



# Wisconsin WIC Staff Development Toolkit

Kathleen Hoag, WIC Training Coordinator  
May 2010

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## INTRODUCTION

This toolkit was written as a guide for any WIC staff person who is involved in planning, conducting and evaluating staff development activities within the WIC program. A large portion of this document is devoted to face – to – face training with a focus on learner centered approaches. At this point in time, E – Learning is not addressed as we are just beginning to develop an infrastructure for this. WIC trainers can use this toolkit in many ways, as a self module to learn key components or as a reference guide to assist with planning staff development.

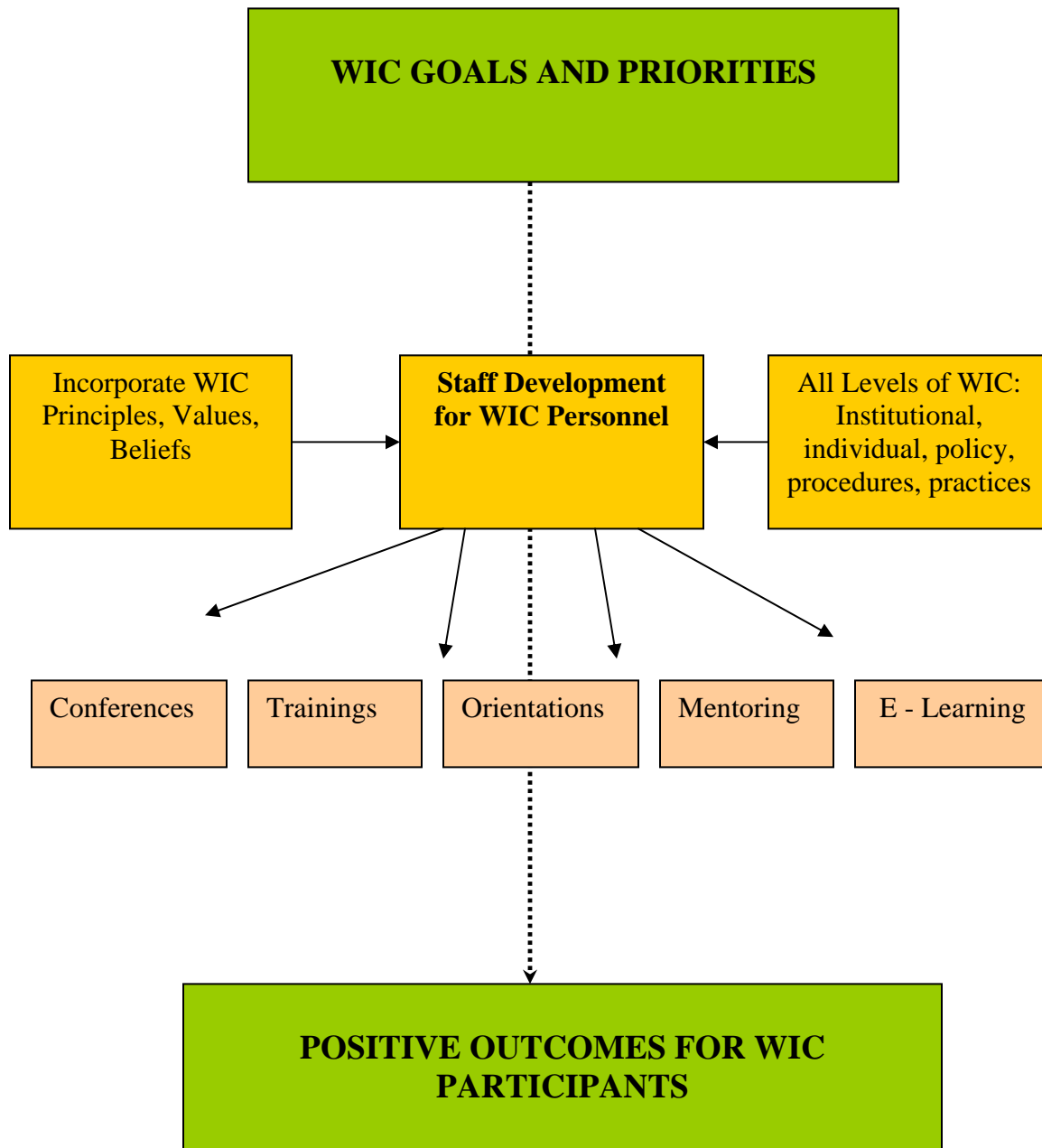
Staff development is about change. Often we see something that needs to be changed and we immediately leap to the strategy that could make a difference. Sometimes this works but often there are many steps that we need to take before that strategy can be implemented. We need to consider people’s awareness of the issue and their desire to change behavior. We need to contemplate what knowledge and skills staff need in order to do their jobs well. Finally, we need to keep moving forward by supporting staff with on the job tools and/or further staff development activities. These considerations and processes require patience, time, organization and coordination. Hopefully, this toolkit will facilitate a process that leads to effective staff development programming and ultimately make a positive impact at the local WIC clinic level.



**NOTE:** Throughout this document I have included side bars with questions or tasks in them. They are designed for self – study of this toolkit so that you can personalize what you are reading.

# OVERVIEW OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT AT WIC

## WIC Staff Development Model



## **WIC Program Goals and Priorities**

### **Health Outcome – Based WIC Nutrition Assessment**

#### **Pregnant Woman**

Delivers a healthy, full – term infant while maintaining optimal health status.

#### **Breastfeeding Woman**

Achieves optimal health during the child bearing years and reduces the risk of chronic disease.

#### **Non – Breastfeeding Postpartum Woman**

Achieves optimal health during the child bearing years and reduces the risk of chronic disease.

#### **Infant**

Achieves optimal growth and development in a nurturing environment and develops a foundation for healthy eating practices.

#### **Child (12 – 60 months)**

Achieves optimal growth and development in a nurturing environment and begins to acquire dietary and lifestyle habits associated with a lifetime of good health.

(From <http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/>)

## **WIC Staff Development Process Overview**

### **Training Coordinator and WIC Training Staff work together to...**

plan, implement and evaluate a wide range of staff development activities for the WIC Program; establish timelines to assure all staff development activities are coordinated and realistic in terms of local staff being able to budget for and attend them; assure the activities align with WIC Program goals and priorities; ensure staff development activities include all appropriate steps for implementing the desired outcomes (i.e., creating awareness of the need for the change, creating a desire to make the change, transmitting the knowledge, creating the ability to make the change, and including follow-up reinforcement activities); identifying if other WIC processes, policies, or materials need to be revised in order to implement the desired outcome, and if so, how and when this is to be accomplished.

<b>Components of Staff Development</b>
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**Step I – Understand WIC Goals and Priorities:** In order for all staff development to be both consistent and meet the needs of WIC employees it is important to reflect first before moving to create a staff development activity. Consider both the overarching goals and priorities of WIC in addition to the local needs and how it all fits together statewide.

**Step II - Analyze Needs:** Determine staff development needs for a target group through surveys, informal conversation, analysis of performance, project monitoring results and outcomes, focus groups, empirical data. These instruments can be used to assess staff awareness, attitudes, knowledge and skills related to specific job performance topics.

