in a way that the learners can follow with a minimum of mental effort. Once again, the aim is to enlist learners in the task of learning; not merely to cooperate with the trainer, but to anticipate their own needs and then to work with the trainer in achieving their individual learning goals.

Whichever sequencing strategy is employed, the plan should provide for progressive testing, that is, checks on learning gains made at different points through the sequence. Progressive testing monitors trainees' progress continuously, and gives both the trainer and the learner valuable feedback about what is, or is not, being learned. This is much preferred over simply issuing a single comprehensive test at the end. Not only are the smaller incremental tests better from the point of view of reducing stress on the learners, they also afford the trainer checkpoints along the way. If learners seem to be having trouble with a particular topic, remedial action can be taken immediately and the learning points in question revisited.

Needs to know

Choosing which topics to include in a session and which to omit presents a continuous challenge for trainers. In the typical case, trainers intend to cover more material than time will allow, and so they are forced to eliminate some useful, possibly interesting things from their schedule. In making these decisions it can be helpful to sort potential topics into three categories: "must know," "should know," and "nice to know." By making these distinctions, the choices may be clearer. To select topics that fit the "need to know " and "should know" categories, one should refer to the job analysis performed in training needs analysis. Topics that are essential to job performance will fit into one of these classifications. The reader may wish to refer to section two for a review of job analysis.

"Must know" topics are the ones that are absolutely essential in order for the subject to be fully understood. These learning points represent the hard core of knowledge. Another way of describing "must know" topics are those one must definitely learn in order to do one's job. The key points on a subject are surrounded by another layer of supplementary information that add to a person's knowledge of the hard core material, and these can be termed "should know" points. Information that learners should know is made up of points that are not quite essential, but are important enough that they need to be included in the training plans. The "should know" points add information that aid learners' understanding and improve their competency, but are not vital to carry out their jobs at a minimum level of performance. Finally, there are topics that may be useful but lie beyond the "should know" topics. These are termed "nice to know." These are the fancy frills on which planners need not waste valuable time.

Take as an example, troubleshooting a piece of electronic equipment. Under the must know category might be placed topics such as "be able to read a circuit schematic," "be able to use common test equipment," and "be able to follow standard troubleshooting procedures." Under the should know heading one might place topics such as "other makes and models of equipment that have identical specifications and testing procedures." Many nice to know points might be mentioned, such as "manufacturing procedures for the equipment being tested" or "the latest research and development on equipment like this."

The aim in a sorting exercise such as this is to clearly identify which topics cannot be ignored and which ones can be discarded. In planning, one should always concentrate on the must knows and eliminate the nice to knows. The should knows need to be included only as time and other resources permit. If you discover a should know topic that cannot be dropped, consider reclassifying it as a must know point. Never waste any resource on the nice to know; it will add to the learning burden for trainees without any corresponding benefit.

Structure of sessions

As noted earlier, the arrangement of topics within a session plays a large role in determining its effectiveness. Choosing the right sequence of topics is only one aspect of organizing a training session.

Learner centered sessions

The manner of training employed in sessions will dictate the precise way that they will be presented. For example, whether the activities will be learner centered or trainer centered will determine precisely what will occur within a session. In general, the use of a learner centered approach is strongly recommended in this manual, as you have seen. Once again, here's why: The purpose of training is to develop learners' abilities. If the training focuses on the learner, each participant will be forced to take a more active role in the learning process. Participants will be required to reflect on their own performance objectives and to work with the trainer in meeting those goals. On the other hand, if the sessions are trainer centered, participants inevitably play a more passive role. In such cases, the total responsibility for the outcome is shifted to the trainer, leaving the learners in a somewhat uncertain position. These issues were discussed in the first section. You may wish to review them before moving on. The principles of learner centered training are so important we would like to restate them here, in the context now of session planning.

Years ago, trainer centered learning was the approach used in activities almost everywhere. The role of the trainer was central–he or she presented the material in the course, and the learners listened and watched. Typically the mode of presentation was the lecture. All of the choices about subjects covered, the allocation of time, and the selection of materials were made by the trainer. Learners might seldom even have an opportunity to ask questions or to make requests, and they were hardly ever consulted on daily activities within the course. The conduct of the program was totally in the hands of the trainer, and the learners were subservient to the wishes of the trainer. This clearly created a potentially restrictive atmosphere for learning.

