

Executive Summary

This interactive workshop teaches the basics of great training facilitation. Learners will explore the attributes of adult learners, core facilitation skills, the “Curse of Knowledge,” and common challenges that might occur during training sessions.

Audience for Curriculum

This curriculum has been designed for all employees who facilitate trainings. It's geared towards a beginner level, but all levels of experience can benefit from the content.

Recommended Pre-Reading for Program Owner & Facilitator(s)

For context on the models and philosophies included in this curriculum, you might find it useful to read the following articles and book:

- [Made to Stick](#) by Chip Heath
- [Facilitating with Ease](#) by Ingrid Bens
- [The Art of Facilitation](#) by Dale Hunter
- [101 Ways to Make Training Active](#), by Mel Silberman

Recommended Delivery & Assembly of Participants

This curriculum is best delivered live and in-person, but could also be adapted for video conference. Participants will spend a large portion of time learning from each other and sharing ideas in small groups and pairs. We offer this program for groups of 15 to 20 participants over a two-hour period.

Pre-session Preparation

- Print off (1) [participant workbook](#) per person
- Determine how many small groups you'll need for brainstorm activities (e.g., if you have a class of 15, you might want 5 groups of 3).
 - Print off (1) [set of cards](#) per group
- Prepare session [slides](#)

Curriculum Elements

Unit Title	Duration	Goals	Elements
Welcome & Introductions	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce instructor to the group• Reflection questions• Agenda preview• Create class ground rules	Individual Reflection Program overview
Adult Learners	10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attributes of adult learners	Individual brainstorm Group brainstorm

Presentation	10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 3 Ts of Presenting 	Lecture Facilitator Demo
Facilitation	20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define facilitation Difference between presenting and facilitating 	Small group brainstorm
Curse of Knowledge	35 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABC Song Must Know-Could Know-Should Know 	Lecture Cards exercise
Challenging Characters	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges in your classroom 	Pairs exercise Group discussion
Wrap-up	5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review agenda Reflect on main takeaways 	Individual reflection Debrief

Alternative ways to deliver this curriculum:

- Offer over Google Hangout (or a similar platform)
- Re-design for use in peer mentor / coaching sessions

Guidance on Choosing Facilitators

This curriculum can be taught by experienced facilitators or learning and development professionals. Facilitator credibility is a key component to program success. Ideally, your facilitator has facilitated a variety of different programs themselves and can add personal stories / perspectives to the conversation.

Dates	Topic & Key messages
Welcome (15 minutes)	
	<p>Individual Reflection</p> <p><i>Have participants individually answer reflection questions on page 2 of their workbook while they settle in. This maximizes the first few minutes of class as people straggle in.</i></p>
	<p>Kick-off</p> <p><i>Once most people set-up and had time for reflection, ask for a few volunteers to share some of their thoughts to reflections questions.</i></p>

	<p>Meta questions to ask the group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why did I start with these reflection questions? (Sample responses: focus learners, find out their expectations to potentially adapt content) ● What are other kick-off questions you could use for everyone to answer for your content/trainings? (Sample responses: what questions do you have, what do you already know, what is toughest question you've gotten from client on this)
	<p>Review Agenda & Course Objectives</p> <p>In this workshop, you'll learn how to effectively facilitate a training and how to put the learner first.</p> <p><i>Go over the agenda so participants know what to expect for the two-hour session.</i></p> <p>We have intentionally designed this course to honor the diverse ways in which people learn – with detailed workbooks to supplement the slides, verbal delivery of content, and many opportunities for reflection, discussion, and hands-on practice. Please consider your own learning preferences and bring that to your experience here.</p>
<p>Adult Learners (10 minutes)</p>	
	<p>Attributes of adult learners</p> <p><i>Give instructions for group brainstorm: We're going to brainstorm together characteristics of adult learners. You'll first have one minute to brainstorm ideas on your own (you can record on page 4 of workbook).</i></p> <p><i>I'd like you to think of all the words/adjectives/phrases that, describe adult learners. You can think of yourselves, here today – you are learners. Or you can think of participants you've had in your previous classes. What are some characteristics or attributes that describe them? They can be both positive and negative!</i></p> <p><i>After one minute for individual brainstorm, ask for ideas from the group and record answers on a flipchart/whiteboard. Discuss attributes and answer any questions as you go. Answers usually range from distracted, multi-tasking, skeptical, and questioning to bright, open, interested, and motivated. See appendix of workbook (page 12) for full list of attributes</i></p> <p><i>OPTIONAL ALTERNATIVE: After one minute for individual brainstorm, put participants in groups of 3-4. Have each group write their list of adjectives on a poster sheet or sheet of paper, starting with their individual list, and brainstorming more. Give 5-7 minutes. Then ask the groups to rotate, so they are looking at another group's list, and circle anything on the 2nd list that they didn't think of. Continue with debrief.</i></p>

Debrief: If you know ahead of time how your adult learners might be showing up in the classroom, you can be more empathetic in the moment and prepared to tailor to their needs. Putting the learner first is about capitalizing on the good things and avoiding or overcoming the challenges with really good facilitation, which is what we'll be covering in this course.

