



Chapter III

CONDUCTING THE TRAINING SESSIONS AND WORKSHOPS

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Get to know about Poland – Training Materials for Trainers and Teachers

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1. Learning process

The teaching process should not rely solely on the teacher or trainer communicating the knowledge – the willingness of a student to assimilate the knowledge as well as his or her abilities are of crucial importance here. Tendencies in the learning process largely depend on information channels. In terms of habits and predispositions, several groups can be distinguished: auditory learners who prefer verbal messages, for example, lectures and discussions, visual learners who prefer visual messages, for example, presentations and illustrations, and kinaesthetic learners who learn most effectively through activities in which they are actively involved. It is worth mentioning the so-called “Cone of Learning” (or Dale’s Cone) according to which we remember things mostly via experience, observation and design. Dale’s Cone determines the amount of information that we are able to memorise relative to the involvement of various senses and processes:

- 10% of what we read (reading),
- 20% of what we hear (listening),
- 30% of what we see (watching illustrations),
- 50% of what we see and hear (watching films, exhibits, live demonstrations),
- 70% of what we say and write (giving lectures, participating in discussions),
- 90% of what we say and do (role-playing, preparing and participating in experiments, designing and carrying out experiments by oneself).

Due to the various ways in which students acquire knowledge, the trainer or teacher should choose the methods and forms of work in such a way as to best support the learners. In addition, while planning activities they should pay attention to the following aspects: goals and methods, available teaching aids, characteristics of the group (number, age, knowledge and skills of the participants), duration of the course and independent factors (place – space for courses, equipment, time of the day).

Any activities aimed at broadening knowledge and developing practical skills, while at the same time not taking place within a formally established education system, are included in the so-called non-formal education category which, by using active methods, such as group work, games and simulations, or interactive activities, is closely associated with the personal and emotional experience of the participants, both physically and mentally. The teacher-student relationship is much less formal and focuses on bilateral activities. The learning process is tailored to the student’s needs and is much more flexible than in formal education, and the applied methods and forms of work are considered to be those which can activate the learners. Below are some examples of activating teaching methods and techniques.



2. Activating teaching methods and techniques

Pair Work

Pair work is a good choice if: the group is large, the participants do not know one another well, the leaders stand out and want to speak, or your aim is to involve every participant in the discussion. When the participants work in pairs, they have more time for the presentation and discussion of the issue, and they can speak more freely. After several minutes of debate, each pair should share with others the information about the course of their conversation and the conclusions.

Group Work

Group work helps to develop team work by drawing on the group members' knowledge, talents and skills; it allows everyone to take part in the exercise. During group work, the participants can improve: *communication skills*, including expressing themselves and listening to others; *cooperation skills*, such as aiming at a common goal; *decision-making skills*, including finding solutions.

Association Chart

An association chart is used for defining concepts by means of various associations, or for finding creative solutions to problems by making a list of possibilities. Participants can work in two groups – each group writes down their associations or answers to given questions, then the groups swap their sheets and complement the association charts with new ideas. In the end, the participants discuss their associations and ideas together.

Mind Map

A mind map pools the experiences and knowledge of the participants, who present a problem or issue in a visual form, which helps to order and group pieces of information, and find the connections between them. The teacher writes down a key word, problem or question in the centre of the sheet. The participants prepare their own associations on the given concept, and express them as sentences, words, drawings or symbols; then, they put them in order, create groups of ideas, and write them down on the main sheet. They look for patterns and correlations between the concepts, and present them by drawing colourful lines, pictures or symbols.

Metaplan

A metaplan teaches argumentation, as well as the presentation and defence of one's own point of view; it helps to develop the skills of analysing, assessing facts, and drawing conclusions. The participants discuss a given topic, while creating a poster as a visual summary of their conversation. The poster should contain visual elements, such as circles, rectangles, clouds, in which the following aspects are written down: Topic; *How is it?* – a description of the actual state of affairs, *How should it be?* – a description of an ideal state of affairs; *Why is it not how it should be?* – reasons for the discrepancies between the actual and ideal states; Conclusions – they should serve as a trigger for further actions.

Decision Tree

A decision tree enables a thorough analysis of a problem that has more than two solutions; it helps to make choices and decisions in difficult and ambiguous situations. Participants adopt aims and values to guide them through a decision process; they then analyse a given problem, note down the advantages and disadvantages of different solutions, and then assess whether a particular solution would have a positive or negative outcome. It is worth taking advantage of the visual structure of a tree, where the root is a situation that requires some kind of response; the lower boughs are possible solutions, while the branches above them are the results of the solutions proposed and the treetop holds the aims and values.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming facilitates the introduction of a new subject, solving a specific problem, or finding answers to a given question. It uses the participants' creativity via a quick and spontaneous production of various ideas. All words, solutions and associations, no matter how crazy, are written on a board – it is important to refrain from assessment or judgement. Participants inspired by each other can create a lot more ideas than they could when working on their own. Then, the ideas should be grouped and analysed, and the ones which would lead to solving the given problem should be developed. ***Writing on the wall*** is a form of "individual" brainstorming – first, participants write down their ideas and associations individually on post-it notes, then stick them to a wall, compare and discuss them.