The training tradition in most Asian countries remains very much trainer centered. The reason seems to be the tendency to adopt an instructional approach frequently used in schools, especially an approach widely used during the first half of the twentieth century. At that time, school teachers assumed that their pupils were much too young and inexperienced to make any meaningful contribution to the planning and conduct of courses. They felt it appropriate to take charge of the instructional program and to dictate to the children what they should learn, and how they should go about learning it. Whether this was a good approach for children is debatable, but it definitely is not suited to the situation faced in adult learning.

Nevertheless, because this was the predominant instructional method for such a long time, many Asian trainers have tended to maintain this style of training.

Placing the learner at the center of the training activity means that learners must assume a key role in defining training objectives and in structuring their work. This forces trainers to strive continually to shift the focus in courses from the trainer to the learner, and to gain the cooperation of learners in accepting a greater role in the conduct of the activity. This may not be an easy task because learners are usually unaccustomed to assuming this responsibility. When this is the case, it will be up to the trainer to guide the learners into taking on a larger role in their own training.

In preparing a session based upon a learner centered strategy, the trainer needs information on the trainees' current state of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. If the program preparation has been thorough, this information should be available. Training needs analysis should yield sufficient detail for the purpose of planning the program and preparing sessions. If not, some preliminary estimates should be made ahead of time, so that arrangements can be made for such things as training materials, facilities, and a general outline of the schedule for the activity. Lists can be drawn up reflecting probable requirements for the course and a tentative outline of sessions can be drafted.

In a learner centered approach an emphasis is placed on activities and involvement of the learner. Each participant is given abundant opportunity to demonstrate and to practice their learning. For each learning point, the session tends to be constructed around a three-step cycle—present information on the learning point, organize an activity to practice and demonstrate the learning, then a summary and revision. If necessary, each cycle can be repeated to reinforce the main ideas in each learning point. Thus the session can be schematically represented as a series of I-A-S cycles, where I represents Information presentation, A represents an Activity, and S stands for a Summary and revision of the cycle. Each I-A-S cycle builds on previous cycles and ultimately leads to the satisfaction of the learning objectives defined for each session.

The mark of a well-planned learner centered training session is that the learner is thoroughly engaged in demonstrations, interactions with the trainer or other learners, and other kinds of physical and mental activities. In short, the training session absorbs the learner both intellectually and physically. Sessions like this keep the learner's attention focused on their own needs and busy in the work of learning and self-development. An advantage of this kind of training is that learners enjoy the opportunity to be highly involved in the work of training and appreciate the respect and consideration that naturally flows from the trainer's attention to their needs.

Training of the sort described here might include regular repetition of skills and other learning. Repetition is not a bad thing, provided it allows for continual improvement. To achieve this aim, it is vital that the trainer be highly involved in practical exercises. It is in this phase that detailed, accurate feedback is called for, in order to produce improvement over successive repetitions. Indeed, repetition without feedback may merely ingrain bad habits or other errors. Consequently, plans for each session must afford the trainer an opportunity to observe and interact with each participant. This is time consuming, of course, but vital to the success of training sessions. Usually it is desirable to include other learners in the demonstration-feedback cycles; they may gain much from observing their peers. Other learners can be enlisted in the feedback process too. At any rate, they should be discouraged from becoming merely passive onlookers; trainers should make an effort to engage everyone in the evaluation and discussion that flows from each I-A-S cycle. A high priority should be attached to the process of gaining maximum involvement of participants.

To summarize on this point, if one-on-one interaction is built into a training program, the session plan must include generous opportunities for interaction and individualized instruction. This affects not only allocation of time, but also the organization of the training room, availability of resources, and a host of other considerations. A significant portion of the trainer's responsibilities in the training room revolves around management of individual observation and coaching. The feedback generated in these individual sessions provide the foundation for individualized instruction within each activity. Attention to individual differences is important because training populations usually encountered in adult training are rarely homogeneous.

Discussion leading

An important facet of conducting sessions is in preparing, organizing, and leading discussions. Discussions are a normal way of communicating among humans, and any exchange of ideas with or among participants in a course will naturally involve discussions. Guiding discussions is one of the chief responsibilities that trainers must assume, and often one of the most demanding. In order to gain maximum benefit from discussions, they must be focused and orderly, leading toward the learning objectives set out in the training plan. Discussions in training activities can produce several good results. They help in such key areas as encouraging the personal involvement of learners, using and building upon learners' experiences, enriching the learning environment, promoting active learning, and ensuring a learner centered approach.

