Multilingual Academic Skills Workshops

Peer Coach Training Session

Objectives:

By the end of the training session, participants will be able to:

- Identify learning objectives for a 1-hour academic skills workshop (Time Management/ Reading Texts and Making Notes)
- Discuss key adult education principles that inform workshop design (connecting information with learner's prior knowledge, incorporating meaningful and active learning activities, providing opportunities for immediate application)
- Follow a four-step model for creating a workshop plan (Connection, Content, Challenge, Change)
- Select appropriate workshop materials (e.g. Learning Aids)
- Create a workshop plan collaboratively with colleagues, while adapting the plan to meet the specific needs of the workshop's target audience

Materials and Preparation:

- Learning Aids (Bloom's Taxonomy, LAs relevant to workshop content)
- Workshop outlines
- Planning templates
- Laptops/Notebooks (for creating workshop plans)

What makes a good workshop?

In groups of 2-3 discuss:
- Think about a workshop you've attended that you enjoyed, and found beneficial. What happened in that workshop that made it connect with you?
- Then, think about a workshop that was a "miss" for you. Why do you think that was?

As you contrast these two experiences, create a list of "What makes a good workshop?"

Key principles for teaching adults

Reflect back on your tutor training and what you've learned through experience since then. What are some key principles that you want to keep in mind as you plan a workshop?

(If not mentioned, highlight:

- Make sure that the workshop is relevant for the participant's *current* needs and goals
- Connect the workshop content to the participant's prior knowledge and experience
- Incorporate meaningful learning activities
- Provide opportunities for people to immediately apply what they've learned).

How do we go about achieving these aims?

Create Objectives

Objectives indicate what we want to the student to have experienced by the end of our workshop session. Workshop objectives should be written using *active* words, and they should

be measurable. Bloom's taxonomy is a useful tool to consider when writing workshop objectives – consider what active verbs you might choose for activities at each level. Also, reference Bloom's taxonomy to make sure that your objectives include higher level tasks than remembering and understanding information. We also want participants to apply what they are learning immediately.

Our Workshop Objectives

Complete the needs assessment reflection sheet.

In groups of 2-3 evaluate the sample workshop plans for the Time Management and Reading/Taking Notes workshops. Think about the potential audience for your workshop and their needs. What objectives will you keep? Which will you modify? Which will you discard? What new objectives might you add? (Think about how the objectives relate to the needs you have identified).

Record your workshop objectives.

Design Workshop Content

Consider the principles of adult learning we discussed earlier – how can we design workshops that incorporate these principles.

One model for workshop design is the "Four C's"

1. Connection
2. Content
3. Challenge
4. Change

Connection

The Connection portion of the workshop involves discussion or an activity to help learners connect what they will learn in the session with their prior knowledge. What do the students already know about the topic? By bringing this knowledge out, you will:

- Make it easier for students to connect what they will learn with skills and knowledge they already have
- Gain a clearer picture of what the students already know in order to tailor the information you will provide to their needs.

Content

After creating connections, you will present your workshop content (based on the workshop objectives). Note – presenting new content doesn't need to be a "chalk and talk" (or Powerpoint and talk). You can use any format that will present the information you want the participants to learn. You might:

- Use video
- Have students read in small groups and discuss

- Use drama or role plays
- What else…?

Usually, a content segment should be no longer than 20 minutes, particularly if students are doing a lot of listening or taking notes.

Challenge

The Challenge applies the principle that participants should make use of their new knowledge immediately after they learn it. They challenge is always activity based, and should focus on giving participants the opportunity to creatively apply what they are learning. For example – after learning principles of time management, participants could create a semester or weekly schedule. After learning the principles of SQ3R, participants could practice surveying a chapter of their textbook, or creating questions.

Change

After completing the learning activities, participants are invited to reflect on what they might want to do as a result of their learning from the workshop --- where to from here? Activities for this section might include:

- Having participants write a key take-away on a post-it note
- Inviting participants to give an "elevator" speech summarizing what they've learned

Note: A workshop may move through these cycles more than once (e.g. there may be more than one "content" piece, and more than one "challenge" activity, depending on the topic).

Designing a Workshop Using the Four C's
Divide into groups of 2-3. Each group will have a folder that contains some sample workshop plans, Learning Aids, and other resources relevant to your topic. Working collaboratively with your group, design a workshop that follows the 4 C structure.

When each group has completed their plan, present to the larger group for feedback and suggestions.

Then, on your own, adapt the ideas generated in the groups to create your own version of the workshop plan for your group of learners.

Next Steps:

From here, you will need to identify the next steps to be completed before facilitating the workshop with a group of students:

- What materials will you need? Is there anything you need to translate?
- What additional coaching or support would you like? Would you like a "practice run?"
- Additional questions or concerns

Feedback forms and wrap-up

Needs Assessment Worksheet

1. Who are the participants I think might attend this workshop? (consider their background, prior experiences, and current life situation)

2. What do they already know about this topic?

3. What do they need to know?

Workshop Design Template

Workshop Name: _____

Peer Facilitator(s) : _____

Language: _____

Objectives
By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

-
-
-
-

Materials and Preparation

-
-
-
-
-

Connection

Content

Content (cont'd)
Challenge
Change

Evaluation: How was this workshop? What would I like do differently next time?