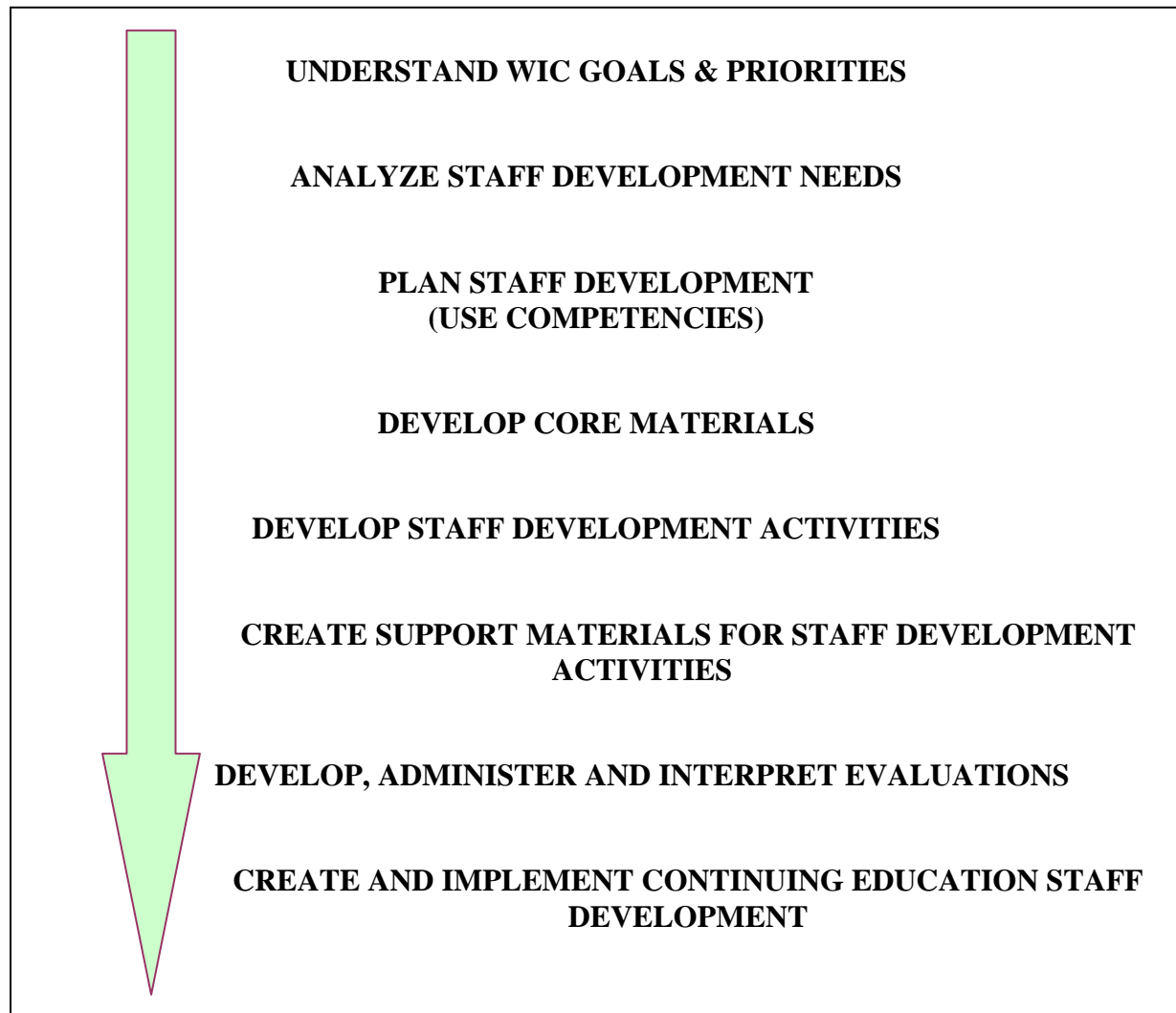
**Step III – Plan Staff Development:** Create a plan for staff development that is linked to both the needs that emerge from the Needs Analysis, goals and priorities for the WIC program and any specific program characteristics, work plan and staff competencies. A Staff Development Plan can be designed to complete “gaps” in knowledge or skills or provide enhancement in these areas. It should be created to encompass realistic timelines with a clear trajectory of activities that link in meaningful ways to each other.

**Step IV – Create Staff Development Materials and Activities:** Usually staff development materials need to be created first before activities are planned. These materials need to embody the key concepts that address staff development objectives. Staff development activities can include: conversations to raise awareness or provide a forum for discussion related to a training topic, training workshops that provide information and/or hands – on, experiential learning, information sharing teleconferences, mentoring, study circles, conferences, as well as web-based video, games, surveys or discussion boards. In this step the activities and the accompanying

assessment of their effectiveness will be planned. Design activities that are learner – centered, grounded in adult learning principles and model the targeted objectives of the staff development (i.e., if your training is on client – centered approaches make sure your activities are learner – centered as well.) Materials that accompany/support the activities need to be produced at the end of this process.

**Step V – Evaluate Staff Development Activities:** Assess the effectiveness of each activity through feedback forms, exit tickets, facilitated dialogues, writing exercises, or on-line surveys.

**Step VI – Continuing Education:** In order to reinforce the learning, it is important to embed staff development activities into the daily workings of the program. Examples of this include giving staff information sheets or conversation cues/frames that they use on the job as they are developing new skills. Other activities are workshops, online training, teleconferences, mentoring, study circles and conferences.



# Staff Development Specifics

## Alternatives to Training

Before we consider doing a training which typically can be costly and/or time consuming we need to remember that there are other ways of addressing workplace performance. Some of the items here probably are not within your jurisdiction but are helpful to know anyway.

### Training cannot close a skill gap that is caused by:

- Poor morale or attitude
- Poor policies or procedures
- Equipment problems
- Lack of incentives



**THINK ...**  
What can I do?  
What can I recommend to others?

### The following alternatives to training can close skill gaps

- Change hiring and promotion criteria to reflect new skill requirements.
- Pay higher salaries for some positions to attract.
- Set up formal mentor programs.
- Implement job rotations for hands – on practical experience.
- Set up buddy systems with retired employees.
- Recognize and reward managers who are effective coaches.
- Use individual development plans for employees.
- Create self – service employee learning resource centers, which provide training materials that people can borrow.
- Develop user- friendly, self – paced, how – to manuals and job aids for common problems.
- Designate experienced employees as troubleshooters for specialized problems.
- Put together a list of employees with specialized skills and training who can provide individual assistance.
- Hold cross – functional meetings for employees to share their expertise
- Set aside time in regular meetings for employees to brainstorm problems and coping techniques.
- Invite industry experts to participate in information panels.
- Design a tuition reimbursement program for job-related education.
- Reimburse employee purchases of job – related books and media.

### Training is especially ineffective and expensive when it is used:

- To train large groups of people in order to correct the behavior of only a few.
- To inspire or motivate employees. Only good management practices and meaningful compensation can do that.
- To correct fundamental hiring errors.
- To encourage employees to market products/services that clients don't want.
- To solve disciplinary problems. These are one on one situations.
- To reduce employee turnover or absenteeism. Working conditions are usually the culprit here.

(Adapted from *The Trainer's Tool Kit*, Charney, C and Conway, K, 2005)

## Needs Assessment

How do we determine staff development needs of WIC staff? Sometimes there are new initiatives that are mandated that we need to implement while at other times there are obvious gaps in knowledge and skills as seen by supervisors or self – reported by employees.

There are a range of assessment tools that can be used to uncover staff development needs. Below is a list with a brief description of each.

### Task and Skill Analysis

Identify, break down job/process into subtasks then determine which steps should be subject to training. This is good for new technology, creating new positions, cross – training

### Regional Meetings WIC Workgroups

Gather together people who have the knowledge, skills, and motivation to resolve an issue and analyze/identify needs.

### Critical Incidents

Specific events that occur on the job have a major impact on organizational effectiveness. Examples of this are: communication breakdowns or urgent client requests/complaints. Evaluating these incidents can facilitate understanding the underlying staff development needs.

### Monitoring Results

Reviewing performance reviews of individuals or groups can yield important information about key job performance gaps.

### Anticipate Need for Training

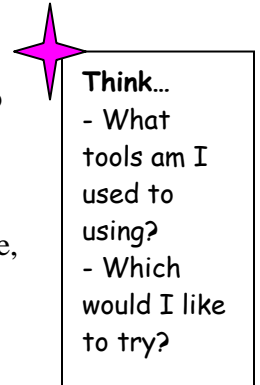
Have a standard training and orientation program. Provide staff development for new policies, procedures, or other changes

### Surveys/Questionnaires

Poll staff development needs for general and/or specific topics.

### Networking

Gather staff development needs information through the network of staff relationships: meetings, updates, newsletters and conversations.



