

# Presenter's Handbook<sup>i</sup>

This handbook is designed to help you deliver information to adult learners. It includes suggestions for setting the stage for an effective presentation, tips for successful delivery of the material, and evaluation tools to gauge how much knowledge your audience has gained.

The most important part of any presentation is the curriculum content. There should be learning objectives associated with each facet of the presentation that you want your audience to obtain.

## 1. Setting the Stage

Good planning is a key ingredient of every successful presentation. This is true for both experienced and novice presenters. Once you are asked to provide this training curriculum, it is important for you to begin asking questions about your audience, the physical layout of the room you are presenting in and the resources available to you. This will help you prepare for a successful presentation. Use the following questions to guide your planning in conjunction with the checklist at the end of this section.

### ***Who will be in the audience?***

#### **Adults? What age range?**

It is good to know whether your audience will consist of mainly young adults, elderly, or a mixture of ages. You can tailor your presentation to fit the audience by highlighting statistics and facts of interest to the age group you are speaking to.

#### **Children? What age range?**

This curriculum is designed for adults, though older adolescents may also benefit from some of the concepts. There are times that children will be part of the audience and it is helpful to have an idea of their age range.

#### **Specific professions or interests represented?**

Your audience may be a church group, mental health professionals, a group of health care professionals, or other collection of individuals with common interests. You may wish to highlight information that is of particular interest to the group you are presenting to.

#### **Cultures represented in audience?**

It is important to assess the cultural needs of your audience ahead of the presentation if possible. Will you need an interpreter to get your message across? Will there be hearing impaired members of the audience or those who understand limited English? You may also want to do some research in advance of the presentation about the cultures that will be represented. Most audiences appreciate efforts you make to create a presentation that is practical, applicable, and understandable to them.

#### **Estimated number of people in audience?**

The way you prepare for a presentation will often depend on how many people you are presenting to. The way you set up the room, the type of presentation style you choose to use, and the way that you organize the activities can depend on the size of the group you expect. Be prepared and flexible as the estimated size of the audience doesn't always match the actual size! You may expect a very small audience and instead, a very large group shows up for your presentation.

### ***How much time do I have to present the material?***

How long is your curriculum designed to last? It's important to note that most adults don't sit still or tolerate lecture presentations lasting an entire day, so be prepared to take frequent breaks and vary your delivery style.

Most people can sit for no longer than one hour, so you should include breaks and activities at least every 50 minutes. This allows time for you and those in your audience to stretch, take a break, and remain focused on the material.

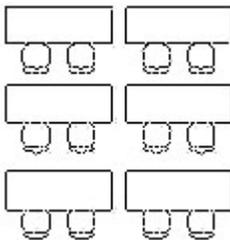
Bring a watch or know where a clock is in the room so you stay on time. All audiences appreciate a presentation that begins and ends on time.

### ***How is the room set up?***

The room set up can guide your choice of delivery options. Speaking from a podium in an auditorium is much different than presenting in a room with sofas and over stuffed chairs. Sometimes you have a choice about room set up. A general rule of thumb to follow is that the longer the presentation is, the more likely you are to need a room set up that encourages interaction.

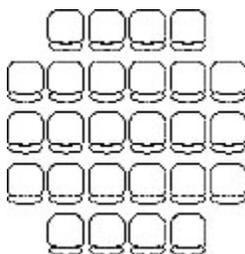
There are some standard meeting room set up styles that could influence whether you choose to use PowerPoint, an overhead projector, or just handouts.

#### **Classroom Seating**



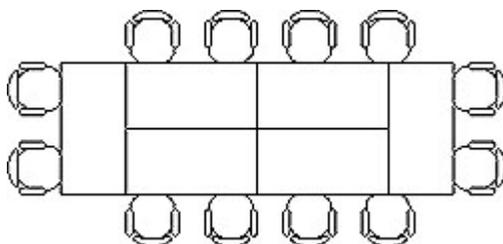
This seating style works well if you want the audience to take notes. It is a good set up if you want to deliver your presentation like a lecture. This seating style is less intimate than some others and doesn't encourage much interaction.

