

## Doc 4.11. Application of training methods to people with different types of disabilities

*Note: This information is from Training for Success: A Guide for Peer Trainers, 2008, ILO. It was developed as part of the Alleviating Poverty through Peer Training (APPT) project funded in Cambodia which used village-based peer trainers to provide one-to-one (and sometimes group training) to persons with disabilities. Trainers were both disabled and non-disabled entrepreneurs who provided training in the business and technical aspects of their work in informal short-term apprenticeship type situations.*

It is important to learn about different methods of training and when and how to use them to teach people skills, knowledge and attitudes. You can then select a method of training that best suits the trainee or what you want to teach. This guide describes the following methods:

1. Explaining or lecturing;
2. Showing or demonstrating;
3. Learning by doing: Guiding, discovery and practice;
4. Role playing;
5. Using questions and assignments;
6. Exposure visits.

You have learned things from some of these methods yourself. You may have also used these methods in teaching others. Or, you may have used these methods in helping your children or friends without realizing it.

### 1. Explaining or lecturing

Explaining means telling someone how to do something or giving information. Explaining can be done by talking, using sign language or in writing. When explaining is done in a large group it is often called lecturing.

#### *Best uses*

- Explaining or lecturing is a good way to explain both verbally and in writing, if your trainee is able to read. If the trainee can write, they can take notes.
- Explaining is good for short training periods and useful for trainees who have no prior knowledge of a topic.
- Lecturing is more commonly used in large groups or formal settings.
- Used alone, explaining is not very effective for teaching practical skills. However, explaining while using other methods can be very effective.

#### *Disability considerations*

Trainees who have hearing difficulties (completely or partly deaf):

- use writing, if your trainees can read;
- use sign language, if you and the trainee know sign language;
- pictures and drawings, like those used in this guide, help people understand better.

Trainees who have seeing difficulties (completely or partly blind):

- written explanation requires Braille for disabled people who can use Braille;
- large print is useful for people who are visually impaired, but not blind.

Trainees who have learning difficulties:

- use simple words and pictures or other visual representations especially for trainees who are illiterate or of limited intelligence.

### **Tips**

- Use simple language.
- Give examples for what you mean.
- Present information and ideas in a logical way.
- Explain in different ways if you can, such as verbally, by writing on a blackboard or by writing and showing at the same time.
- Encourage the trainee to write or draw pictures to represent what is being explained, if they are able to do so.
- Interact with the trainee by encouraging or asking questions or starting a discussion.

## **2. Showing or demonstrating**

Showing or demonstrating is physically doing the activity you want your trainee to learn. Sometimes trainees just observe while the trainer works. Showing or demonstrating is a good way for almost all groups of people to learn except those who are blind or visually impaired. Showing is especially important for people who are deaf.

### *Best uses*

- Explaining and showing at the same time really works. Trainees learn better when they see what is involved in a task or in operating a business.
- Showing or demonstrating is an especially important training method for teaching complicated tasks or those that have many steps. With many steps you want to break the tasks down into small steps and demonstrate them one at a time. You may even want to let the trainee practice or learn by doing in between parts of the demonstrations.

### *Disability considerations*

Trainees who have seeing difficulties (completely or partly blind):

- describe what you are doing as you demonstrate with trainees who have seeing difficulties;
- use touch or physical guiding (see the method “learning by doing” which follows), for example, if you are teaching a blind person to do a manual task you can have him or her feel your hands while you do the task.

### **Tips**

- Plan demonstrations and think about what you want the trainee to learn.
- Make sure you have all the materials and tools at hand.
- Demonstrate slowly and, if possible, explain as you do it. You can also ask the trainee questions at the same time to make sure they understand.
- Combine demonstration with other methods such as learning by doing.

- Ask the trainee to repeat the tasks you demonstrate.
- Praise what the trainee does right and correct what is wrong by showing the right way to do it.
- Repeat the demonstration or show the steps several times if needed.

### 3. Learning by doing: Guiding, discovering and practicing

Giving the trainee the chance to do a practical task, or learning by doing, is an important way to train. It is also a way to evaluate or test to see if the trainee is learning. Learning by doing is an important way for anyone to learn. It is frequently used to train people who have limited educational backgrounds or learning ability.

There are different approaches to this method:

#### 1. Guiding

There are two ways to guide: verbally or physically. In verbal guiding the trainer tells the trainee what to do. The trainer coaches the person through each step of the process. In physical guiding, the trainer may physically take the persons hands (or another part of the body) and take them through the steps. You should always ask the trainee first if you can use physical guiding.

#### 2. Discovering

The trainer creates a situation where the trainee has to figure out or discover what to do. For instance, making a necklace. The trainer could provide a model (the completed necklace) and ask the trainee to “discover” or figure out how to put it together. This approach might meet with frustration or failure depending on how demanding it is. But, after providing proper instruction, the trainer may want to use this approach to test or determine how well the trainee can perform the task.