## Staff Development Activities

### POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE...

TRAININGS

CONFERENCES

TELECONFERENCES

PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR THE TOPIC

MONTHLY WIC NUTRITION UPDATES

FORUMS

MENTORING

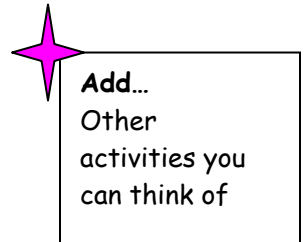
STUDY CIRCLES

BUDDY SYSTEMS

STAFF SUPERVISION

E – LEARNING

REFERENCE MATERIALS



# TRAINING SPECIFICS

## Characteristics of an Effective Trainer

### Planning and Design

Focused presentation/realistic for time \* Rehearsal of presentation \* Comfort with technology (and checking it) \* Checking compatibility of technology/software \* Interactive activities but also some direct presentation of information \* Innovative activities and variety of activities \* Activities have a purpose \* Create own flow of activities/make the training your own \* Make presentations a dialogue with the group \* Know your audience/what are their expectations? \* Allow for genuine discovery: not discovering the obvious in activities \* Be flexible \* Balance being responsive with confident leadership \* See plan as a work in process \* Balance open discussion and getting through material \* Send information to potential participants so they are clear about objectives of workshop



#### REFLECT...

Highlight 3 - 5 items on this page that you consider your strengths as a trainer.

Circle 3 - 5 items that you consider challenges for you as a trainer.

Choose two things you would like to improve upon. What can you do or learn to help your self in these areas?

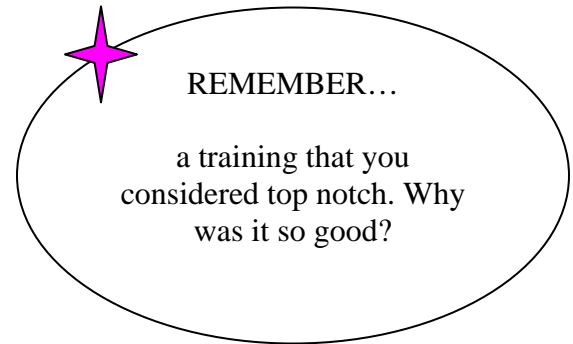
### Communication

Communicate needs ahead of time regarding space, facility, AV needs \* Show energy – facilitator sets tone (finding a good pace) \* Share purpose of activity with participants \* Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know" \* Dialogue between you and audience \* Be able to push a bit beyond your own and participants' comfort zone \* Be prepared for criticism; don't personalize things \* Set ground rules (don't judge, respect everyone, opinions valued, don't speak when others speak) \* Manage expectations ("That's beyond the scope of this workshop.") \* Acknowledge validity of point being raised, whether or not you agree \* Use "Parking Lot" \* Listen and observe

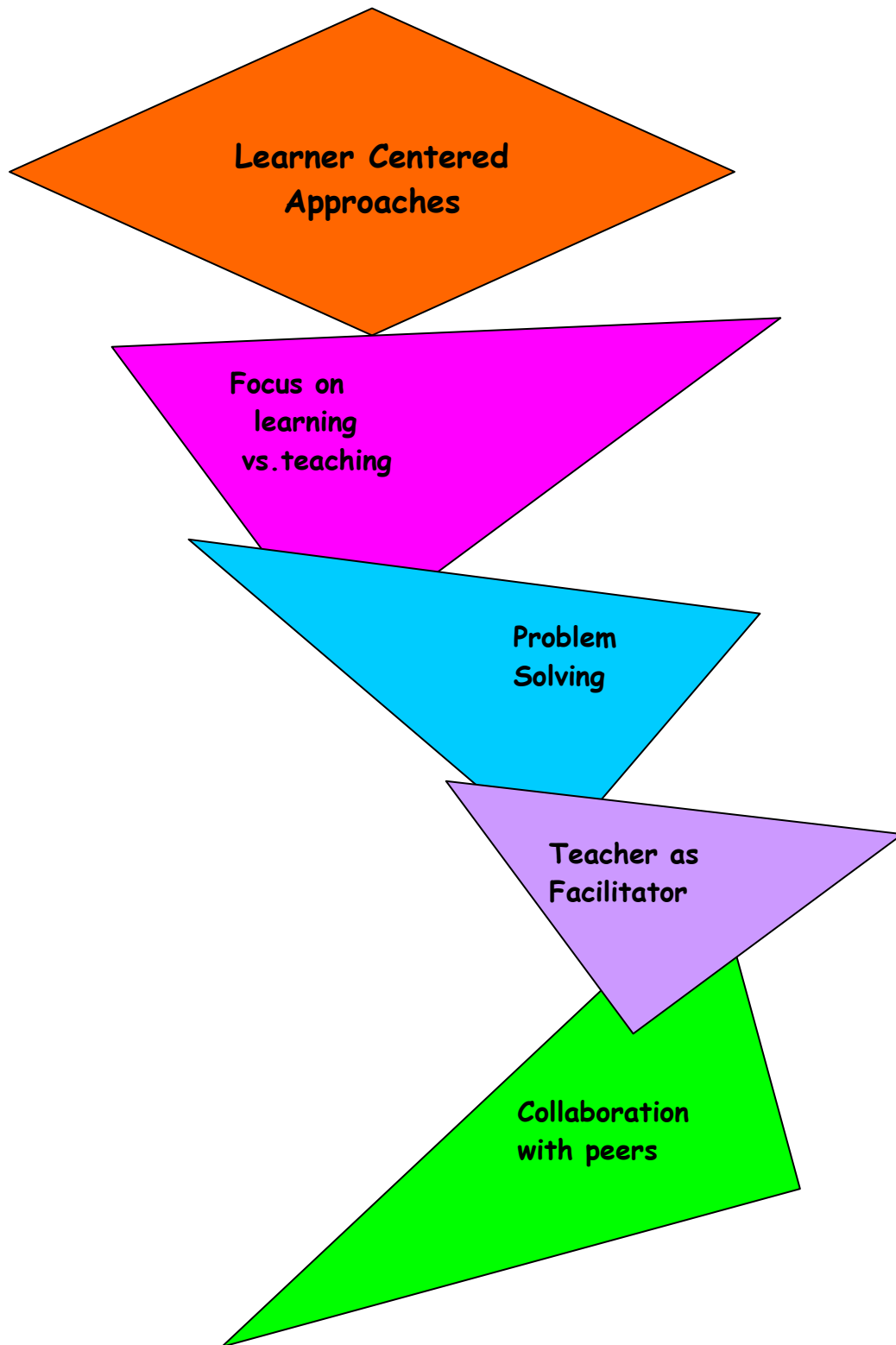
(Adapted from materials developed by Nash, A & Sedor, M, 2006)