An open discussion is surely one of the most learner centered formats available for use in training. When discussions are used in training, the discussion leader's primary functions are to provide direction and to keep the dialogue moving forward. The contribution of thoughts or information by the discussion leader is very much secondary; it is learners who should furnish most ideas. They should also set the pace of learning. Personal motivation and intellectual inspiration is much more evident in open discussion than in the closed communication format of a lecture. As participants talk about their experiences and their knowledge of different issues, the discussion leader should be able to sense their interests and steer the discussion toward learning goals. This can be done in a way that satisfies the group and yet keeps objectives clearly in view. A discussion of this type fits the requirements of a learner activity mentioned above. An active discussion requires thought and reflection on the part of each participant and should draw out each member of the group. Adult learning leans heavily on this kind of interaction.

Leading the discussion is a job that is more complicated than it may seem at first. There are least eight distinct responsibilities that fall to the discussion leader. First, is the basic responsibility for preparation and planning–deciding what will be discussed, then breaking the topics down into a number of clear ideas that need to be raised in the exchange. Second, the leader must stimulate the group to take up the issue to be addressed. Unless this happens, the discussion might never get started, or once started it might simply come to a halt. Three, the group's attention should be focused on the subject at hand, often by defining the topic and the aims of the discussion. Four, guidance is needed to keep the discussion going and to keep the conversation moving toward the intended outcomes. Five, the leader must sustain the group's interest in the problem. Once a discussion begins, contributions should be invited from everyone, and particular efforts should be made to draw out personal experiences from each member of the group. If interest begins to fade, it is up to the leader to find new approaches to maintain the momentum of the discussion. Six, the leader must find a way to accommodate the individual differences within the discussion group. Usually, this is accomplished by refocusing the exchange from time to time, in order to suit the different perspectives within the group. Trainers should build on these individual differences rather than discouraging them, for this will encourage the maximum involvement of each person. Seven, the leader must make it clear to the group what is expected of them. The discussion's agenda can be explained by the leader and framed within the context of the entire activity. In training, discussions are not idle conversations, they are a forum for sharing the wealth of experience within the group. Finally, eight, the leader has the responsibility of summarizing the discussion–what ideas were agreed to, what ideas were rejected, and to enumerate the major points of the discussion.

The discussion can be divided into segments made up of four phases. The first phase, called the introduction, is one which the leader defines the topic and the scope of the discussion. The second phase is called the approach. In this stage, the exchange is begun, typically by making a direct question to one of the members of the group, one whose response is likely to initiate further discussion. The third phase is called drawing out. Here the leader attempts to fill in the gaps in the discussion by probing or asking participants for clarification or elaboration. This is done only if necessary; generally, participants will take care of these matters spontaneously as the discussion proceeds. The fourth stage is called acceptance, this is where the group has said what it wants to say, and some sense of closure has been reached. The final phase is conclusion, in which the leader attempts to restate what the group has agreed to. There may not be complete consensus among members of the group, but there should be agreement on the points of disagreement. After this, the group can take up additional issues and keep the discussion moving forward. The cycle can be repeated again and again, leading eventually to a thoroughgoing review of the subject at hand.

Using questions

To guide and motivate discussions, the trainer needs to become skillful in the use of questions. Questioning is a potent instructional technique. It was a method of instruction used in ancient Greece where Socrates employed questioning to train his followers, including Plato and Xenophon. He was so much identified with this technique that it became known as the "Socratic" method. A number of questioning methods can be employed, each of which has a different effect on discussions.

The "direct" question is one that the discussion leader asks of a specific individual in the group. The trainer can select that individual so as to draw out a participant who has not contributed much or to get the views of a person whose thoughts the trainer believes may be particularly helpful. The disadvantage of this type of question is that only the person being questioned will be forced to think of an answer; everyone else will merely wait for an answer to be given. The "overhead" question is one that the trainer addresses to the entire group and waits for a response, or selects a volunteered response from among the participants. This method does force everyone to formulate an answer, but the discussion can take unexpected directions if the responses are not the ones the leader desires. Keeping the discussion on the topic can be a struggle if overhead questions are used. "Probing" questions are used to pursue a point further. These questions ask for additional detail, clarifications, or explanation, allowing the leader to dig more deeply into a subject. These are particularly useful for keeping a discussion moving forward. "Leading" questions are ones that are stated in such a way that the answer is suggested by the way the question is worded. You might ask, "you don't really think that is true." This question tells the respondent what answer is expected. Although this kind of question does produce predictable answers, it can place the person responding in an uncomfortable position if they don't truly accept the answer being suggested. A related kind of question you might encounter is the "rhetorical" question. In truth, rhetorical questions do not invite a response; in effect, they are statements phrased in the form of a question. An example might be something like "don't we agree on this?" In asking this, it is clear that the meaning is really "I believe we agree on this."

