

ORGANIZING AN EFFECTIVE WORKSHOP IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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The term workshop has been borrowed from engineering. There are usually workshops in the engineering. In these workshops persons have to do some task with their hand to produce something, Question Bank Workshops are organized in education to prepare questions on the subject. The designers are given knowledge and training for preparing questions in the workshop.

Teaching is a continuum from conditioning to indoctrination and training. The new innovations and practices of education are introduced by organizing workshop in which teachers are trained to use new practices in their teaching learning process. The workshops are organized to develop the cognitive and psychomotor aspects of the learner regarding practices of new innovations in area of education. Participants have to do some practical work to produce instructional teaching and testing material.

OBJECTIVE OF WORKSHOP

General objective:

- To enhance the capabilities of teachers in planning and implementing instruction in teachers training classes as well as in evaluating pupil performance.
- Acquire deeper understanding of the philosophy, goals, objectives, special features of teaching, and the different roles of teachers in teaching.

Demonstrate competence in:-

- The preparation of lesson plans, tests and instructional materials.
- The use of instructional materials.
- The use of different teaching strategies.
- Drawing in a community support.
- Structuring class rooms for effective teaching.
- Demonstrate training skills in designing training programs for teachers, school administrators and supervisors.

OBJECTIVES RELATED WITH COGNITIVE DOMAIN

The workshop is organized to achieve the following cognitive objectives:

- To solve the problem of teaching profession.
- To provide the philosophical and sociological background for instructional and teaching situation.
- To identify the educational objectives in the present context.
- To develop an understanding regarding the use of a theme and problem.

Objectives Related With Psychomotor Domain

The following objectives are achieved by this technique under psychomotor domain:

- To develop the proficiency for planning and organizing teaching and instructional activities.

- To develop the skills to perform a task independently.
- To determine and use of teaching strategies effectively.
- To train the persons for using different approaches of teaching.

FUNCTIONS OF WORKSHOP

Workshops are great for brainstorming, interactive learning, building relationships, and problem solving. The purpose of higher learning is to develop the capacity to respect the ideas and feelings of others; healthy criticism, appreciation, and present own ideas and seek clarification. The learner should be able to present his own views on the theme. These potentialities can only be developed by employing higher technique of teaching and instruction at higher level. A workshop is one of the main techniques used for higher learning.

- The workshop technique is used to seek explore and identify the solutions to a problem; to permit the extensive study of a situation its background and its social and philosophical implications.
- It is used for insurance teachers for giving awareness and training of new practices and innovation.
- It provides an opportunity to prepare specific professional vocational or community, service functions. A high degree of individual participation is encouraged. It permits group determination of goal and method.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURE OF A WORKSHOP

Prepare for a workshop that will be not only relevant and productive, but memorable. This is why advance planning is a necessity. Follow these phases to make sure your workshop a valuable experience for everyone:

PRE-ACTIVE PHASE

Designing and implementing a workshop takes a lot of preparation. After deciding what to do, make sure that everything – from handouts to equipment – is ready so the workshop runs smoothly and learning can occur. Participants should have clear expectations for your workshop and how it fits into larger Education efforts.

PLAN THE BUDGET

This is an important first step. Check with the school management and see if there is a budget set aside for inter-active co-academic activities, also check with the university or directorate of higher education or government agencies attached with Human resource ministry, as they may also offer limited funds to organize the workshop. Local businesses may donate money or charge a small admission fee if necessary.

Build support for the workshop. This means getting approval, resources and/or help from colleagues, administrators, financial supporters, and other key player for the workshop. Explain to them how the workshop will enhance and complement the mission of their institution, it is also important to discuss with these key players where they might like to be involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating your workshop.

LOCATE RESOURCE PERSONNEL

Look for a Resource personnel, there are several resources to locate a qualified Resource personnel. Once the Resource personnel is located there are several important questions need to be asked-

- Resource personnel fee
- Resource personnel availability
- Resource personnel needs (power, technical equipment, seating, tables, screen)
- What topics they will cover and length of presentation
- Method of payment accepted
- Cancellation policy

THINGS TO CONFIRM WITH THE RESOURCE PERSONNEL

One week before workshop confirm the date, time, address and any special needs with the Resource personnel. Provide a cell phone number to the Resource personnel, so that they can reach if there are any delays or issues.

SELECT A TOPIC

Think about topics that will be of interest to the learning community as a whole. Selecting a topic that is too narrow will create difficulty to get a lot of attendees. Some sample topics that are often popular with teacher educators' are-

1. New format of lesson planning.
2. Writing objective in behavioral terms.
3. Preparing objective type tests which are objective centered.
4. Action research projects for classroom problems.
5. Preparing instructional material or teaching model.
6. Workshop on Micro teaching.
7. Workshop on Interaction analysis technique.
8. Workshop on test construction.
9. Workshop on preparing research synopsis or proposals.
10. Workshop on non formal education.
11. Workshop on designing program for teacher education.