## Qualities of Effective Training

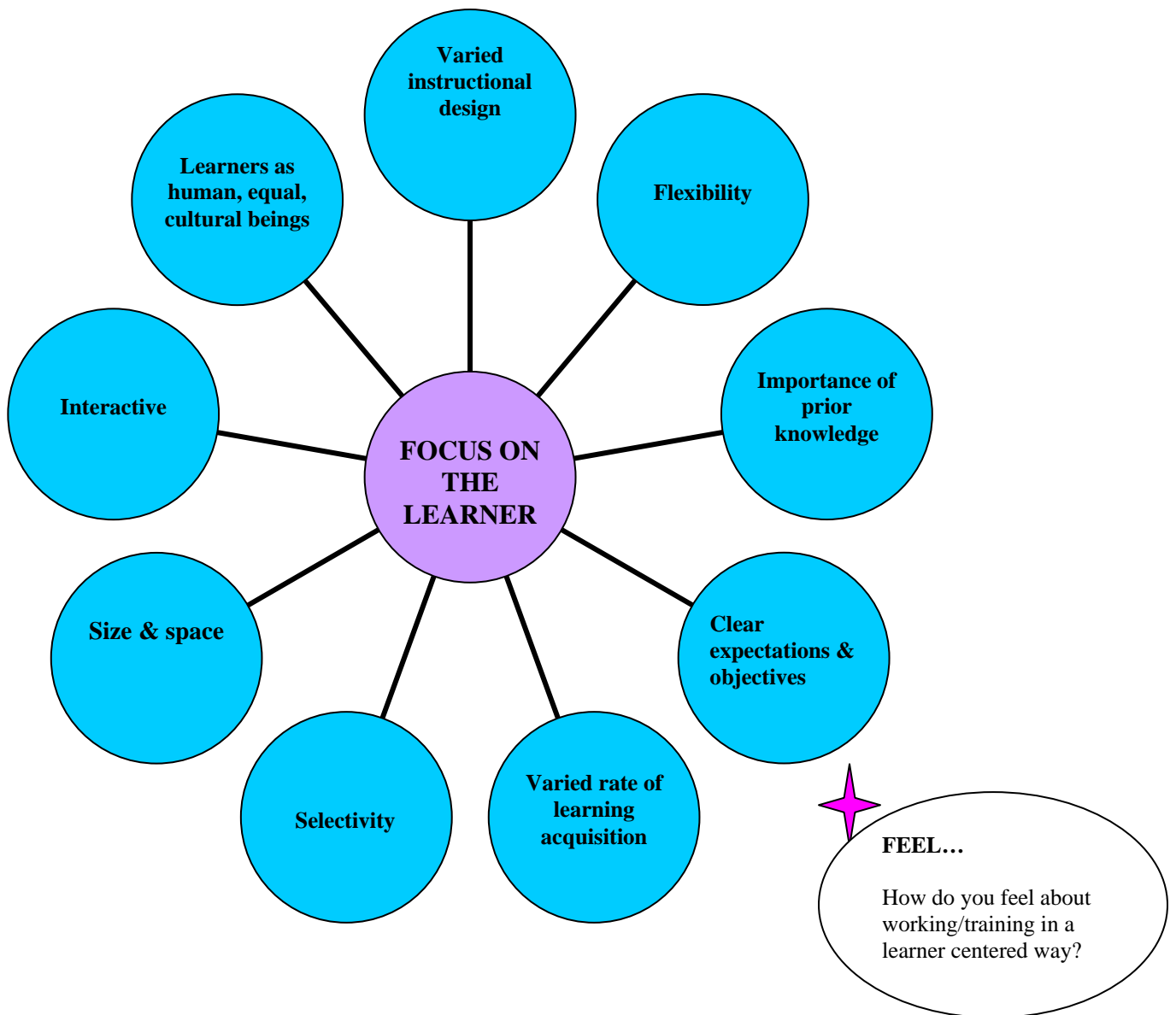
- **Link training to goals of the organization.** Embed core values into training methodology and content. For example: Demonstrate acceptance of diverse opinions through interaction and structured group work.
- **Get senior level commitment and involvement.** Have supervisors introduce sessions and be available for questions.
- **Train a critical mass of people.** Involve key employees in training to effect greater change in the organization.
- **Measure and evaluate results.** Use a variety of assessment tools to determine quality of training: surveys, forums, and outcome data.
- **Maintain learner focus.** Strive to meet the needs of the trainees.
- **Respect adult – learning principles.** Allow for negotiation of process and content of training.
- **Focus on real – world training.** Trainings should be practical, hands on, and linked to the participants’ needs, experience and current work environments, including job performance competencies.



(Adapted from *The Trainer’s Tool Kit* by Charney, C & Conway, K, 2005)



# Principles of Learner-Centered Education



(Adapted from *Principles of Universal Design for Instruction* Scott, McGuire & Shaw, 2001.)

**Varied Instructional Design**

Instruction is designed to be useful and accessible to all learners, attending to various learning styles: audio, visual, kinesthetic. Alternate delivery of material. Active learning with hands on, peer - led, multiple groupings of learners.

**Flexibility**

Allows learners options in use of instructional materials, testing, assignments, and training activities.

**Recognize Importance of Prior Knowledge & Relation to Other Trainings/Work Experience**

Instruction is straightforward & eliminates unnecessary complexity. Use needs assessment to determine prior knowledge of content. Explain concepts simply without assuming learners have prior knowledge. Activate prior knowledge when introducing new content.

**Clear Expectations & Objectives**

Necessary information is communicated clearly. Visuals/meaningful materials and clear learning objectives are provided to learners.

**Awareness Of & Appreciation for Varied Rate of Learning Acquisition**

Instruction anticipates variation in individual learning pace. Give multiple examples from a range of concepts and use variety of methods. Repetition and spaced retrieval of information over time, reinforcement of prior learning.

**Selectivity**

Select core objectives/competencies and teach from these. No reason for rote-memorization of non-essential information. Focus on core tasks rather than non-essentials.

**Size and Space for Approach and Use**

Classroom size, desks/tables, acoustics, and lighting are accessible to all learners. Instruction is designed with consideration for students with varying body size, posture, mobility, sensory and communication needs.

**Interactive Learning**

Promote purposeful interaction and communication between and among learners/trainers. Group learning, peer teaching, group projects, problem-based learning are tied to core training goals and objectives.

**Treat Learners as Human, Equal, Cultural Beings**

Instruction is designed to be inclusive and respectful of cultural differences. Engage learners outside of training, reveal human side; embrace equal people in different roles.

(Adapted from *Assistive Technology: The Key to Learner - Centered Education*, Wright, L. & Ratliff, D, 2004)

## Training Structure

Training Item	Activities
Welcome and Introductions	
Icebreaker (build trust and community)	
Clarification of and buy – in to objectives	
Individual interactive training modules	
Breaks	
Questions/Answers	
Wrap – Up	
Evaluation	



**Contribute...**  
Do you have a different model that works for you?

## Learner-Centered Training Approaches

Below is a table with ideas for structuring interactive training activities.

<p><b>Varied questioning strategies/Cubing:</b> Ask the whole group a range of questions from the concrete to the abstract. Put Bloom’s Taxonomy, on the wall to remind yourself to ask questions to elicit: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. * <b>See next page for more details</b></p>	<p><b>Cooperative learning:</b> This is a system of providing structure to learners working in groups to facilitate full participation of all and time – efficiency. It encourages cooperation, goal setting, self – reflection and information sharing. * <b>See below for more details</b></p>
<p><b>Sequencing:</b> Learners organize information in a sequence (time, organization, procedure).</p>	<p><b>Matching activities:</b> Learners match concepts, words/definitions or visuals.</p>
<p><b>Flash cards:</b> Learners use flash cards with either picture/word or word/description and drill each other.</p>	<p><b>Information Gap:</b> Learners fill in information on a trainer – generated worksheet. The same text can be used but the missing gaps could be different for the different knowledge and skill levels.</p>
<p><b>Tiered Learning Activities:</b> Learners work on the same essential understanding and key skills yet do different activities at their individual knowledge or skill level. * <b>See below for more details</b></p>	<p><b>Reading buddies:</b> Pair up learners to read together. Follow up with mind mapping, story telling, comprehension or critical reading questions, or a worksheet with a cloze exercise or matching.</p>
<p><b>Think, Pair, Share:</b> Ask learners to think by themselves first, pair with another learner then share ideas out to the whole group.</p>	<p><b>Demonstrations:</b> Learners benefit from actually seeing how a procedure is done.</p>
<p><b>Pictures:</b> Pictures are natural language generators. Use them for matching, story telling, procedures, and questions and answers.</p>	<p><b>Slips of paper:</b> Different questions or concepts are written at varying levels of difficulty and put into different envelopes. Learners can choose from which envelop to choose.</p>
<p><b>Sponge activities:</b> When doing a whole group exercise there may be learners who complete the task before the rest. Have something ready for them to do that is short and linked to the original activity’s content.</p>	<p><b>Problem posing:</b> Present a problem or have learners generate one. Ask them to resolve the problem using a range of activities such as graphic organizers, case studies, etc.</p>
<p><b>Role Play:</b> Learners act out dialogues related to the content being studied. They can create their own dialogues or use a trainer – generated one.</p>	<p><b>Graphic organizers:</b> Learners use “mind maps” to organize information. These are especially good for brainstorming, procedures, and checking comprehension of a text.</p>



**Do...**  
Choose 3 - 5 of these activities and try them in the next few months in a meeting or training.

<p><b>Cloze Activities:</b> Create text with key missing items for learners to fill in. These can be adapted for all knowledge levels.</p>	<p><b>Jigsaw Reading:</b> A text is divided among the learners. Each learner reads his portion then regroups with others to share a summary of the reading</p>
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<p><b>Instruction Sheets:</b> Provide these sheets to learners as they practice a skill or discuss a problem or information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Information sheets</b> provide key information learners need to understand a process or procedure.</li> <li>▪ <b>Operation sheets</b> give step – by – step directions and information necessary to perform one operation (or job task).</li> <li>▪ <b>Job plan sheets</b> are completed by learners to demonstrate their knowledge of the operation as well as the tools, materials, and equipment needed to do the job.</li> <li>▪ <b>Problem sheets</b> provide types of job – related problems learners may face in a particular workplace or occupation. Learners solve the problems.</li> </ul>
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### More Specifics...