#### **Theatre Style Seating**

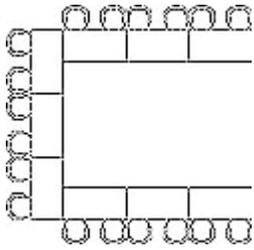


Large audiences often are seated in this configuration. Everyone is facing the speaker and ready to listen. The seats are often close together, leaving little room for interaction between audience members and the speaker. This configuration is best for short presentations with large groups. It isn't easy to do the group activities with this seating arrangement.

#### **Conference Seating**

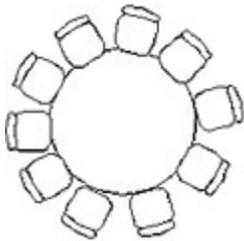


This arrangement works well for small groups. It can be challenging to use projectors or flip charts using this seating style. Conference Seating works best with handouts and presentation styles that encourage discussion among participants.



### **Semi Circle Seating**

This seating style can be used with or without tables. It is used for small and medium sized groups. The benefit of this seating arrangement is that it allows all participants to see you and each other. This arrangement works well with audio-visuals such as power point or use of an overhead projector.



### **Banquet (Round Table) Seating**

More people can fit into a room when round tables are used. This is often the set up used for presentations that encourage interaction among participants. There may be challenges associated with holding people's attention and positioning projectors so everyone can see it. This seating style is good for encouraging cohesion and participation in the group activities that may include discussion or role plays.

### ***What are my presentation resources?***

The curriculum modules are often available in different formats. Power point slides can be copied onto transparencies for use with an overhead projector or as handouts to participants. The resources you have will determine how you deliver the material. To use the PowerPoint program you will need a computer with the Microsoft PowerPoint Program and a projector. An overhead projector can often be a cheaper alternative, but it requires a bit more work to insure that the slides are in order and in focus for all to see. Handouts can often be a way to either reinforce the visual material you are showing via PowerPoint or overhead projector, or they can be used without additional visuals. Handouts give participants something to refer to later and to take notes on during the presentation. The presenter should ask the sponsor of the event ahead of time how many copies will be needed and either make the copies or arrange for the sponsor to have the handouts available at the time of the presentation.

The room set up and number of participants will help you determine if a microphone will be needed. Some rooms are small enough that a loud speaking voice is enough to get the message across. Audiences appreciate the use of a microphone if possible as it insures that everyone can hear the message regardless of where they are seated. The speaker should ask the event sponsor or the person responsible for setting up the room if there is a microphone available. Usually a small microphone that clips on clothing (a lavalier) is preferable to a large one you must hold. You may also want to know if the microphone is wireless or wired as your mobility as a speaker will be limited with a wired microphone.

Some presenters like to have a chalk board, marker board, or flip chart available to write on during their presentation. This may be important if you do not have access to an overhead projector or computer / projector.

Another resource that will help your presentation be memorable is the availability of refreshments for participants. This can be water, coffee, or much more. This optional resource is one you will wish you check on prior to your presentation as the availability of refreshments can lengthen the breaks you take and encourage interaction among participants.

Regardless of the resources you have available or choose to use for your presentation, the audience will appreciate the time you have spent planning ahead to make the presentation smooth, professional, and meaningful to them.

### ***Planning tips***

Giving a good presentation involves more than being comfortable in front of people. A good speaker is prepared and organized. Some of the planning tips listed below may seem like common sense, but can be easily overlooked.

- Write down the name and phone number of the contact person for the presentation. This person is often your source of information for the set up information discussed in the previous section.
- Touch base with the contact person within one week of the scheduled presentation to see if there have been any changes or final arrangements made that will affect your presentation.
- Make copies, gather resources, test your power point presentation and back up, and go over the curriculum notes one more time at least a day or two before the presentation.
- Plan to arrive about 30 minutes before the scheduled presentation so there is plenty of time available to set up and test equipment, arrange the room, and generally “get ready” to present. You may also want to check the temperature of the room you are presenting in to insure that it is not too hot or too cold. The comfort of your audience is as important to the delivery of your message as the room set up!

## **2. Delivering the Message**

Many educational programs are designed for the adult learner. This section of the Handbook offers some basic information about how to get your message across to adults.

It is important to keep in mind the way adults learn best when presenting any material you want them to remember. This will help you deliver your message in a way that holds the audience attention and gets your objectives across.