Expert Puzzle

An expert puzzle is an information gap activity that actively engages the participants in the learning process. They need to remember a certain amount of information that is dividable into coherent parts (puzzle pieces). Each participant should learn all the information, using the knowledge of others. The participants work in so-called expert groups – each of them receives an issue which should be understood and remembered, and then explains it to the members of another group. Then the teams swap places, and the participants convey what they have just learned to others.

Learning Stations

This strategy teaches how to use acquired knowledge in practice, as well as seeking and ordering information from many sources. The participants become familiar with different issues by visiting learning stations where they find didactic materials and tasks to be performed. In the end, the participants present models, texts or solutions, and they tell the others what was important for them at a given station.

Pyramid Discussion (Snowball)

A pyramid discussion develops the abilities to agree on a common position, negotiate and formulate thoughts. The participants describe a given issue or solve a problem individually, then in pairs, then in groups of four, eight, etc. It is important to develop a common position both in small subgroups, and eventually as a whole group.

Panel Discussion

A panel discussion requires the participants to make substantial preparations beforehand. This entails a division into two groups – the speakers (experts who present a given issue, and then lead a joint discussion) and the audience (people who ask questions and complement the discussion with comments). The speakers' discussion is moderated by the teacher who finally summarises the substantive content of the discussion, the participants' justification skills, and the arguments presented by them.

For and Against Debate

A for and against debate provides an opportunity to analyse problems from various points of view. Participants are obliged to respond to a given issue, then develop their arguments and present them as a debate. The teacher writes arguments and counterarguments on a board or a flipchart which are then discussed and conclusions drawn.

Oxford Debate

An Oxford debate enables a complex analysis of given issues. Two teams, supporters and opponents of an idea, take part in a debate on a previously agreed topic. Each team assigns people responsible for the presentation and justification of arguments and counterarguments, and for summarising their standpoint. The audience can ask questions, and at the end of the debate they support a particular group.

Six Thinking Hats

The Six Thinking Hats technique is a creative way of solving problems by indicating six different perspectives from which the problem can be viewed. Simple argumentation and the defence of one's position develops into a constructive discussion, during which a certain position concerning the issue is adopted. The hats are of various colours symbolising different perspectives from which the problem or situation is viewed: *white* – objectivity, neutrality, data, facts; *black* – difficulties, mistakes, flaws, pessimism; *red* – emotions, subjective impressions, intuition; *green* – ideas, solutions, opportunities; *blue* – conclusions, rules, priorities, plan; *yellow* – optimism, benefits, dreams, positive attitude. While putting on different hats, you change your way of thinking.

Carpet of Ideas

The carpet of ideas allows a shift from an analysis of the reasons for a given problem or phenomenon to individual actions undertaken to solve the problem. It makes the participants aware that in many situations they can do or change something, instead of complaining. The analysis begins with working in small groups: *problem recognition* – why is it so? and *looking for solutions* – what can be done to change it? Then the participants work individually: *action individualisation* – what actions will I take to solve the problem? and *evaluation of ideas* – what will I try to do and what am I going to do to solve the problem? All thoughts, associations and answers to the aforementioned questions are written down on small pieces of paper, and then combined on big sheets which form the carpet.

Priority Pyramid

The priority pyramid consists of an evaluation and creation of a hierarchy for a given subject or problem. Participants work in groups and develop answers to a question posed, then they place the best proposals at the top, less important ones in the middle, and the least valuable at the bottom of a pyramid. The groups describe, explain and compare their choices concerning the given topic.

Fishbone diagram

The fishbone diagram aims to identify factors contributing to the emergence of a problem. The teacher draws a simplified fish skeleton on the board or a big sheet of paper, and places the problem to be analysed in its skull. During the course of brainstorming, the participants point out basic reasons which they believe influence the actual problem (the teacher adds them to the drawing along the “big fishbones”). Then they work in groups developing and justifying reasons which influence the main factors (the teacher adds them to the drawing along the “small fishbones”). Then a general discussion takes place and the most appropriate detailed arguments are chosen.

Source Text Analysis

Source text analysis helps to learn important issues while searching independently for information in a text. The teacher should define the aim of reading and pose questions concerning the text. The participants should first read the text to understand its basic ideas, and then read it again to find the information that provides answers to the questions. An interesting version of the exercise is a person's **biography analysis**. The participants read the biography, then gather necessary information about the person, find answers to the questions, and do a creative role-play to present the person.

Case Study

A case study consists in studying a specific case or event through a critical analysis of data which makes it easier to understand all the factors similar to the one being analysed. Case studies are short stories about people or events, which illustrate a given problem. A case analysis contains: *diagnosis of the situation* – What has happened? What were the reasons for it? What problems have emerged in relation to the event?; *looking for solutions* – How can the problem be solved? What criteria should be adopted to make the best possible decision?; *discussion on the solutions* – argumentation and discussion on the presented solutions to the problem; *transfer to real-life situations* – How is the described case similar to real situations? Which conclusions from the analysis can be useful in real situations?

