

Workshop Development Tip Sheet!

Ideas on how to develop your own fun and engaging workshop on any subject!

Key Characteristics of a Workshop:

- Active and Interactive
- Developed outcomes and take-away messages for participants
- Newly introduced information, ideas or messages
- Space for reflection and application
- Fun and engaging

Workshop Preparation and Design:

- Design the workshop for your particular audience! Things to think about:
 - Group size
 - Diversity in group
 - Age
 - Familiarity of subject matter
- Make sure the space is appropriate:
 - circles of chairs can encourage a safe and participatory space;
 - rows of chairs may establish a space where the person at the front is expected to speak *at* the audience
- Co-facilitate where possible
 - Having two people facilitating reduces pressure, and allows for a more creative and flexible workshop; when one person is facilitating, the other can attend to the needs of the audience (create space for clarification, questions, energizers, etc)
- Be flexible
 - Look for cues as to the receptiveness and energy of your audience, and modify activities to meet their needs if necessary
- Do NOT write yourself a script!
 - Do write yourself a workshop outline (see example below) which you can refer to throughout, and practice ahead of time to get comfortable with it
- Be prepared!
 - Make sure all the write equipment and supplies will be available (flip charts, markers, scrap paper, AV equipment, etc)

Workshop Design:

Every workshop is different, and there is no 'right way to do it'. Here are some ideas, however on how to keep your audience engaged, and fulfill your workshop objectives:

- Have a well-developed time-line for your workshop:
 - Assign an amount of time for each section or activity
 - Leave 5-10% of your workshop as 'slush' time – don't worry, you will end up using it!
 - Make sure you leave time for the introduction/explanation of each activity as well as time to debrief, to make the most of each learning opportunity
 - Integrate breaks for workshops over 1.5 hours.
- Start with introductions and outcomes
 - Having people introduce themselves will leave them more comfortable to participate later on
 - Ask people to give more than their name. For example: What do you expect to get out of the workshop? If you could be any animal, what would it be and why? If you could have coffee with any person alive or dead, who would it be and why?
 - Share with them the agenda for the day, and the key learning outcomes that you hope they walk away with
- Structure your workshop in sections, each of which fulfills one of your specified outcomes
 - Never use powerpoints for more than 15-20 minutes at a time, and no more than a total of 40-45 minutes in total. Break it up with interactive activities that illustrate your points, or gets people building on or applying the ideas you are talking about.
 - Ensure logical transitions between major ideas or sections
 - Make sure you have at least 1-2 activities that gets people out of their seats or talking to new people in order to keep energy levels high
- Examples of interactive activities:
 - Speed dating
 - Human sculptures
 - Spectrum of agreement
 - Name games
 - "The west wind blows..." aka "move you butt if..."
 - Brainstorming
 - Small group work
 - Role-plays or skits
 - Action planning
 - Ice-breakers
 - Energizers
 - Think, Pair, Share
 - Song-writing or creative writing
- Closure:
 - Facilitate a "check-out" with your audience: this will help you determine if your outcomes have been fulfilled and help people synthesize and articulate what they learned.
 - Examples of good questions are: what was your favourite moment of the session, what was one thing you learned or are taking away, what is one thing you will apply in your own life/work from this session, etc.

Facilitating workshops is a valuable skill to develop, so take the time to debrief how it went afterwards – what went really well, and what would you do differently next time? If possible, have the participants fill out feedback forms. And finally...HAVE FUN WITH IT!! Enthusiasm and energy is infectious and having fun should be a top priority!

Workshop Design Worksheet:

Workshop Title:

Total Time:

Presenters:

Workshop Objectives:

By the end of this workshop, everyone should:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Audience:

-
-
-
-

Materials:

-
-
-
-

Workshop Outline:

1. **Introduction and go around:** (time: ____ minutes)

2. **Section/Activity** (time: ____ minutes):

3. **Section/Activity** (time: ____ minutes):

4. **Section/Activity** (time: ____ minutes):

5. **Closure** (time: ____ minutes)

Sample Workshop Outline:

Event Planning – Coordination, Level 2

Total Time: 90 minutes

Workshop Objectives:

By the end of this workshop, everyone should:

- Have a strong understanding of all the elements you need to think about and feel comfortable in taking a lead in event planning
- Have 'planned' for a real or imaginary upcoming event
- Return to their project with a strong understanding of how to minimize environmental impacts of events and maximize positive social impacts

Audience:

- 15 – 35 participants, about half post-secondary and half high school
- Some launching specific campaigns, some working on Go Beyond
- Lots of new people, many different experience levels!
- Hands on – no powerpoint!!

Materials:

- Scenarios on separate sheets of paper
- Flip charts
- Markers
- Tape
- Scrap paper for each person
- Pens for each person
- Elements of Event Planning – on flip chart or handout
- Budget handout

Workshop Introduction: (5 minutes)

- Share the goals of the workshop and topics covered

Activity 1: Speed planning: (20 minutes)

Purpose: to get people thinking quickly about possible scenarios and coming up with interesting solutions for event planning (based on speed dating)

1. Break everyone into groups of 8 (or 3 groups): go beyond launch campuses, high school students, and other campuses. Each group member will get a scenario from a different category
2. Bringing everyone back together, have everyone find a 'date' and form 2 concentric circles, with one partner in the inner circle, and one in the outer (see diagram).
3. Give each person a 'scenario' (see list below) and the following instructions:
4. Each date will have the chance to read their partner their scenario, and hear what their date has to offer in the way of suggestions or solutions
5. After 1 minute, the outer circle will rotate clockwise and have a new date!
6. All ideas will be written down - if you already have the idea your new date has proposed, your date can either build on the idea, or try another idea. Keep note of the things you could have done ahead of time to avoid these situations!

Information: (15 minutes)

Go through Elements of Event Planning worksheet (see Appendix 1), focusing on:

- Timelines (handout with examples)
- Budget (handout with examples)

- Definition of “in-kind”
- Approaching funders
- Definition of “billeting”
- Follow up
 - Making the most out of your event

Activity 2: Planning the real deal. (total: 40 minutes) – worksheet provided

1. Everyone breaks back into their groups (of 8): Go Beyond launch campuses, other campuses and high schools students
2. Everyone picks an event they will be mock planning
3. As a group, think through: (15 minutes)
 - i. What are the goals of the event? What will you accomplish/what are the outcomes?
 - ii. Who is your audience? If there are specific outcomes, who NEEDS to be there in order for this to be a success? How many people will you aim for?
 - iii. What will the event look like?
 - iv. What is the broad timeline?
4. Break into pairs. Each set of pairs will take a set of programming areas: (see Elements of Event planning for guidance) (15-20 minutes)
 - i. Logistics and Volunteers
 - ii. Funding and Food
 - iii. Programming and Participant Travel/Accommodation
 - iv. Outreach/Advertising and Follow up

Wrap Up (10 minutes)

- Report back from previous exercise

See Appendices for Handouts