Meta debrief: Now let's take a step back and think about the activity you just did.

- **Why was this activity designed this way (instead of just reading you a list of adult learner characteristics)?**
(Sample answers: got them thinking, they came up with ideas so they'll remember them better, increased energy, group bonding/unity, facilitator doesn't need to have all answers or do all the work, uses experience and ideas from participants, helps with negative of being easily distracted because they are so busy)

Presentation (10 minutes)

3 Ts of Presenting

The primary reason for this 'presentation' is for you to present something so they can compare this to facilitation. Don't spend too much time on the 3 Ts content, move quickly into facilitation afterward.

Today will just be a very quick taste of presentation skills. As a facilitator, you'll have moments when you need to present content to your audience, so we want to cover the basics, otherwise known as "The 3 Ts."

Give a quick ~2 minute presentation on the 3 Ts (Tone, Tempo, Take a Breath). Option: Exaggerate how you're speaking to really show each of the 3 Ts as you explain each one. Ie, you can speak very monotone when starting to explain Tone, or very fast or very slow about Tempo, or take a very long pause during the Take a Breath. These can be done in a funny way, but then speak normally so the audience does actually understand the main points:

- **TONE** - The tone of voice you use in your presentation will convey a sense of meaning. Try varying the tone and volume of your voice. Speaking in a monotone voice is sure to put your audience to sleep! Instead, vary your tone of voice up or down and change the volume of your voice to emphasize certain points, raise energy, or bring a sense of focus to what you're saying.
- **TEMPO** - The tempo or speed at which you're talking also needs to vary during your presentation to maintain the audience's interest. When you want to emphasize an important point, slow down and speak distinctly. When you want to cover less important points, it's OK to speed up.
- **TAKE A BREATH** - Remember to breathe. It's helpful to pause and take a breath after important points or natural breaks in the content. It gives the audience time to process what you're saying and absorb the full meaning in the content. If there is a lot of complicated language or jargon, people also need time to think each phrase through before understanding.

Facilitation (20 minutes)

Define facilitation

Now we're going to do small group brainstorms on the topic of facilitation. I'm going to break you up into small groups, and then you'll have ten minutes to define/explain facilitation.

Have group count off by however many groups you want (e.g., if you have a group of 15 and want 5 groups of 3, count off 1-5). Designate different areas of room for each number and have participants move to the area for their number.

Once in their small groups, repeat instruction to brainstorm what facilitation is and record on flipchart/whiteboard, and set timer for 10 minutes.

When there are about 2-3 minutes left: With your last couple minutes, finish this sentence as a group. Facilitation is not...

Large group debrief: Ask each group to summarize their flipchart in one minute. Highlight any responses/themes that show up across the groups.

Let's take a step back to think about what we just did – I just presented on Presenting and facilitated the Facilitation content.

- **How was this different for you as the learners?**
- **How was it different for me as the trainer?**
- **As the trainer, what did I physically do?** (Sample responses: facilitating - not as much energy, just ask questions. learners more involved and more two-way. presenting - one way flow of info, all on me, passive for learners)
- **Is facilitation better than presenting?**
- **Why is facilitation important for adult learning?**
- **How can we decide which to use for our design?** (Sample responses: presenting is important when the trainer has info to give learners that they couldn't come up with on their own; neither is better than the other, but they have different goals and both should be used)

Facilitating is about putting the learner first and respecting and using what they do know, but maybe they haven't thought about yet. A course that includes facilitation, not just presentation, is important to allow the learn to discover or use what they already know.

Break (5-10 minutes)

Prioritizing Information for Learners (35 minutes)

Curse of Knowledge

I hate to tell you this, but you're all cursed! Every trainer has the "Curse of Knowledge." Let's do a quick exercise to demonstrate what this means.

I'm going to clap out a song that you all know and we'll see if you can guess it. Don't say it out loud when you know which song I'm clapping. We'll see how many people figure it out.

Clapping exercise (from [Made to Stick](#)): Clap the ABC song (same tune as Twinkle Twinkle Little Star). After the song, have them raise their hand if they think they know and ask what it was. Keep hands up if they were right. Usually only 1 or 2 get the right answer.

In studies with this exercise, clappers and listeners were paired up, and the clappers were given songs to clap out. Clappers estimated the listener would correctly guess over 50% right, but in reality they only got 2-3% right! This wasn't studying if the listener could figure the song out, but instead if the clapper could understand how hard it would be to guess the song. And they guessed very wrongly - they thought it would be 10 or 15 times easier to guess the song that it actually was.

Because the clapper had knowledge (a song running through their head) they assumed it would be easier for someone else to understand. This is Curse of Knowledge – once you know something you can't unlearn it, and it's hard to remember what it's like to be novice. Like the slide says, the curse is that once you know, you can't go backwards and un-know!