SWOT Analysis

- A SWOT analysis consists in ordering information on a given case or situation according to 4 categories:
- S – Strengths – benefits, assets, positive aspects,
- W – Weaknesses – flaws, negative aspects,
- O – Opportunities – everything that can bring a beneficial change, favourable situations which can be used to achieve the goal,
- T – Threats – everything that brings the danger of an unfavourable change, factors which hinder the achievement of the expected result.

Participants should find relations between these categories and answer the following questions:

- Will a given strength enable us to use a given opportunity?
- Will a given strength enable us to counteract a given threat?
- Does a given weakness limit the use of a given opportunity?
- Does a given weakness intensify the risk of a given threat?

The SWOT analysis enables the identification of factors which can help (strengths, opportunities) or prevent (weaknesses, threats) the achievement of the expected result. You should consider how to use strengths and opportunities in order to minimise weaknesses or threats.

Lecture

A lecture consists in conveying systematised knowledge in a passive way, so it is worth complementing it with real-life examples, rhetorical questions, bilateral argumentation or visual aids, such as multimedia presentations, photo shows or slides.

Talk

A talk is a dialogue between the teacher and participants, during which questions are asked and answers are obtained. Subsequent questions should result from the answers obtained, and thus stimulate the analysis and synthesis of one's knowledge as well as drawing conclusions. The talk can include: **initial conversation** – introduction of new material, **systematising conversation** – ordering knowledge and information, **imprinting conversation** – revision of the information learned, and **checking conversation** – testing the information learned.

Drama

Drama develops creativity and aids the remembering of information through experience. This method can take different forms, e.g. **improvisation** – participants know only the initial situation, whereas the further course of events and the ending are their creation; **pantomime** – presentation of a given situation using body language; **live painting** – participants present an event stopped at a certain moment; **sculpture** – presentation of characters using one's body; **museum** – participants present an exhibition on a given topic.

Role Play

Role play involves arranging a situation in which the participants play roles assigned to them. This enables the understanding of a particular issue through personal experience. The participants become actors (they play roles based on the instructions they receive, improvising to a large extent) or observers (they pay attention to different aspects of the situations presented by the actors). In the end, the exercise should be discussed with the actors (how they felt about playing their roles, what was easy and what was difficult for them) and observers (what they paid attention to, what kind of behaviours they noticed). It is important that the participants stop playing their roles and avoid stereotyping others during the discussion.

Simulation Play

A simulation play presents an opportunity to improve knowledge on the mechanisms of social, economic and political reality by reflecting an event or process, independent solving of problems, and verification of common beliefs. The teacher should prepare materials containing a description of a given situation, roles to be played, tasks for observers, and rules for the simulation. The most important part is the summary of the play – the participants analyse in detail what has happened and what processes occurred during the given event, on the basis of other people's behaviour and their own experiences during the simulation.

Forum Theatre

A forum theatre involves not only the actors, but also the spectators in the action, which allows everyone to reflect deeply on a given issue – a socially engaged theatre practice. At first, a protagonist who has a particular problem is introduced. The spectators-actors become involved in the further course of the performance by partially taking over the protagonist's role. They have the opportunity to add subsequent elements or introduce changes through "interventions"; they try alternative solutions to the problems which present everyday challenges.

3. The proposed literature and films

Websites:

- Erasmus+ Programme (PL, EN): http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
- Youthpass (PL, EN): <https://www.youthpass.eu>

Books:

- Fennes Helmut, Otten Hendrik, *Quality in non-formal education and training in the field of European youth work*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg 2008:
<https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1615/TrainingQualityandCompetenceStudy.pdf>
- *Manual for facilitators in non-formal education* (ed.) Sabine Klocker, Council of Europe, Strasbourg 2009:
https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Publications/2009_Manual_for_facilitators_en.pdf
- Gilliom Melanie, *Practical Methods for the Social Studies*, Wadworth Publishing Company Inc., Belmont 1977.
- *Motivating teaching and learning methods*, Eekhoutcentrum Kortrijk, Belgium 2012:
<http://www.tlqproject.eu/en/pdf/TLQ-BOOK-3-MTLM.pdf>
- *Poradnik edukatora*, (ed.) Marzenna Owczarz, Wydawnictwo CODN, Warszawa 2005.
- *Poznajmy się lepiej z EFS. Pokonkursowe scenariusze zajęć o Europejskim Funduszu Społecznym*, (ed.) Irena Gutowska, Centrum Projektów Europejskich – Krajowy Ośrodek EFS, Warszawa 2013.
- Rau K., Ziętkiewicz E., *Jak aktywizować uczniów. Burza mózgów i inne techniki w edukacji*, Oficyna Wydawnicza G&P, Poznań 2000.
- *The impact of Non Formal Education on young people and society* (ed. Maria Nomikou), AEGEE-Europe:
http://www.aegee.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/NFE_book.pdf
- *Training guide and training techniques*, UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok 2004: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001356/135603e.pdf>

Films:

- *Different types of Learners* (EN): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_bQUSFzLI4
- *Formal and Informal Learning* (EN): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PKIvEMsFZM>
- *Study Skills: Learning Techniques & Methods* (EN): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_WYfhOv3V-Y