Concept to Plan: Instructional Design @ TBD
Lead Trainer's notes: Constructivism

Adapted from 'Training from the Back of the Room: 65 ways to step aside and let them learn' by Sharon L Bowman. Copyright 2009 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. This text has been reproduced for educational purposes and less than 10% of the book has been copied in accordance with Australian Copyright laws

> **Your instructions as Lead Trainer are in these green boxes.**

Background Info: What Are The 4 Cs?

This instructional design process covers both design and delivery, a two-for-one approach that saves you time. You can use this process with any training topic or audience, and whenever you plan any kind of information delivery program. Here is a short description of each of the four design and delivery steps, and what learners will be doing during each step:

1. **Connections:** This is the beginning or opening of the training and can also include pre-training time. During the Connections step, learners make connections with what they already know, or think they know, about the training topic. They also make connections with what they will learn or want to learn with other learners in the training group, and with you, the trainer.

2. **Concepts:** This is the direct instruction, lecture, or presentation part of the training. During the Concepts step, learners take in new information in multi-sensory ways: hearing, seeing, discussing, writing, reflecting, imagining, participating, and teaching it to others.

3. **Concrete Practice:** This is the active review that usually follows information delivery. During the Concrete Practice step, learners actively practice a skill using the new information, participate in an active review of what they have learned, and again teach others what they know or can now do.

4. **Conclusions:** This is the wrap-up or closing part of training and can also include post-training time. During the Conclusions step, learners summarise what they have learned, evaluate it, make a commitment to use it at work or in their lives, and end with a short celebration of their learning experience.

Learning Outcomes: A Formula

A Learning Outcome is an action, an observable behaviour demonstrated by the learner when the training is over. The learner does it; the trainer (or another person) can see it being done. It's not guesswork. It's pretty clear to the learner as well as to anyone else observing.

Behaviour + Concept or Skill = Learning Outcome

(Action word plus information or skill equals learning outcome)

The 4 Cs Process

Lead Trainer instructions: Steps 1-8 are what we did at the last meeting

1. In large print, **label** one paper "Topic & Learning Outcomes". Label each of the four other sheets with one of each of the 4 Cs steps: Connections, Concepts, Concrete Practice, and Conclusions. Lay the sheets of paper on the table in front of you.

2. **Think of a topic you teach**. Write one topic on one post-it and lay it on the Topic and Learning Outcomes paper.

3. **Begin with the end in mind**. Think of one learning outcome, that is, one observable behaviour you want your learners to be able to demonstrate by the end of the training. Although there can be many learning outcomes for one topic, just choose one outcome for now. You can go back and write the others later. A reminder: Learning outcomes must be observable, so do NOT use the wards "know", "understand", or "learn". Write the outcome on another post-it and put it below your topic on the Topic and Learning Outcomes paper. Everything you do from this point on will be tied to this learning outcome.

4. **Teach only the need-to-knows**. Write down a few topic-related concepts, one per card. Place these on the Concepts paper. This is the need-to-know information that you'll cover during training.

5. **Design out of order**. Think of some ways you might involve learners as you teach them the concepts. Jot these down on post-its and place them on the Concepts paper.

6. Fill in one or two **concrete practice** cards and put them on the Concrete Practice paper. These will be the skills practice or review activities to follow the concepts step.

7. Now return to the **beginning** of the training. Think about the connections to the topic and to each other that learners need to make during the opening. Jot down your activities and place them on the Connections paper.

8. Think about how you want learners to **summarise, evaluate and use** what they've learned. Write out another card or two that describe the conclusion pieces, and place these on the Conclusions paper.

Lead Trainer instructions: Steps 9-10 are your role between meetings

9. **Play with the pieces and work out the flow**. Imagine how training would flow from step to step as you orchestrate the 4 Cs' concepts and activities. Imagine how it would feel to be a learner as each step is implemented. Ask yourself the following questions, then rearrange your post-its as necessary:

- *What can I add or change so the training flows easily from one step to the next?*
- *Am I teaching only the need-to-know information?*
- *What can I hand over to the learners to teach?*
- *Are all the steps tied to the learning outcome?*
- *Are learners engaged during every step of the process?*

10. **Deliver in order**. Now that you have all the pieces filled in, put the entire training process in order by rearranging the papers and cards to read: Topic & Learning Outcomes, Connections, Concepts, Concrete Practice, Conclusions.

Step back and admire your handiwork! Now all you need to do is complete a session plan (you can use the template provided in Project One of the Club Training Manual) and provide an evaluation form. If you need the club to print copies of the form for you, please provide to the VPE at least one week prior to the club meeting.