Demonstrations

Demonstrations are a mode of training that can fit within a course, but are more familiar in the micro-training setting. Micro-training is the training of a group smaller than would be appropriate for a course. Micro-training is most often encountered in on-the-job training (OJT). OJT and micro training are a predominant training modes in many organizations simply because they are cheap and require little in the way of infrastructure. OJT, however, is not a panacea—unless the training meets minimum requirements, problems can result. Usually these requirements are:
(1) Clear and well-defined objectives;
(2) the organization must place the trainee in positions in which the new knowledge and skills can be used;
(3) the management of the organization must value the training, for instance, recognize it in annual appraisals;
(4) the training must be cost-effective; and
(5) the trainee must have a clear understanding of the purpose of training.

Within this outline, a demonstration follows the usual principles of learning by objectives. That is, the training must have a clear goal and the trainer must make a reasonable effort to obtain results consistent with those goals. In addition, the trainer should be clear about the purpose of the demonstration exercise. That is, the learner must know why the demonstration is being presented and how will the trainee be able to apply the learning. Here, as always, the learner is expected to participate actively in the training and to interact with the trainer in defining the training exercise. Often this is easier in OJT because the learner is in a "one-to-one" setting with the trainer; he or she won't be concerned about how other learners react to their questions and requests.

This kind of training is also called "coaching." Coaching is a mode of training that concentrates on optimizing individual performance. This is the type of training associated most commonly with sports and athletics where individual adaptation is well known as the key to success. The same principle can work in the job setting too, and the demonstration mode is central to coaching methods. Coaching is a very flexible tool for organizational training needs because it can be conveniently coupled with other training modes. Some advantages of coaching include the following: Training can be totally individualized, involving only the learner and the trainer. It can ensure complete validity if the coach is the trainee's immediate superior. Since the "boss" is coaching, there can be no doubt about the management's support of the training. This extremely personal, one-on-one communication permits a quick and powerful feedback mechanism. Likewise, one-on-one communication allows dynamic reappraisal of the learning objectives. Moreover, in coaching on the job, responsibility is delegated to that point in the organization where it has the most immediate and direct payoff: the relationship between superior and subordinate.

Manager/coaches tend to learn a great deal about the skill, attitude, and knowledge levels of the individuals whom they coach—as well as about the process of motivation, directing, and communicating with their subordinates. Thus, the manager learns a great deal in conducting on-the-job training that can be useful in making the best use of personnel. This can become an enormously powerful asset in mobilizing the human resources within work units.

Training aids

Training aids are unquestionably important tools to enliven and animate one's presentations. However, training aids do not necessarily produce improved learning and, if used incorrectly, they can be counterproductive. Even though a detailed discussion of training aids is beyond the scope of this manual, we would like to offer a few suggestions on their usage. It is vital that the trainer makes use of training aids discriminatingly. If used haphazardly, they are likely to become distracting and a source of potential confusion. There are three primary functions for training aids—to add clarity to instruction, to stimulate participants, and to enhance the learner orientation of training. Of these, the first function is perhaps the most important. Some topics are best presented visually, not just orally. These topics automatically call for the supplement of some type of training aid. For example, it is impossible to imagine an explanation of the steps required in repairing an automobile engine without the use of drawings and other visual aids. Even topics that are not particularly visual in nature can profit from the use of drawings and graphic representations. For instance, courses in the fundamentals of journalism almost always employ drawings to represent the "inverted pyramid" structure of news reports.

Although one could make a long list of possible training aids, only a few are widely used. Among these are the overhead projector (and its more modern cousin, the computer video projector), printed materials, audio and video recordings, whiteboards (or chalkboards), and the flip chart. Each of these types of aids has advantages and disadvantages, and the trainer should be conscious of them.

The classical training aid is the chalkboard/whiteboard which have been used in various forms for at least two centuries. Most trainers feel at ease with their use and hardly any training course would be complete without one. Their advantages are that they are cheap and easy to use. But writing boards do have limitations—once boards are erased, their former contents are gone forever. To overcome this, several companies have introduced whiteboards whose contents can be output on an integrated printing device. Whiteboards and chalkboards can also be quite messy. Many of us do not write neatly enough to make attractive visual presentations, and chalkboards are a prolific source of dust. The flipchart is similar in most respects to the whiteboard or chalkboard, except that the contents may be retained for later reference. The usual practice is to employ the flipchart when the trainer wants to keep information for use over an extended period of time. Flipcharts have smaller writing surfaces than boards, thus several sheets of paper may be required to hold the information that could be placed on a good-sized chalkboard. Trainers often use masking tape to stick flipchart sheets to the walls of the training room. By this means, information can be kept as a reminder throughout an activity.