Here's more information on some of the approaches cited above.

**Varied questioning strategies:** Below is a chart of Bloom's Taxonomy which gives questions from lower level thinking to higher level thinking order. Good for Critical Thinking!


<p><b>Knowledge (Recalling information)</b></p>	<p><b>Comprehension (Understanding, meaning)</b></p>	<p><b>Application (Using learning in new situations)</b></p>
<p>Where did...            What was...            Who was/were...            When did...            How many...            Locate it in the story where it...            Point to the ...</p>	<p>Tell me in your own words...            What does it mean...            Give me an example...            Describe what...            Illustrate the part of the story that...            Make a map of ...</p>	<p>What would happen if you...            Would you have done the same as ...            If you were there would you...            How would you solve this problem in your own life?            In the library, find info about...</p>

<b>Analysis (Ability to see parts and relationships)</b>	<b>Synthesis (Parts of information to create original whole)</b>	<b>Evaluation (Judgment based on criteria)</b>
What things would you have used... What other ways could ... What things are similar/different... What part of the story (etc.) was most exciting, funny, sad? What things couldn't have happened in real life? What kind of person is ... What caused ____ to act the way ____ did? Outline	What would it be like if... What would it be like to live... Design a ... Pretend you are... What would have happened if ... Why/Why not? Use your imagination to draw a picture of... Add a new thing on your own that was not in the story. Tell (write) a different ending.	Would you recommend this book to your friend? Why or why not? Select the best... Why is it the best? What do you think will happen to ... Why do you think that? In your opinion... Why systems are the best? Worst?

**Cubing:** On each side of a cube are directions based on Bloom's Taxonomy. They can be used to differentiate learning by readiness (familiarity with content or level of skill), learner interest, and/or background. They vary in color and tasks based on the abilities and interests of the learners.

<b>Cubing... Levels of Thinking</b>	
1. tell describe recall name locate list	4. review discuss prepare diagram cartoon
2. compare contrast example explain define write	5. propose suggest finish prescribe devise
3. connect make design produce develop	6. debate formulate choose support In your opinion...

<b>Blank Cubes... (Write in your own tasks.)</b>	
<b>Green Cube</b>  1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<b>Blue Cube</b>  1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
<b>Yellow Cube</b>  1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<b>Red Cube</b>  1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

 Do...  
Cubing is really fun!  
What ways can you use it in your context?

**Tiered Learning Activities:** This activity allows for trainers to provide learners with essential skills and key concepts while also adapting for different learner knowledge and skills. Here's how it works.

- First, identify the concepts, skills and content that will be the focus of the activity.
- Next, gather data about the students' prior knowledge for the new content or skill.
- Compile the pre-assessment data.
- Determine the key standards and concepts and/or skills that will be taught.
- Decide which parts of the study should be taught to the entire group and how/when they will be presented.
- Decide about how to tier or adjust the assignments. Answer the following questions:
  - What content does each of the groups already know?
  - What does each group need to learn?
  - What strategies should be used to facilitate the learning of each portion?
  - What is the most effective way to group for each activity?
  - What assessment tools will be used so that learners will be accountable?
  - Are the plans meeting the individual needs of the learners?

**Think...**  
of a situation in which you have to work with people who have multiple abilities and knowledge base. You can use this model.

Example: **Competency:** Doing anthropometric measurements on a baby.

<b>B</b>			
	Learner can follow all procedures except one or two.	Learner can follow some of the procedures. Doesn't understand the importance of precise measuring.	Learner understands some of
<b>A</b>			the concepts but needs to add more while building skills in taking the measurements
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>Basis Knowledge or Competency Levels</b> </div>		
	<b>High Degree</b>	<b>Approaching</b>	<b>Beginning</b>

(Adapted from *Differentiated Instructional Strategies: in Practice*. Gregory, G, 2003)

## Cooperative Learning Structures

1. **The Line Up** structure is used to get acquainted, develop mutual support, group identity, and to share attitudes, points of view and experience. Sharing attitudes, points of view and experience is one way to start a training..
  - a) Entire group lines up according to some criteria, i.e., birth date, family size, first letter in their name, etc... or
  - b) Group lines up according to point of view or background information, i.e., attitude towards amount of homework, teen drug use, etc...
  
2. **Three – Step Interview** is a structure designed for concept development and sharing of information and experience.
  - a) Learners divide into pairs
  - b) Partners interview each other, first one and then the other.
  - c) One set of partners joins another (or teams join together) and each shares what s/he learned about her/his partner with the other two.
  
3. **Jigsaw I** encourages specialization in a particular task in which learners become “experts”. It is used for concept development and mastery.
  - a) Before the training, the trainer makes an Expert Sheet for the material. The contents of the Expert Sheet can include questions about the reading, a cloze exercise or anything else that will help the learner digest and process the information. Also, the trainer prepares a post reading activity that the teams do to demonstrate their knowledge of the reading. This could include a quiz or any other activity.
  - b) Process
    1. Pass out Expert Sheets and assign topics (about 5 minutes)
    2. Learners read material (time varies)
    3. Learners meet in expert groups (about 20 minutes)
    4. Learners return to report to their teams (about 20 minutes)
    5. Quiz or other activity(about 10 minutes)
  - c) If learners finish reading earlier than others, have them take notes on their material or have another activity (related to the material) ready.
  - d) Learners do a wrap up evaluation following the Jigsaw and expert groups to examine whether or not they listened well, treated each other with kindness and allowed others to speak. (This is optional with adults.)
  
4. **Jigsaw Partners Consult** may be used for teambuilding, concept development, higher – level thinking or mastery. In addition, it encourages strong interdependence among teammates. The five – step process is as follows:
  - a) The learner is assigned a partner from the same team.
  - b) The partners meet to discuss the assigned task.
  - c) The same-task pairs meet in expert groups to discuss the material.
  - d) The partners meet again by themselves to prepare/practice the presentation they will make to their teams.
  - e) The home teams meet and the experts make their presentations.

5. **Teammates Consult** is a structure used to develop higher order thinking.
  - a) Learners work in teams of four. Trainer establishes roles within the group such as reader, checker, spokesperson. Gambits (talking points) are taught in advance to help students use appropriate language that is helpful to the group process.
  - b) The reader reads a question.
  - c) Learners seek the answer from a book, text, and/or through discussion.
  - d) Checker checks to see that teammates all understand and agree.
  - e) When there's agreement, all learners write their answer in their own words.
  - f) Learners progress to next question: Roles can remain the same or they can switch at this point. For example, the checker becomes the new reader; the person on the left becomes the checker.

6. **Sponge** is an extra activity that the trainer prepares for groups that finish earlier than other groups. Examples of a Sponge activity may be additional questions or a problem to solve.

7. **Puzzle piece** activity is used to create random groups.
  - a) Type or copy an image, quote, question, statement or task that relates to the current curricular theme.
  - b) Cut it up into puzzle form for the amount of groups for the training.
  - c) Mix the pieces up in individual envelopes for each group. (Each group will have their own puzzle. Don't mix ALL the puzzles up.) You can put letters on each envelope and each puzzle piece in the envelope to keep it straight.
  - d) Give or have each learner select one piece of the puzzle from an envelope.
  - e) Learners find the other missing pieces and sit with that group.
  - f) After putting the puzzle together they can have a discussion or do the task.

**Choose...**  
 2 of these activities  
 to do in a meeting or  
 training.

8. **Numbered Heads** is an effective structure for producing mastery of content. It is useful with high consensus material that encourages knowledge building and comprehension. Numbered Heads keeps learners on their toes; they don't know when they will be called on!