Lead Trainer instructions: Notes on Constructivism & ID Session from 31st January

These notes should form the basis of the training you finalise and present at the upcoming club meeting.

Basic Training Needs Analysis

At the beginning of the meeting on 31st January, attendees completed an Icebreaker/Training Warm Up activity that asked them to reflect on their current knowledge of theories of learning and constructivism. Here are the questions that were posed, and the responses received on post-it notes (verbatim):

Q: How would you define a theory of learning?

Answers:

- *a way of facilitating the acquisition of knowledge*
- *different ways people learn*
- *sadly, I haven't thought much about it – but I think EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING makes sense for me*
- *the way in which you approach (structure)*
- *a defined methodology on how people learn*
- *mode or way of communicating*
- *engaging the learner via a number of methods (varied) to meet their specified needs*
- *something that explains how/why learning proceeds*

Q: Name some theories of learning?

Answers:

- *behaviourism*
- *VAKS*
- *rote learning* ☹
- *learn by doing*
- *internal representation*
- *S.M.A.R.T.*

Q: What do you know about constructivism?

Answers:
- *putting together a session plan*
- *no idea*
- *not enough*
- *constructive criticism*
- *sadly, nothing*
- *engaging the learner by doing?*
- *breaking it down into structure*
- *Toastmasters is a constructivist learning experience*

Q: Why are theories of learning relevant to you as a trainer?

Answers:
- *to choose different ideas to suit your style*
- *theories of learning provide a framework to measure*
- *helps me plan sessions*
- *to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of my training*
- *keeps adult learners engaged*
- *helps understand my audience and plan how to teach and communicate*
- *it helps trainers meet learning objectives*
- *need to be effective*

Q: Have you consciously applied a theory of learning in your training?

Answers:
- *yes – through mini role plays during educational*
- *demonstrate, explain, practice*
- *tell them introduction, tell them, tell them what you told them*
- *yes – adult learning theory*
- *yes for explanation*
- *yes*
- *once or twice*
- *6 times 6 ways, visual, auditory, by doing, demonstrate, games*
- *yes, it's been helpful*
- *interactivity, written, verbal, role play*

Post-it Notes

At the end of the meeting on 31st January, attendees collaborated to design a training session on Constructivism, to be delivered to club members (trainers) at our upcoming meeting on 21st February. The posters are based on the Sharon Bowman 4Cs method of instructional design (outlined above on Page 2). The following pages contain the exact words from the post-it notes produced during that session, under the headings of the posters.

Thanks to Ross for his suggestion of a visual display in this section.

Topic & Learning Outcomes (Learning Outcomes abbreviated to 'LO')

Topic: Constructivism

The session should 'practice what it preaches'

LO: WIIFM – why this is a useful concept for trainers

LO: learners should be able to articulate what it is (ie be able to explain theory to a friend)

LO: learners should be able to demonstrate application of the theory in different training contexts

Lead Trainer Instructions: these learning outcomes will probably need rewording, as they don't quite fit the formula on page 1

Connections

Example/story

Send resources via email

(VPE HAS DONE THIS ALREADY)

Check understanding: ask people to define/explain

Game to demonstrate ie constructive puzzles (rubiks cube?) – followed by debrief

Concepts

Explanation of theory, history of it through storytelling

How to apply – practical strategies and processes for trainers

Transfer of skills: why/when to use this approach

Examples of constructivism in Toastmasters program

Group discussion of successes and failures using this theory

Failure as feedback – how to be reflective and evaluate

Concrete Practice

Demonstration & roleplays (changing roles)

case study – take ordinary training and turn it into a constructivist learning experience (in groups?)

Conclusions

Debrief

Reflect

2 Relate to self

Assimilate

2 Action to take

Individual
Action Plans

Lead Trainer Instructions Timing:

Intro to session: 3 mins

Your session: 55 mins

Please aim for a 50 minute total.

Notes from VPE:

The resources I included in the last email to members were:

- *the best YouTube video I could find on Constructivism.*
- *the Wikipedia entry on Constructivist Teaching methods (since as trainers we're more interested in the practicality of the theory rather than the dry academic side)*

Toastmasters Manual?

Are you planning on being evaluated in a Toastmasters manual for your presentation? I have copies of all the Advanced Manuals so if you need a blank evaluation photocopied so you can do this just let me know. Or if you need assistance determining which Toastmasters projects will be suitable, I'm happy to help with that as well. Basically whatever support you need to get Toastmasters credit for your presentation.