

WORKBOOK 4.2: GUIDELINES FOR USING CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT

Purpose: The purpose of this job aid is to help you prepare for presenting training

Tips for Setting Up and Operating a Projector

- **Test the equipment.** Arrive early and test the equipment. Check the readability of your visuals for different locations within the training room. Sit in different locations and make sure the text is readable.
- **Adjust crooked images.** Make sure the image fills the screen and adjust your projector manually or using the keystone feature to make sure the image is not crooked. Make the image larger by placing the projector the proper distance from the screen.
- **Dim lights as little as possible.** Dim the lights in the room (but don't make it too dark). If you can, darken the lights in the front of the room where the screen is located. Bring the lights back up to complete exercises or during discussions. Dark rooms do not encourage interactivity and can make the learners sleepy.
- **Have backups.** If you are using a projector, have an extra bulb on hand. Have a second set of PowerPoint files. Recognize that equipment can fail, so also prepare to give your presentation without the hardware!

Tips for Using PowerPoint Slides Effectively

- **Position yourself.** Stand to either side (rather than in front) of the equipment and screen. Talk to the course participants, not to the projected image or your computer.
- **Use motion.** Motion attracts people's eyes. Gesture to the screen when appropriate. Stand still when you want the course participants to read the screen.
- **Pace yourself.** During the presentation, hold the image on the screen only until the course participants have had time to grasp the meaning.
- **Control attention.** Turn the projector off or make the screen black when it is not being used.
- **Summarize – do not read.** Do not read the text aloud from the PowerPoint slide to the class. Use the bullets to guide your presentation.

Tips for Preparing Charts

- **Use pencil first.** Write your text lightly in pencil before using a marker.
- **Use dark colors for text.** Black, blue, green, brown, and purple stand out and are easier to read. Avoid pastels, which are hard to read. Use them for highlighting only.
- **Alternate colors from line to line.** Use this technique to separate ideas or topics and to make the chart easier to read.
- Make letters at least 1 inch or 2.5 cm tall. Smaller letters are hard to read.
- **Leave space between lines.** Lines of text that are too close together are hard to read.

- **Use the top two-thirds of the pad.** Reading text near the bottom of the page is difficult, especially for those in the back of the room. This technique also allows room to go back later, if necessary, to add something else related to the topic.
- **Highlight key points.** Use color, shapes, graphics, boxing, underlining, and pictures to focus attention on key points.
- **Use as few words as possible.** Too much text can be distracting.
- **Check readability.** Walk to various parts of the room to see if course participants will be able to see and read the chart.
- **Use tape tabs or self-stick notes.** Create tabs that will help you find your place or return to a page.
- **Use pencil notes.** These notes can help you complete a chart without referring to your Facilitator Guide for details.

Tips for Capturing Comments on Charts or Whiteboards

- Don't block course participants' view. When writing on chart paper or a whiteboard, stand to one side so that you don't block course participants' view of what is being written. Also, make sure the easel does not obstruct other equipment such as projection screens or monitors.
- Use bold printing. Use bold printing, which is easier to see. Cursive writing may be faster, but it's harder to read. Use the fat side of the marker when you write.
- Record key words quickly. This technique keeps course participants interested.
- Write exactly what people say. Do not edit the content of what was said. If you are unsure of what the course participant meant, ask for further explanation. If a course participant's idea is long or needs clarification, ask him or her how to word it. Check to be sure that you are reflecting ideas accurately.
- Use arrows, circles, and underlines. These techniques help reinforce ideas and encourage participation.
- Pre-tear pieces of masking tape (for hanging charts). Place strips of tape on the back or side edge of the chart easel. Place tape on the upper corners of the page before tearing off the page.
- Hang pages on the wall. After course participants' comments are captured on chart paper, tear off and hang the sheet on the wall to keep comments visible throughout the session. This makes referring back to previous discussions easier. If you have a prepared page that you will refer back to throughout the session, hang it in a central place where all course participants can easily see it.
- Use two charts or boards. A second chart is helpful when more than one idea is being discussed – for example, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of an item. Having both lists visible at the same time helps you and the course participants keep track of the ideas.
- Use someone to record. This technique allows you more freedom to facilitate the discussion. Using one or more recorders increases the involvement and level of participation. Be sure to ask the person(s) before inviting him or her to record.

Tips for Presenting Video Segments

- **Prepare for showing the videotape.** Make sure you know how to use the equipment. Preview the tapes to gain an understanding of their content. Review the key points in the Facilitator Guide and add any additional pertinent points about the video.
- **Provide instructions.** Before showing the videotape, tell the course participants what they should look for, whether they should take notes during the video, and what they will do after the video (e.g., critique someone's behavior in the video). Tell the course participants the approximate length of the video.
- **Play the videotape.** Before class and during breaks, cue the videotapes so they are ready to start. Adjust the picture and sound and the lighting in the room.
- **Break long videos into smaller segments.** Monitor course participant reaction during the showing of the videos. Stop videos at the appropriate points to conduct exercises or discussions. A video has to be excellent to capture course participants' attention for more than 10 to 15 minutes.
- **Avoid low-energy times.** Try to avoid showing videos during low-energy times such as immediately following lunch.
- **Summarize learning points.** Use the discussion questions to summarize the key points you want course participants to take from each videotape segment.

Tips for Providing Feedback

- **Get input first.** First, ask the learner to critique his or her performance before you present your feedback.
- **Start positive.** Begin your feedback with something positive. Be sure to comment on the interviewer's strong points. There is always something good you can point out.
- **Be honest.** Remember that we are trying to ensure that all learners have the skills they need to perform critical job tasks. This goal is too important to avoid providing honest feedback.
- **Be tactful.** Phrase your feedback by:
 - Being specific. Words like "weak" or "not effective" are very general. Explain with details and examples what is weak or ineffective.
 - Focusing on a specific behavior, not on a person or his or her intentions. (AVOID: "You were unprofessional and rude." BETTER: "When you said, 'I know you are lying,' it shut down the class and you lost rapport.")
- **Prioritize your feedback.** If you find many areas that need improvement, sometimes breaking down your feedback into a list of "big things" and a list of "little things" helps. Consider choosing two or three of the "big things" to focus on for your feedback.
- **Check to make sure the learner understood what you communicated.** Ask for feedback on the clarity of your comments. ("Do these points make sense?" "Are these suggestions helpful?")