- a) Learners number off.
- b) Trainer announces a time limit.
- c) Learners put their heads together, discuss and then agree on a response.
- d) Trainer calls a number, calls on a learner with that number, and learner gives the response.
- e) Remember to write down the numbers then check them off as you go so as not to call on the same people.

9. **Corners Game** is a way for learners to express opinions and share information.
  - a) Designate corners for different topics related to a theme.
  - b) Either post a sign with a statement, question or task at each corner or give them verbally.
  - c) Learners choose which corner to go to; those in that corner discuss, share or do a task.

10. **Inside – Outside Circle** is a good structure to use for getting acquainted or sharing ideas.
  - a) Form two concentric circles with Insiders facing out, Outsiders facing in.
  - b) Trainer asks question, pairs form, discuss, consult and share.
  - c) Outsiders face right and step in front of the next Insider.
  - d) Repeat until rotation is complete.
  - e) Questions can be different with each rotation or the same one can be cycled through the group.
  
11. **Cocktail Party or Mixer** is a fun way of loosening up a group to help them get acquainted or to share information. The trainer presents a topic or question. Students mingle with as many people as they can and talk about the topic or give a response to the question.
  
12. **Think – Pair – Share** is a strategy to encourage learner participation.
  - a) Learners listen while the trainer poses a question.
  - b) Learners are given time in which to think of a response.
  - c) Learners are then cued to pair with a neighbor and discuss their responses
  - d) Finally, learners are invited to share their responses with the class.
  - e) A time limit is set for each step in the process. Cueing devices can be bell, lights turned off, hand signal, etc... Learners can be asked to write or map their responses while they are in think and/or pair mode(s).

(Adapted from *Cooperative Learning: Resource for Teachers*. Kagan, S., 1998)

## Learner-Centered Materials

Any materials can be used in learner – centered ways; it’s all in the process. The key is to be able to analyze the materials you want or have to use and understand how to make them meaningful to the learners.

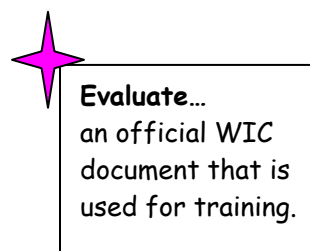
Here are some questions to ask about materials that may guide you in deciding how to use them.

1. What are the salient elements of the material that is critical for learners to know? What do you really need to share? What do you really need to print (can the learners get this electronically)?

2. How can you break up the material for different staff development activities? (Maybe you can ask learners to read a bit of it before a training, work with some of it during the training and then assign material or use it in a follow up activity.)

3. If you are going to use the material, how accessible is it?

- amount manageable
- white space around text
- bold and highlighted words
- side bars for explanation of key words/concepts
- text broken up into small paragraphs, bullets, etc
- use of visuals to aid in quick understanding of text
- acronyms defined
- copy is good



4. Having chosen the material, how will you use it in a learner centered way? If it is very short and clear, simply delivering the information with power point/visuals might be good enough. If it is complex and lengthy you might want to create an interactive exercise that will engage learners in *discovering* the material. Below is a table of possible activities that may work with various types of materials.

Type of Material	Training Activities
<b>Handbook</b> (program information, policy, guidance)	<b>Jigsaw reading</b> (see Cooperative Learning Structures) <b>Highlighting</b> (see Working with Large Groups) <b>Scavenger Hunt</b> (different groups look for different content then share with each other) <b>Slips of Paper:</b> Groups choose slips of paper from envelop; answer questions related to handbook content <b>Graphic organizers:</b> different groups organize information from the handbook
<b>Directory of names</b>	<b>Matching game:</b> names with positions then check on answer key. <b>Twenty questions:</b> Each person gets a name (put on their back) and a description of that person. Group mingles to ask yes/no questions to find out the identities of the tagged names.
<b>Procedures</b>	<b>Mix up</b> the process and have learners put them in order then check answer key; follow with questions.

	<p><b>Demonstrate</b> the process through role play; give learners frames to practice with. (See Working with Large Groups)</p> <p><b>Show DVD</b> demonstrating the procedure; learners use graphic organizers to write in the process, then compare with partner.</p>
<b>Rules</b>	<p>Put each <b>rule</b> on a piece of paper and tape to the wall around the room. Give learners a <b>case scenario or a problem</b> that goes with the rules. Learners match up the rule with the scenario or problem. Small groups discuss then whole group discusses. Alternately, each group standing at each rule can <b>brainstorm a solution</b> to the problem given.</p>
<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<p>Set up <b>stations</b> around the room, one for each role. In each station is a description of the responsibilities for the role along with interactive activities to process the information: matching exercises, questions, Jeopardy game.</p>

## On-going Assessment

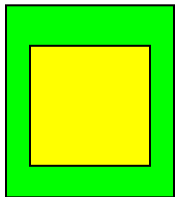
During training it is critical to assess what the learners are grasping and to provide them with opportunities to let you know what they need. Below are some informal ways of getting the pulse of the individuals and groups you are training. As a bonus, some of these activities can also be used for learners to practice skills or develop knowledge.

1. Ask learners to **demonstrate** a concept or task using manipulatives (real life objects, paper cubes).
2. Use **interest surveys**, checklists, rubrics.
3. Use **Interviews**: pairs, small groups.
4. Ask learners to **sequence** steps or procedures.
5. Ask learners to **match items**
6. **Elicit topics** for learning from the learners by using a stick figure. Learners write down what that stick figure person needs to learn.
7. **Squaring Off**: place a card in each corner of the room with one of the following words or phrases:

*Sometimes    Often    I have it!    Rarely ever*

Direct learners to go to the corner that matches their knowledge/skill level or activity frequency. Learners at each place discuss what they know about the topic or event, demonstrate a skill or discuss an activity.

### 8. Boxing:



- A. Draw a box in the center of a piece of paper. Draw a smaller box inside the first box. Outside box: *What do I know? Or What can I do?* Inside box: *What do I want to learn? Or What is my goal?*
  - B. Outside box: Write one of the following: *What else do I know (or can I do) about this topic? How does it fit? What does this have to do with \_\_\_\_?*
  - C. Inside box: Draw a model, picture or create a graphic organizer to explain the topic
  - D. Middle of the box: Summarize: *What does that say?*
9. **Yes/No Cards**. Learners indicate their understanding or interest in something by flashing a *yes* or *no* card. You can add or change cards to *some, often, plus sign, minus sign, Got It!* or *Not a Clue*.
  10. **Graffiti Fact**: Create a “Graffiti Board of Facts”. Post topics on big Post – It paper around the room. Learners think about the following: *What we knew or could do. What we learned or discussed. What we want to learn or discuss next.* Let the learners answer the questions alone first in writing then allow the whole group to post their responses.
  11. **Thumb It**: Ask learners to respond with the position of their thumb to get an assessment. *Where I am now in my understanding of \_\_\_\_?*
    - a. upside know a lot
    - b. sideways know some
    - c. downside know very little
  12. **Fist of Five**: Show the number of fingers on a scale, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest.  
*How well do I know this?*  
1    2    3    4    5  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Try...**  
3 - 5 of these activities in a meeting or training in the next few months.

