

APYN Skype School HIGHLIGHTS – How do YOU(th) host workshops?

7 July 2011

Who facilitated the session?

Our friend Dan from Australia! Dan is the Youth Coordinator for AI Australia and has been involved in campaign for quite awhile.

From the facilitator:

The purpose of today's session was to initially give you an idea of how to train or run workshops within your communities.

The thing to remember is that there is no exact science to running workshops, it takes practice, and mistakes, and time to develop your own style.

Firstly establishing the space - we don't always get to pick where we train. Quite often, we are placed in a room and other times it can be via phone or via Skype.

Generally, I think it is important to start with some sort of get to know you game.

Normally I would ask people to go around the room and tell me something about themselves.

The next thing I would do is talk through the agenda - this makes sure people know what will be covered- and if they have something they want to contribute they know where the space is.

Setting up the space - I always try and make sure everyone is equal within the space - depending on the size of the group - normally I would say a circle is good – but as long as it's not too much like a classroom – participants just get sleepy then. If you are like me I like to move around- but that way you can see everyone.

The handout the theatre of training gives some basics- but normally I would encourage you to check out the space first.

When you are running a workshop with specific learning outcomes I think it is important to make sure everyone knows what the learning outcomes (expectations) are. I think it's important to tell participants the outcomes at the beginning so you can check in with the group about what they expect - it is also a good way to check what knowledge is in the room - and share experiences and skills

When I write a training, I include a learning outcome for every activity - it makes it easier to train.

The next handout I gave you deals with the basic structure of a training.

The handout I gave you (number two) talks about each component of the training. Setting the learning climate - so the space and rules for communicating- setting the objectives (so the learning outcomes) and then initiate the experience. This means actually doing something to practice what you are learning- like a role play- or a case study

In the campaigning and mobilising handout you will see an example of something practical you can do.

You should then reflect on the learning experience, and talk about what people have learnt. It ensures consistent learning throughout the workshop - from you as the workshop host and others within the room.

At the end of the workshop you should summarise all of the areas covered though- I would normally ask participants to do this. Summarise behaviour and the skills they have developed- and how they are going to use it practically in whatever they do.

I have also included a handout about dealing with people that are difficult in the group. Where possible I try and get the group to look after them. For example asking the group what they think. The people I find hardest are the quiet ones - I would normally ask them a few simple questions- but not push too hard, some people are just shy. I sometimes will take them aside on a break and just check in as well.

In the training handout I have used four headings: learning outcome, task, how to, and time. I use these four headings for all of my trainings - and keep them with me - it means it keeps me focused - and helps me time out the workshop

The Campaigning and Mobilizing module gives you an idea of workshops that you can run - but that is just one formula there are lots of ways.

Comments from the participants

In my opinion, setting up the space is an important factor when you want to set the training or workshop. One way to set up the space in Laos is in U-shape.

Setting the learning outcome beforehand is important because it will help you to direct the session to reach the outcome easily and keep you focused when you are conducting the lesson.

Summarising at the end will allow participants to reflect what they've learned and their expectations - which is what is needed from the training.