Second only to chalkboards as training aids are printed materials. This is the best way to present large amounts of information for reference over an extended period of time. Preparing good print materials can be time-consuming, but the costs tend to be comparatively small. Care in the presentation of print materials is necessary. If the trainer distributes printed items to participants while continuing to discuss a topic, it is highly unlikely anyone will hear what the trainer has to say. Everyone will be absorbed in reading the printed material. For this reason, it is usually best to distribute printed materials at the end of your session.

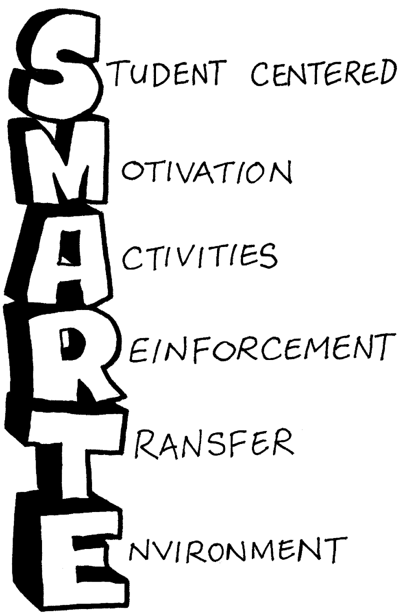
Audio and video materials can be very powerful and stimulating aids in the training setting. But producing the materials can require a great deal of time and money, so their use is usually quite restricted. If materials are acquired from outside sources, they may not fit into the training schedule well. Once a video or audio playback is begun they move at their own pace, regardless of the learners' desired pace. If learners want to move at a slower pace, the best the trainer can do is periodically to interrupt the presentation. Also, video and audio material can entail copyright issues. Many videos are sold for personal use only and showing them to a large group may violate laws in some countries. Lastly, the training room needs to be arranged properly for audio and video presentations; control over light and noise in the training room must be available.

The overhead projector (usually referred to as the OHP) needs to be used in a room with controlled lighting also. The OHP is a simple device, but it is often used incorrectly. OHPs are meant to be used with the speaker facing forward. The speaker can look down at the OHP or look up to see the participants. Pointing to different items on the transparency should be done with a pencil or other pointer on the transparency itself, not by pointing at the image on the screen. OHP transparencies and computer graphics work best if each slide is kept simple. Bold letters and bright colors can be used to focus attention on key portions of the slides. OHP transparencies are of moderate cost and can be produced by hand drawing, by photocopying machines, or by computer printers.

In conclusion

In this section we have offered numerous suggestions for training presentations, discussions, and demonstrations. These are the main modes of introducing information in courses. Although we have not described them here, there are additional modes that you might wish to use. Among these are the case study, simulations, and computer aided training, to name just three. The case study is frequently used in management training and has been especially favored as a technique for sharpening decision-making skills. Simulations and computer aided training are particularly useful when the training room cannot provide the proper conditions for the training exercise. All these are specialized techniques that require extensive preparation. If you are interested in any of these, you should consult a publication that gives more detail on their use.

The points presented in this section leave the trainer with many things to think about when planning an activity. We would like to close this discussion with a memory aid. It is an acronym that has been used in training courses at AIBD for many years—SMARTE. SMARTE should remind trainers of six important factors that they should take into account when organizing their sessions.



The S in SMARTE stands for "student centered" and reminds the trainer of the need to arrange training so that it focuses on the learner, not the trainer. M stands for "motivation" and stresses the importance of building motivational elements into the schedule. A is a reminder of "activities," that adult learners require opportunities for active participation in training, both physical and mental. R stands for "reinforcement," that is, the need to include opportunities for learners to demonstrate their learning within a course as a means of reinforcing their new knowledge and skills. T stands for "transfer" and prompts the trainer to check for transfer throughout a training program, to make certain the desired learning points have been internalized. And finally, E is for "environment," the setting used for training—whether it is comfortable and conducive to learning. As you prepare your training activity, make an effort to think about each of the issues raised by SMARTE. If your plan addresses each of these, the probability of its success will be greatly increased.