- Adults are Goal Oriented – Usually adults attend a presentation with a goal in mind. They appreciate a program that is organized and helpful in

meeting their personal goal. Stating the goals and objectives of the presentation early helps adult learners meet their own goals.

- Adults are Relevancy Oriented – Adult learners want to know how the material you are presenting is relevant for them. This can be accomplished by giving examples or taking examples from the audience that are familiar or applicable to their situation.
- Adults are Practical – The presenter shouldn't assume that all members of the audience are there just to gather knowledge for its own sake. Each person is often looking for something practical they can use in their work or personal life. Adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value.

People learn in different ways. This is referred to as a person's "learning style." The challenge for the presenter is to use mediums to get the message across to all three learning styles.

The *VISUAL* learner often needs to see the material for it to have meaning. They learn best when presented with pictures, slides, graphs, or demonstrations. The visual learner may drift off during a presentation that is mostly lecture or requires lots of listening.

The *AUDITORY* learner prefers lectures. They do well with story-telling or small group discussions and often engage in lively debates. The person with this learning style can often repeat verbatim what the presenter has said about a particular topic and will listen carefully to the nuances of the presentation.

The *KINESTHETIC* Learner does best with practical, hands on exercises. Role playing and games reinforce the message for the person with this learning style. This learner needs to move about and actively participate in the presentation to learn best. They can become inattentive during lectures even with visual reinforcement.

The trick for the presenter is to balance all three learning styles by combining presentation mediums. This can be done by having a carefully prepared presentation that includes something for the visual learner to see while satisfying the auditory learner with prepared, organized lecture material. The kinesthetic learner will enjoy role plays or other activities that are "hands on." If a presenter senses that a number of the audience seem to be kinesthetic learners, it may be helpful to emphasize participatory activities in the presentation to reinforce the message being sent.

### ***Facilitating Discussion***

This segment briefly addresses what to do to facilitate any discussion within the presentation format. Discussion plays a vital role in active learning. The learning environment can be enhanced by a good discussion that stimulates thought yet remains on track with the topic being presented. The following tips for facilitating discussion are paraphrased from a book called **101 Strategies to Teach any Subject** by Mel Silberman:

- Paraphrase what the audience member says so they feel understood and so others in the audience understand what is being said. "So what you're saying is..." or "You're saying that...."
- Compliment an interesting or insightful comment. "That's a good point...."

- Mediate differences of opinion between students, and relieve any tensions that may be brewing. “I think you aren’t really in disagreement, but are presenting two different sides of the issue....”
- Summarize the major views of the group.

The presenter must keep in mind that an active discussion aids in retention of material, but it can also side track the presentation. Be prepared to inform those who wish to continue a discussion beyond what you have time for to do so after the material has been presented. The other audience members appreciate a presenter who can keep the group on task and the discussion focused.

## Checklist for Presenters

<b>Who is the contact person for the Presentation?</b>	
Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
E-mail	
<b>What is agreed upon <u>Date</u> and <u>Location</u> of the Presentation?</b>	
<b>Who is in the Audience?</b>	
Adults	<input type="checkbox"/> Young Adults (20's)
	<input type="checkbox"/> 30's – 50's
	<input type="checkbox"/> 60's or older
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixture of ages or unknown
Children	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary Age
	<input type="checkbox"/> Middle School Age
	<input type="checkbox"/> High School Age
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Males
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Females
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed Group (Males & Females)
Specific Groups	<i>List interest or professions represented:</i>
Cultures represented	<i>List cultures represented:</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreters needed
Estimated number of people in audience:	
<b>How is the Room set up?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Style <input type="checkbox"/> Theater Style <input type="checkbox"/> Conference Seating <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Circle Seating <input type="checkbox"/> Banquet (Round Table) Seating
<b>What are the presentation resources?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer & Projector for Power Point Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Overhead Projector and Transparencies <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of Hand out Material <input type="checkbox"/> Chalk board or Marker board (with chalk & markers) <input type="checkbox"/> Microphone (hand held or clip on?) <input type="checkbox"/> Refreshments
<b>Were Evaluations Distributed?</b>	
	_____ Number Distributed _____ Number Collected

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