DEFINE THE GOALS /CREATE AN AGENDA

Many workshops are a waste of time because there's no clear goal kept at the center of the discussion. Every workshop must have a goal. Now as the primary objective is clear and knowledge about participants is known, start to develop an outline of how to achieve the workshop's goal.

Main points –

Create a list of main points to discuss, and then break down each larger point into details to communicate to the participants.

Visual aids –

List the visual aids, if any, to be used for each point. Provide technical support, this helps the people providing it to determine where they need to focus their efforts.

Discussions and activities –

Take time to list exactly which group discussions and activities one have at which point in the workshop. How much time will be allowed for each exercise? Make sure the activities are appropriate for the size of the group, and ensure that the venue has the resources (for example, seminar rooms) needed to run sessions.

Remember, the more detailed the plan will be, the more the probability will be that the workshop will run to schedule – and be successful.

SELECT THE RIGHT LOCATION

If number of participants is small, then the conference room probably be just fine. But if there are more participants, find an outside location that's large enough. Think about the logistics and practical details of the workshop when to choose the location. Will everyone be able to see the visual aids? If there is a need for a certain technology, like teleconferencing, will the location support it? Are there appropriate facilities for breakout sessions? Will everyone be able to reach the venue? Will there is a need to organize accommodation for people who are coming from a long way away? And what catering facilities does the venue provide?

Room arrangement is important. One needs to set up the workshop space to facilitate learning and interaction. If one has designed small group activities throughout the workshop, one might want four or five participants seated at each table, which is angled so everyone can easily see the front of the room. If there is a large group than don't plan to use smaller discussion sessions, try arranging the chairs in semicircular rows, with a middle aisle and space on all sides. Posters, maps and other visual aids should be used to help enliven the room. The goal is to create an environment where everyone feels comfortable, where one can walk around and interact with participants, and where everyone can see everyone else.

Arrange required Resources

- Equipment/other facilities.
- Production of materials
- Financial support for training and materials and curriculum development.

Expert assistance-

- Development and production of materials.
- Training
- Management of project
- Curriculum and instruction
- Information on teaching, brochures literature, etc

ARRANGE OTHER AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

Workshop facilitators use audio-visual aids to enhance their workshops and the different learning styles of workshop participants. Slides, videos and films can bring environmental concepts to life. Handouts, overheads or flip charts can be used to emphasize a point by drawing attention to it and thereby enabling participants to focus on the topic. The choice of medium will depend on many things – room design, workshop format, topic, amount of time available, time of day, and personal preference. Here are a few things to think about when making the choices.

NEWSPRINT/FLIP CHART/CHALKBOARD

Write large enough so that letters can be read at the back of a room. A flip chart has several advantages: pieces of paper can be saved and hung on the walls as “visuals” and the papers can be prepared before the workshop, and saved from one workshop to the next. Use appropriate colors, and keep the amount of text per page to a minimum.

OVERHEAD PROJECTION

For workshops with a large number of participants, “overhead transparencies” have the advantages of the image being larger and the facilitator faces the group while writing. Transparencies can also be prepared in advance. Keep the text to a minimum and use large letters.

DEVELOP A FOLLOW-UP PLAN

Before starting each workshop, think about how it will be evaluated. Use this evaluation to revise and improve the workshop. Try some of the many different ways of conducting workshop evaluations, from paper to pencil evaluations to small group discussions. Make sure to evaluate and revise the workshop accordingly. It's also important to have a plan to communicate the decisions that were reached during the workshop. Send out a mass email to everyone with the details? Put it on your college's intranet? People need to know that their hard work actually resulted in a decision or action, so keep them informed about what's happening after the workshop has ended.

ACTIVE PHASE-

Generally workshops are organized for three to ten days. In special cases the period of workshop may be 40 days. It depends on the nature of task assigned to the workshop.

SET THE RIGHT TONE

When a group of teacher educators files into a room to take part in a workshop each participant brings certain expectations, fears and experiences. As the workshop facilitator, one needs to build on their knowledge and background to create a welcoming climate. Remember that workshop participants are likely to have different learning styles as well as a desire to take part in activities that will generate positive feedback and peer respect. By using the facilitation skills and attending to participants' learning build an atmosphere of trust and help the participants get the most out of the experience. There is also need to plan opportunities for ongoing support arising from the workshop.