Ask a volunteer to read quote on the slide (also in workbook):

"Every beginning instructor discovers sooner or later that his first lectures were incomprehensible because he was talking to himself, so to say, mindful only of his point of view. He realizes only gradually and with difficulty that it is not easy to place one's self in the shoes of students who do not yet know about the subject matter of the course." Jean Piaget, 1962 (one of foremost and most influential cognitive psychologists who studied how people learn)

Who can you explain this slide and how it relates to the Curse of Knowledge? (Sample responses: if the facilitator is saying things the learners don't understand, they won't remember it anyways; just because the facilitator says a point doesn't mean the group learned it)

Who has experienced the curse of knowledge, either from learner's perspective or when you were a facilitator? How did

	<p>you know the Curse was happening? (Get 2 or 3 examples/anecdotes)</p>
	<p>Must Know-Could Know-Should Know framework</p> <p>We're going to review a framework that will help with combating the Curse the Knowledge.</p> <p>As the expert, the facilitator knows all the information, but you can't get learners up to your level in a limited amount of time, so you have to prioritize which content you're going to include in the course. A good way to do this is to divide the content into what learners Must know, Should know, and Could Know.</p> <p>You can think of this is as an iceberg (<i>click for waves on slide</i>). The Must Know is the top of the iceberg that the group sees - what they actually get exposed to in the course. The rest is stuff you know, but it stays below surface and you don't overwhelm them with it.</p> <p><i>Cards Exercise (10 minutes): Use same small groups from facilitation brainstorm. Pass out (1) set of cards to each group – each card has a topic for the imaginary course "How to Use Google Drive". Have groups organize the cards into Must-Should-Could know piles. When there's one minute left, have groups move one Must Know topic to Should Know.</i></p> <p>Debrief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What would happen if we didn't prioritize our content and tried to squeeze all information in? How does this feel for learners? (Sample responses: too much information for learners so they are confused and remember barely anything; they might remember could-knows and not must-knows) ● What if someone asks a question about 'Could Know' info during the session? How can we respond or what should we do? (Sample responses: let them know that's more detailed than the topic today, make a "parking lot" of questions/topics that come up that you can come back to at end or during breaks if time, give short answer but ask them to talk to you after if they want to discuss further)
	<p>Must Know-Could Know-Should Know framework continued</p> <p><i>Individual activity: Each participant has 5 minutes to write the Must Know list for their own topic. They can use a training they have coming up, or an area of expertise as if a new team member was joining their team.</i></p> <p>Debrief: This was only a few minutes to start your list, so please keep working on it after today's session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How did you find that you were choosing what is Must Know vs Should Know? ● How did you determine what goes in different categories? (Sample responses: what the learner will experience)

	<p>first vs later; what they'll need the most based on volume of questions/cases)</p> <p>Keeping the Curse of Knowledge in mind, just like we have to respect what learners know, we also should put them first and empathize and respect how much they <u>don't</u> know and facilitate with this in mind.</p>
<p>Challenging Learners (15 minutes)</p>	
	<p>In any training session, there's usually one or two participants who are a bit of a challenge, even for the best facilitators. We're going to discuss some common Must-Know ones.</p> <p><i>Give explanation of the four challenges on slide. Then give two minutes for each participant to jot down the do's and don'ts for each of these participants on page 8 of their workbook.</i></p> <p>I gave you time to think through the dos and donts on your own before you get in pairs to keep brainstorming because some learners really appreciate having a bit of time to gather their own thoughts before jumping into discussion.</p> <p>Do any of you feel this way? <i>(Ask for show of hands)</i> It's good to keep this in mind and vary your training activities to appeal to different learning styles.</p> <p><i>Pair up and take 10 minutes to discuss tips and best practices they've used or seen that have worked (or not worked) for these types of learners. Use pages 9-10 in participant workbook.</i></p> <p>Debrief: let's review some top tips for handling each of these participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Talkative Learner: In extreme cases you might need to interrupt the person. You can do this in a nice, sneaky way by stopping them right after they make a good point with "Yes! Sorry to interrupt, but that's such a good point I want to make sure everyone heard. S/he said and that's important because..." and then keep talking so the Talkative Learner can't. ● The Cynical Learner: Make sure it doesn't become a 1:1 conversation between you and the person. Paraphrase his/her point to make sure you understood, and then open it to the rest of the group with, "What do other people think about that?" Then you see if others agree, or you get the group pushing back on the person instead of you. ● The Quiet Learner/The Disengaged Learner: Use lots of partner/small group discussions and activities. A Quiet Learner might be more comfortable sharing points in a smaller group, and a Disengaged Learners will have a hard time being disengaged when talking with one other person.
<p>Wrap-up (5 minutes)</p>	

Reflect on what you learned

Look back at your initial reflection questions and write in your workbook your top learnings you'll use, considering your original reflection questions.

If time - ask for some examples from group.

Thanks for joining us today! We hope you learned some best practices for effective facilitation and how to deal with different types of adult learners in your classroom.

Program Ends