5. I know it so well I could explain it to anyone.
  4. I can do it alone.
  3. I need some help.
  2. I could use some more practice.
  1. I'm only beginning.
13. **Wraparounds:** Learners form a circle. Each person takes a turn telling... a. Something he will use from information or activities learned today. b. Something he will remember from today. c. A significant AHA! from the session
  14. **Talking Topic:** a. Form A/B partners. b. A tells a fact to B. c. B gives another fact back. d. Partners keep swapping facts back and forth
  15. **Conversation Circles:** Form a conversation circle with a group of three learners. The following is a way to use circles to improve communication. a. Individuals assume A, B, or C names. b. "A" starts talking and continues until signal. c. "B" continues with topic. d. "C" then picks up the topic. e. Continue until there are no more facts or ideas to add to the topic.
  16. **Donut:** Draw a donut shape. On the outside, write, "*I am learning....*". On the inside, write, "*I know...*".
  17. **Rotation Reflection:** a. Post charts around the room with a related topic written on each sheet. b. Small groups gather at each location to give ideas and views on the chart topic. c. A recorder fills in the charts with the ideas generated. d. A signal is given for the groups to move to the next chart and respond to the topic. e. Groups continue around the room, visiting each chart and adding ideas. f. The last group remains at the chart, consolidates information, and reports it to the large group.
  18. **More Ideas!:** Select items from the following list that are appropriate. Create a Data Board, leaving room for feedback from the learners in each section chosen. Learners respond to the appropriate question, and their answers are posted. They can keep adding to the board for however long necessary. Here are the topics: *What I brought, What I want, Learnings for Me, Suggestions for Next Time, Questions I have, Guesses, Pluses, Minuses, Insights, Requests, Favorites, Dislikes, Teach Me!*
  19. **Five Minute Write:** Learners make requests and comments, ask questions, and share reflections.
  20. **Line Dialogues:** Learners form two lines (A/B) and ask each other questions using cue cards. After each pair has dialogued, Line B shifts to match up with new partner.
  21. **Information Gap:** Learners work in pairs each with a different worksheet containing missing information and ask each other questions in order to complete their forms.
  22. **Conversation Grid:** Learners use a trainer-generated grid to ask and answer questions.
  23. **Plot data:** Learners plot data on a variety of graphic organizers
  24. **Focus Groups:** Learners discuss a specific topic to share ideas, identify needs, evaluate class activities, and give suggestions for instruction.
  25. **Timelines:** Learners create a written or visual timeline of events.
  26. **Graphic Organizers:** Learners use mind maps of all sorts to organize thoughts and concepts.
  27. **Grand Finale Comment:** Right before learners leave the training ask them to give feedback. Here are some ideas.  
*Today I learned... Tomorrow I need... \* Our group was great today when we... \*Today I felt... because... \* I hope we ... next. \*One word to describe today is ...*

## Training Tips

- 1. Stick to an agenda.** Display it and refer to it from time to time. Let people know the time limits for activities; give a two minute warning to finish activity.
- 2. Focus on the learning objectives (which should be based on job performance competencies).** Straying from the training topic for too long will derail your plan and leave learners feeling disappointed.
- 3. Train adults as adults.** Challenge them, respect them, listen to them, provide for self – discovery in a safe environment.
- 4. Promote equal participation.** Use round robin, flexible groupings, avoid eye contact with the dominant talkers, ask the quieter people questions directly, thank people for their contributions but then say “Let’s get some other opinions/ideas.”
- 5. Deal with dysfunctional behavior.** Intervene directly and make the person aware of the problem. Listen to any complaints and offer help insofar as you have control over the resolution. Ask for the person’s cooperation.
- 6. Give your best!** People have high expectations of you. If you do become aware of a problem, don’t apologize, just move on to fix it.
- 7. Model what you are teaching.** Embed activities into your training that model what learners will be expected to do on the job. For example, if they need to cooperate with each other create activities in which they actually have to work and cooperate together.
- 8. Listen to the learners.** Listen to what and HOW they say it.
- 9. Provide a safe environment.** Learners need to practice skills before being expected to use them in the workplace. Use humor, stress the importance of learning from feedback, be a role model.
- 10. Have fun.** People learn best when they are relaxed. Tell jokes, laugh at yourself, illustrate theory with amusing anecdotes, use short activities that are fun, keep an upbeat tempo, have fun yourself.

## Working with Large Groups

Learner Centered approaches can be applied to large group trainings but attention needs to be put on key details: logistics, trainer attitude, transitions, interactive activities and feedback tools.

### **Logistics \*\*\*\*\***

It is important to set up the **room** to facilitate the creation of small learning communities. This means having round tables and enough space around them to accommodate communication.

**Groupings** should generally be formed in advance using symbols/colors on name tags or putting name tags directly on the tables. Also, it is critical to have all **materials** already placed on tables to avoid passing out them out during the session. They can be put upside down to signal to learners not to pick up right away.

### **Trainer Attitude \*\*\*\*\***

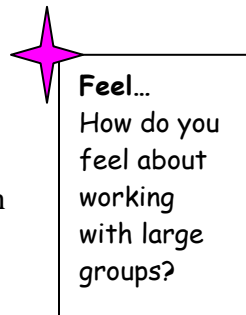
A **calm** and **confident** attitude will carry the group. **Voice projection** and energy help support the pacing as well. Giving **clear**, straightforward **directions** is a must for guiding a large group. **Dealing directly with** any **interruptions** will go a long way to keeping things running smoothly.

### **Transitions \*\*\*\*\***

Executing learner centered activities naturally involves many transitions as learners move in and out of different groupings and exercises. **Be clear** in advance what transitioning forms you will employ. **Transitional methods** might include: raising your hand, saying “If you hear my voice, clap once.”, turn the light switch on/off, turn music on. It’s OK to tell the learners how you are going to get their attention.

### **Interactive Activities \*\*\*\*\***

Here are some examples of activities that are interactive but can done with minimal disruption to the flow of the training.



**Stand Up Exercise:** A. Ask everyone to stand up. Trainer chooses different people to share something (Ex: name/what they do); all people who do the same thing sit down. Continue until

everyone has sat down. B. Trainer calls out something and people stand if it applies to them (Ex: Who works in the north region?)

**Pipe Cleaners** (or other manipulative): Ask learners at each table to use pipe cleaners to create an image of something (Ex: What does VENA look like?)

**Highlighter Exercise:** Partners at tables read something short together then highlight key ideas or highlight something that the trainer directs them to (Ex: Find the key components of critical thinking for VENA.) Each pair could be given a different content piece to find then everyone discusses what they found. The group could follow this with discussion questions.

**Pictures:** Provide learners with pictures and guiding questions related to the training topic. Pairs discuss then share with small group. Provide extra pictures for those who finish sooner than the rest.

**Strategy Exercise:** Trainer gives the group a challenge they need to address. Individuals at each table generate one strategy to meet the challenge. Everyone stands, goes around and asks others what strategies they have. People sit down after stating or hearing their strategy.

**Poster Session at tables:** Learners are given a task to respond to in writing (Ex: What are 5 ways to motivate WIC participants to follow the Care Plan?). Groups write their answers then lay out the paper on the table. When everyone is done, the trainer asks groups to walk to the table next to them and look at the responses. Trainer could ask the groups to do demonstrations to the rest or part of the whole group.

**Video/Graphic Organizer:** Learners watch a clip from a video and complete a mind map to organize the information. When done, individuals take their papers and find one person at a different table and share the information. Tables or individuals can be given different graphic organizers with a different content focus.

**Rating Exercise:** Trainer presents case studies and solutions. Learners indicate which solution would be best by holding up fingers (1 finger = not a good solution; 2 fingers = OK solution or

I'm not sure; 3 fingers = great solution). Whole group shares their ideas according to the rating (i.e., some people with a 1 finger rating share their ideas, etc.)

**Framing:** For practicing new ways of communicating, trainer gives learners a written “frame” in which they have to complete with their own words. (Ex: On a power point the words are “I see that you are smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, I \_\_\_\_\_.”)

### **Feedback Tools \*\*\*\***

**Identifying Difficulty:** Learners look at a list of items (Ex: Steps to VENA) and identify which ones are difficult for them to do or understand. Partners discuss the difficulty then the trainer goes through each item as people identify their difficulty by raising their hand. This could be followed by a question/answer session on the most highly identified item.

**Exit Tickets:** Learners use post its to write a question or comment about something they are confused about. Trainer addresses them at a later time.

**Table Pounding:** This is not a precise measurement of opinion but helps generate energy and can be fun. Trainer asks learners to agree or disagree with statements (Ex: VENA will be useful in my job). Learners indicate their support by pounding their fists under their tables.

**Open/Closed Fists:** Trainer says a statement (Ex: I understand how to use critical thinking in the VENA process.) and learners open fist to indicate a “yes” response and close fist for “no”.