#### 3. Practicing

Once someone understands how to do a task, the trainer could ask the trainee to practice the task over and over to develop skills or improve speed. Practice sessions are an important part of learning, as you can see from the examples of Mr Hem Him and Mrs Seng Sopheak.

#### *Best uses*

- Learning by doing is an important way for trainees to develop practical skills.
- Learning by doing can be used on its own or with other training approaches.
- Practice sessions will help build speed and improve quality.
- If the tasks are carefully planned, learning by doing can help build trainee confidence.
- Learning by doing is also a way to evaluate how the trainee has learned and of measuring progress.

#### *Disability considerations*

Trainees who have hearing and/or speaking difficulties:

- Learning by doing is especially suitable for persons with hearing and/or speaking difficulties. It relies on seeing and doing rather than hearing or speaking.

Trainees who have seeing difficulties (completely or partly blind):

- Physical guiding is a good way to teach blind people. Let them feel the product or outcome that is expected before they start. You can guide and explain as they try to learn by doing.

Trainees who have learning difficulties:

- Learning by doing is especially important for those trainees who have limited education or learning difficulties.
- Combine showing and guiding for these trainees. First, break the task down into small steps. Show the step and then guide the trainee through repeating the step, either verbally or by touch. Repeat each step as needed until they are able to do it correctly. Then go to the next step, until the process is complete. Many repetitions may be needed. It is important to remain encouraging. You will also need to gradually put each step together so the trainee learns the sequence of the steps.

### ***Tips***

- Be creative. There are many ways to use learning by doing. Use it as a way to improve learning, to assess progress and to develop speed and quality.
- Give feedback during practice sessions and ask questions. Positive feedback will encourage motivation and confidence. Correcting mistakes prevents the trainee from learning incorrect methods.

## **4. Role playing**

Role playing is like a game or a play. It involves setting up a scene, assigning roles and acting out a scene so the trainee can learn something. Role plays can be used in many situations. For example, if you want to teach a trainee how to interact with a customer, you might set up a role play. The trainer can assume the role of the customer (or get someone else to play this role) and the trainee would act as the shop keeper. The trainee gets to practice how to deal with customers. Another example is to have the trainee negotiate a price for raw materials from a vendor. The trainers must carefully design the activity. They must also make the roles very clear to the trainees or people playing the roles. The people playing the roles must be encouraged to take it seriously so that it seems real.

It is important to discuss the role play afterwards. Ask the trainees what they learned from the experience. Also ask the trainees how they would do it differently next time. You can repeat the role play many times or change it so the trainees can develop their skills related to the role play's purpose.

### ***Best uses***

- Role plays are a good way for people to learn new skills, especially those that involve interaction with others. If people are afraid of interacting with others or are shy, it is a good way to learn how to be comfortable and confident.
- Role playing is also suited for teaching a complex series of skills, such as selling. Selling may involve meeting someone, finding out their needs, and promoting the products or services available. Finally, the vendor must close the sale or try to get the customer to buy the products or service. This can involve deciding on a price, delivery date and other matters.
- Role plays are very effective and fun to use in group situations.

- Role plays can be used to test trainee understanding. For example, in the selling situation just described the trainer can evaluate the trainee's communication and selling skills. The trainer can also determine the trainee's knowledge of the product or service and what it should cost.
- Role plays can be used to build confidence, break stereotypes and change attitudes.

### *Disability considerations*

Trainees who have hearing and/or speaking difficulties:

- You need to consider how well the trainee is able to communicate with others, because role plays often involve speaking and other forms of communication.

Trainees who have poor social skills

- Make the role plays interesting and fun to encourage participation. Role plays may be particularly useful to build social and interactive skills among disabled people who have been socially isolated.

### **Tips**

The following steps are involved in developing a role play:

- Decide what you want to teach through the role play. Create a simple role play.
- Define the roles or characters in the play. Consider how many people you need and what each person should do. The trainees may play themselves. In fact, this is most effective so they can have the experience of what to do. Ask other people to play the other roles in the play.
- Make sure that each person in the role play knows their role and the key words to say. You may want to keep the specific situation secret from the trainee. For example, if you want the trainee to learn how to ask for a lower price for some raw materials, you should not tell the trainee that you have instructed the person in the role of the vendor not to agree right away. This way the trainee will learn the value of being persistent and trying to get a lower price.
- By the end of the role play, you should ask what the trainee thought it was about, what was learned and what the trainee would do differently.
- After the discussion, you should conclude by reinforcing the main lesson of the role play.
- You can repeat the role play to develop skills. It can be like a practice session.

## 5. Using questions and assignments

Questions and assignments are often used with other training methods. Using questions and assignments is a good way to encourage active participation and to check what the trainee already knows or if they have understood your teaching. The trainee has to respond independently either by answering a question or completing an assignment given by the trainer. The trainees need to use what they know to find a solution to a problem or practice a task related to running the business.

### 1. Questions

Questions are an easy problem solving activity to test trainee knowledge. For example, you may ask the trainee which scissors or other equipment they would use to cut someone's hair.

