

Active Training: Tools and Techniques

BGSU ALLIES Faculty Advocates

Attention-Getting Techniques

- Tell a relevant story
- Use participants' names
- Ask a quick participatory question ("By a show of hands, how many of you....")
- Share a surprising and credible statistic or fact
- Presenting a photo, sound, or quick clip

Active Training Tools:

- **Icebreakers:** These activities aim to introduce trainees to each other and foster a positive training climate.
- **Brainstorming session:** Invite participants to generate and share new ideas
 - Think-pair-share: Give participants time to identify ideas by themselves, then have them discuss their ideas with a partner, and then facilitate a group discussion
 - Divergence-convergence group activity: Brainstorm individually and then work with a group or partner to identify the "best" option/solution
 - Mind-mapping: Generate ideas and then place them into a conceptual map to show the ideas' relationship to each other
 - Go-arounds (each person in the room must contribute a unique idea)
- **Polling**
 - **Quick polls** (e.g., raise your hands or vote using your fingers)
 - **Dot voting:** Write down ideas and give trainees sticker dots; they place their dots next to the ideas that resonate most with them
- **Group Collaborations**
 - Case studies
 - In-basket exercises
 - Jigsaw techniques
 - Peer review
 - Game-based learning
- **Role playing**
 - Informal role playing (ask them how they would respond to a hypothetical situation)
 - Stage-front role playing (ask one or more trainees to role-play in front of the rest of the group)
 - Rotational role playing (each trainee gets an opportunity to take a turn at role-playing)
 - Repeated role playing (trainees complete a round of role-playing, get feedback, and then try again)
- **Individual reflection**
 - Minute paper: Give trainees one minute to free write a response to a training question
 - Muddiest point: Invite trainees to identify the concept, idea, or issue that is most confusion or unclear to them
 - Self-assessment
- **Generating Discussion**
 - Interviews
 - Platonic "speed dating" style discussions
 - Team-based discussions
 - Fishbowl discussions
- **Artifact analyses** (e.g. analyze a short video, comic strip, image, social media post, policy, etc.)

Providing Constructive Feedback

- Be specific instead of general.
- Offer suggestions that are feasible and within the trainee's control.
- Provide specific examples or concrete actions.
- Time the feedback appropriately (usually immediately after the given behavior)
- Frameworks:
 - Stoplight framework: Identify what they should (1) continue doing, (2) stop doing, and (3) start doing.
 - Sandwiching: Provide a compliment or validating statement, then provide a constructive comment or critique, and finish up with another compliment or validating statement

Debriefing & Discussing

- **Types of Probes to Facilitate Deeper Discussion**
 - Silence: Pause to nonverbally invite the participant to keep talking.
 - Descriptive: What happened?
 - Affective: How did it make you *feel*?
 - Explanatory: *Why* did that happen?
 - Exploratory: What are the *possibilities*?
 - Planning: What *will* you do?
 - Retrospective: *Thinking about a past moment*, what would you have done differently?
 - Evaluative: What went well? What could be improved?
 - Restatement: Ask the question again.
 - Reflective: Clarify one aspect of a participant's response.
 - Clearinghouse: What else would you like to discuss?
 - Analysis: What patterns are emerging? What might have caused X? How are X and & different from each other?
 - Bridging: How does this example relate to X concept? Y concept?
 - Time-Oriented: *When* should we X? How does timing impact this situation?
- **Clarifying Techniques**
 - Paraphrasing or summarizing information
 - Writing down key points
 - Ask reflective or clarifying questions
- **Encouraging Wider Participation and Processing**
 - Redirecting questions and comments to the group
 - Think-Pair-Share
 - Invite individuals to write down their questions or comments anonymously and then collect/process them.
- **Staying Focused**
 - Create a "Parking Lot" list that holds tangential topics, ideas, and issues. You can revisit those topics at a later time.
 - Live Long and Prosper: Use hand signals or specific nonverbal actions to quickly convey information like 1-minute left or that individuals understand