START THE MEETING WITH A FEW ICEBREAKERS TO GET EVERYONE RELAXED AND COMFORTABLE

Open the workshop with something that motivates participants and gets them excited about it. The opening can also provide a rationale for why learning for a sustainable environment is important to participants and how the workshop will be useful to them. This is the time to make introductions, conduct a relevant ice-breaker activity, read a motivational quotation or story, or use a special demonstration or gimmick to get the attention of the participants and draw them into the workshop. If this is not the first session, use part of this time to describe how the new session fits into the overall framework of the workshop. After that, ask a question or two to help participants focus on the topic.

PRESENT THE THEME TO PROVIDE AWARENESS

This stage continues first two days of the schedule. In the first stage theoretical background is provided to the participants. Resource persons or experts are invited to provide the awareness and understanding of the topic. Paper reading is done to discuss the different aspects of the theme. The trainees or participants are given opportunities to seek clarification. The experts provide the suitable illustration and steps for using it in classroom teaching or education.

Give participants an opportunity to ask questions about the goals or objectives, add ideas, or raise concerns. For it conduct an expectations activity: ask participants to list their expectations on a flip chart and then explain how some or most of these will be met during the course of the workshop. Display their expectations on the wall and refer to them at the end of the workshop.

INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS

After having a solid advance plan, figure out how to bring some excitement into the event Make the information fun and memorable for the team? Creating group exercises is different for each workshop. Keep these tips in mind:

- Many people are nervous about speaking up in an unfamiliar group. For plan group exercises, keep the size of each group small, so people are more comfortable talking and interacting.
- Mix up different types of people in each group.
- Determine how to record the ideas from each group.
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There are many ways to design effective workshops. However, in all workshops it is best to engage participants in thought-provoking activities and discussions directly relevant to their work and lives. It doesn't take long for participants to tune in if they can make the connection between the workshop and their own experiences. Incorporate the experiential learning cycle into all workshop sessions to ensure high

interest, relevance, and engagement. Also remember to model effective education strategies that involve participants and show them how they can use the same techniques in their own teacher education work.

POST ACTIVE PHASE

Evaluate the material prepared

Evaluate the material prepared by the participants, as follow up. For this groups meet at one place and present their reports of work done at second stage. The participants are given opportunists to comment and give suggestions of different aspects of the report; formalities are observed at the end of the workshop.

Generalizing is one of the most important parts of a workshop. By trying to identify key generalizations about the experience, participants can see how the activity relates to themselves. Questions such as “What insights did you get from this experience?” or “What was the most important lesson from the session and why?” can help participants begin to think about how the experience relates to their everyday work and lives. When generalizing, participants can learn by listening to others and may even change their attitudes as a result of doing so. Generalizing questions nudge participants to broader levels of analysis: instead of reviewing and commenting on specifics, they are asked to address an overall perspective, insight, or attitude.

CONCLUDING WORKSHOP AND FOLLOW- UP

The workshop should end with, the facilitator, briefly summarizing the key workshop events, linking these to the goals and original expectations. It is important for participants to feel that they accomplished what they set out to do, that their expectations were met, and that there is closure. Use this step to close one session and make a link to the next one. A follow-up program is an important part of a good workshop. The effectiveness of a workshop is ascertained by a follow up program. The trainees are asked to continue their task and examine the workability and usability in their institutions. The participants are invited to meet again and present their experiences regarding applicability of the topic or new practices. They may give some practical suggestion in this context. A report of the workshop is prepared. At the end of the workshop, hand out an evaluation sheet to the attendees. This will help to determine if the workshop was well received and can often offer an opportunity to poll attendees about interest in future workshop programs.

ROLES IN WORKSHOP

Role of Organizer of the Workshop

The programmed and schedule is prepared by the organizer. He has to arrange for boarding and lodging facilities for participants as well as the experts.

ROLE OF CONVENER IN FIRST STAGE

At first stage of the workshop theoretical aspects are discussed by the experts on the theme of the workshop. Therefore, a convener is nominated or invited who is well acquaint with the theme or the workshop. He has to conduct workshop at this stage and he has to observe the formalities and key note of the workshop.

ROLE OF EXPERTS OR RESOURCE PERSONS

In organizing a workshop, resources persons play an important role in providing theoretical and practical aspects of the theme. They provide guidance to participants at every stage and train them to perform the task effectively

ROLE OF PARTICIPANTS OR TRAINEES

The participants should be keen or interested in the theme of the workshop. At the first stage, they have to acquire understanding of the theme. At second stage, they have to practice and perform the task will

great interest and seek proper guidance from the experts. They should try to carry the concept to their classroom to evaluate its workability in actual situation. The effectiveness of any workshop depends upon the involvement of the participants in the task.

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