Questions can also be more complex involving a story. For example, the trainer can pose a question related to a story to solve a problem. The story can be real or imaginary. For example, a trainer in pig raising might describe a situation where many pigs are dying and the pig raiser is about to lose their business. What should they do? Where can they go to get help? The trainer asks the trainee to solve these problems. Another example might be about a business person making a mistake, such as in preparing Khmer cakes. The trainer might describe a situation where the ingredients used to make the Khmer cakes are wrong. The trainer asks the trainee to identify why the Khmer cake tastes bad. This is a good way of testing if the trainee knows the recipe, if they understood that if the recipe is not followed, the business is not successful. People will not buy bad tasting Khmer cakes and the trainee will lose time and money as a result of the mistake.

## 2. Assignments

The trainees are given a task to do by themselves. An assignment can have many purposes. It can also be a real assignment or one that has no consequence. Using assignments is like learning by doing, but it is more complex.

For example, a bicycle repair trainer might ask a trainee to find a broken bicycle in their village and decide what needs to be done to fix it. Assignments can also be used to help the trainee learn new information that will help the business. For example, for a trainee learning to sew shirts, the trainer might instruct them to interview all the people in the village to find out what colour and style shirts they might want to buy. This is a good way to find out more about the market demands.

### *Best uses*

- Questions and assignments are best used to help trainees learn by thinking or doing on their own. This method can also be used to find out if the trainee really understands what to do. It encourages trainee creativity and initiative.
- Using questions and assignments is especially useful if the testing or training cannot be done in another way or it would be too costly. For example, the Khmer cake example tests if the trainee understood how to make Khmer cakes by following a recipe. It also teaches what goes wrong if the different types of ingredients are not properly used or measured.
- These methods can be used to help build the business to find out new information. The assignment about finding out which colour and model shirts people want to buy is about market research and can help the trainee start or improve the business.

### *Disability considerations*

Trainees who have hearing and/or speaking difficulties:

- You need to consider the trainee's ability to communicate with others when presenting questions and assignments. A deaf person might have difficulty in carrying out problem-solving tasks related to market research, unless they could be done with a partner, through writing or some other means.

Trainees who have learning difficulties:

- Keep the assignments and questions simple and easy to understand.
- More difficult assignments or questions with complex stories may only be useful to people who have higher intellectual abilities.

## Tips

- Use questions with other training techniques.
- Use simple assignments to test trainee understanding.
- Use more complex assignments and questions to build new knowledge.
- Gain experience before you use more complex stories or assignments.
- Consider the trainee's experience level. Difficult questions and assignments can lead to frustration and failure. Those carefully designed can challenge and build trainee confidence.

## 6. Exposure visits

Exposure visits are similar to the showing or demonstrating method, but they have a broader purpose. An exposure visit or field trip involves visiting a successful business where it operates or a place that could be useful for teaching a specific skill. For example, if you are teaching how to raise pigs, you could organize a visit to a successful pig farm. Or, you may want the trainee to visit a bank or credit bureau to learn how to access credit. Exposure visits are often arranged for a small group of people, but can also be done for individual trainees. Some types of exposure visits can be expensive.

If the peer training sessions are not held at your place of business, it is a good idea for the trainee to visit your business or a similar operation. The trainee should see how the business is organized, managed and carried out. Even if the trainee is working at your place of business, it is useful for the trainee to visit similar businesses and related places. For example, if you are making ropes for animals that are sold in the market through a middleman, you may want the trainee to visit the market.

### *Best uses*

- Exposure visits are a good way for trainees to see different ways of doing things.
- Exposure visits can be a good way to encourage and motivate the trainees.
- Exposure visits work best when they are combined with other training methods, such as using questions and assignments. For example, a trainee could be asked to evaluate the profitability of a business being visited. Or, they could be asked to identify the steps involved in making the product.
- Exposure visits are most useful when the trainees have some previous experience of the business or process to understand what is being observed and be able to ask questions. Trainees, who already have a business but need to improve it, can benefit greatly from exposure visits to successful similar businesses.

### *Disability considerations*

#### Trainees with moving difficulties

- The place visited must be accessible to people with moving difficulties. You need to consider issues of barriers, transportation, safety and suitability of the place.

#### Trainees with hearing, seeing, speaking and/or learning difficulties

- You may need to provide some assistance in explaining what is going on to those who have seeing or hearing difficulties or are slow learners.

### ***Tips***

- Make sure that the persons visited are comfortable with disabled people and deliver positive messages about their ability to do the work.
- Consider using a facilitator to provide guidance and ensure learning when an exposure visit is organized for a group. The facilitator can be the peer trainer themselves or someone who is equally skilled.
- Be focused and well prepared, have a clear purpose and expected outcome.
- Prepare the trainee or trainees for the visit. Tell them the goals and what they can expect to see and learn. Coach them by asking questions beforehand.
- Involve the trainees in summarizing the visit at the end to emphasize what was learned.