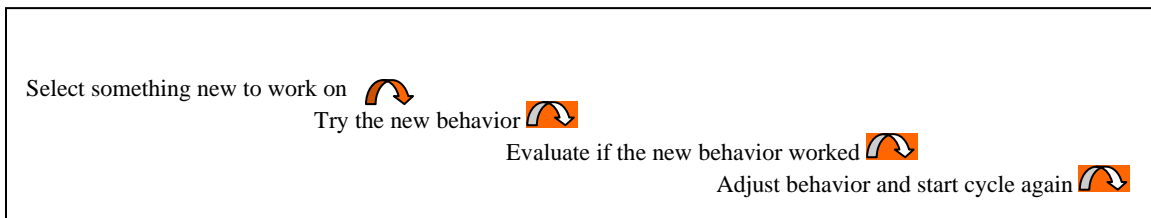
## Post – Training Activities

Developing new skills requires on – going effort so it is helpful to always plan post training activities for learners. These can take many forms but should involve learner’s input in the content and or process. For example, after a training learners could choose from any of the following activities.



**Add...**  
Other ideas to this list. What makes sense to your context?

A. Learners choose a topic they would like to work on further. Use a reflective learning cycle...



B. Learners use information sheets to guide new behavior then meet with others to discuss what worked and what didn't.

C. Learners turn to mentors for specific problems.

D. Learners form peer teams and check in regularly with each other on how they are applying the new concepts and skills.

E. Learners use on – line modules to check understanding of concepts.

F. Learners use on – line forums to discuss issues related to applying the new concepts and skills.

G. Learners use a study circle to explore a topic more in depth.

# Appendices

## WIC Staff Development Worksheet

**Directions: Begin this worksheet to develop your ideas then contact the Training Coordinator to complete the rest.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information:**

---

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**A. Staff Development Idea/Need (Explain):**

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**B. List the WIC Goals and Priorities that the staff development would address:**

Idea	WIC Goal or Priority

**C. Staff development needed?** Check to see if the staff issue can be addressed through means other than staff development activities. Perhaps the issue can be solved through management or changing a simple process. Also, think about whether the staff development issue is one of a “gap” or needed enhancement in knowledge or skills, a lack of awareness, or an attitude perspective.

**D. Contact the Training Coordinator.** If you decide that staff development is required please contact the Training Coordinator and **consult with her to complete the rest of this worksheet.**

It may be possible that the staff development need you have might be shared by someone else and the Training Coordinator can help with coordinating a joint project. Also, the sooner you contact the Training Coordinator the sooner you will get support for your project.

**E. Analyze Needs:**

What **general** staff development **needs** (based on job performance competencies) will you be assessing? (circle all that apply)

Awareness    Attitude    Knowledge    Skills

What **specific** staff development **needs** (based on job performance competencies) will you be assessing? (i.e., customer service)

---

What **instrument and/or process** will you use to determine staff development needs? (circle all that apply)

Survey    Forum    Outcomes analysis    Performance reviews

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your key findings from the needs analysis?

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On a separate piece of paper, identify the **job performance competencies** that need to be addressed in the training. Write out your staff development learning objectives before you plan the activities.

**F. Develop core materials.** Based on your findings, Goals and Priorities for WIC, job performance competencies and the gap or enhancement need, determine the critical concepts, process, etc that will be presented/taught. The core materials can take the form of handouts, demonstrations, case studies.

**G. Plan staff development.** Based on your findings, Goals and Priorities for WIC, job performance competencies and the gap or enhancement need, determine what type of staff development activity you should pursue.

<b>Staff Development Stages</b> (Incorporate - Awareness, Attitude, Knowledge, Skills) (Circle all that apply)	<b>Possible Activities</b> (Circle all that apply)	<b>Other Activities</b> (Add your own ideas that are not listed here)
<b>Building the Foundation</b>	Strategic planning * Updates * Discussion Forums * Meetings * Online information * Needs Analysis * Timelines * Power Point Presentations * Messaging * PR * ROSIE Bulletin	
<b>Implementation</b>	Meetings * Trainings * Conferences * E – Learning * Discussion Forums * Power Point Presentations * Study Circles * Mentoring	
<b>Assessment</b>	On – going in trainings, conferences, E – Learning * Evaluation/feedback forms * Discussion Forums * Outcome data * Performance data	
<b>Institutionalization</b>	On the job supports: info sheets, guides * Policies * Procedures * Mentoring * Study Circles * Discussion Forums * Monitoring	

**List the activities** that you chose or created above in the spaces provided. Write in who will be responsible for the activities and the timeline in which they will complete them.

<b>Foundation Building Activities</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>


<b>Implementation Activities</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>

<b>Assessment Activities</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>

<b>Continuing Education Activities</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>

**G. Broadcast your event(s).** Keep the Training Coordinator up to date on your activities so she can put them on the WI WIC Training Connection website and support you in your activities.

**H. Implement your event(s).** If you are doing a training, refer to the WIC Training Checklist that follows.

**I. Reflect and Institutionalize the learning.** After your events, reflect on the evaluations/feedback and consider what needs to be institutionalized further (in addition to things you may have already thought of). Consider what has changed as a result of the staff development activities. Are people more aware? Has their attitude shifted? Have they developed new knowledge and skills? How do you know?

## WIC Training Checklist

### Before the training

Have I ...

\_\_\_ completed the WIC Staff Development Worksheet and consulted with the Training Coordinator?

\_\_\_ reviewed the training material in light of the content and audience?

\_\_\_ decided on presentation style?

- lecture
- discussion
- role play
- demonstration
- games and learning activities
- case study
- other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ decided on the use of group work?

- Pairs for \_\_\_\_\_
- Small groups for \_\_\_\_\_
- Whole group for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ sequenced the session?

- Welcome and Introductions \_\_\_\_\_
- Icebreaker \_\_\_\_\_
- Clarification of and buy – in to objectives \_\_\_\_\_
- Individual training modules
- Breaks
- Questions/Answers
- Wrap – Up
- Evaluation

\_\_\_ prepared my visuals and handouts?

\_\_\_ stocked my supplies?

- I need:
- \_\_\_ pens/pencils
  - \_\_\_ paper
  - \_\_\_ readings/handouts
  - \_\_\_ manuals
  - \_\_\_ poster paper
  - \_\_\_ whiteboard/markers

- post – its
- index cards
- laptop/projector
- other items:
- checked my training venue?

## During the training

Am I ...

- assigning amounts of time to each presentation and activity?
- keeping track of time?
- managing the time on each topic as appropriate to the participants' needs and interests?
- aware of which participants are interested the entire training and which participants are interested in certain topics?
- ensuring equal participation in the training?
- including on – going assessment to make sure participants understand concepts?
- making myself available to participants during breaks and meals?
- using my visuals well, not standing in front of them or keeping them up longer than necessary?
- keeping a running list/"parking lot" of questions and comments and referring back to them when there is a little extra time?
- giving my contact information to participants?

## After the training

Have I ...

- entertained participants' questions at the close of the training?
- considered how the training aligned with WIC Goals and Priorities?
- considered how I incorporated learner centered approaches into the training?
- considered how I involved all participants?
- read the evaluations and made notes as to what will stay the same and what will change the next time this training is given?
- emailed answers to participants whose questions I did not have time or resources to answer during the training?
- sent materials to participants who requested them?

(Adapted from CAELA Guide for Adult ESL Trainers, 2006)

## **Learner-Centered Education**

California WIC Program July 2002

Learner-centered education (LCE) celebrates learning. It is exciting, energizing, and creates a “buzz” in the air! When education is learner-centered, it is done “with” instead of “to” WIC families. WIC families and WIC staff are partners in the learning. We cannot “empower” learners, but we can invoke the power that people already have. In learner-centered education: - learners are included in the educational decision-making - the diverse experiences of learners are encouraged and integrated into learning - differences in learners’ cultures, abilities, styles, developmental stages, and needs are respected- learners are treated as individuals. When learners get excited about learning there’s always a story to share about the experience. Learner-centered education can be documented in story, song, and poetry. Learners leave feeling that they are “brilliant” because of the rich experience of the learning. You’ll hear “Oh, now I’ve got it.”

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### Graphic Organizers

<http://www.graphic.org/goindex.html>

<http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/index.html>

### Cubing

<http://www.dcmoboces.com/dcmoiss/staffdev/oinit/dile/didocs.htm>