OUTCOMES-BASED LEARNING GUIDELINES

THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR
The role of a facilitator is to create and maintain peak learning conditions for the learners. We cannot make learners learn, but we can help create a climate that makes it easier for them to be receptive, that is, open, non-judgmental and accepting. We should try and remove the obstacles to learning. People love to learn if we, the facilitators, can get out of the way.

What do we need to do to create and maintain a climate conducive to training? What can we do to be part of the solution and not part of the problem? First, we can do the usual things, such as prepare the physical environment so that it is comfortable and doesn’t cause problems for the group. Such things as lighting, proper chairs, tables arranged correctly, visual aids, etc. Second, we can gather the information about the group to help us prepare, such as who are the learners, what are their expectations, what has been their group experience, and have they been identified for training. But the most important single thing to do is to prepare ourselves both personally and psychologically.

One of the most consistently destructive factors affecting learning is the high level of defensive behaviour that can be triggered in the facilitator or the learners. We need to learn to identify where we “get in the way of learning” and what circumstances cause us or the group to get defensive.

Some of the obstacles to learning come from the group, such as the compulsive talkers, the know-it-alls, the comics, the subgroups, etc. But we want to focus on the obstacles within the facilitator.

BELIEFS THAT HINDER THE FACILITATOR
Some of the beliefs many of us have, which seem to cause problems when training are:

- **Being the expert**
  “I have to have the answer, or at least, I should have the answer”.
The need to be the expert can get in the way of being a good facilitator.

- **Less experienced than the group**
  Sometimes we’re concerned with such things as: “I don’t have as many years’ experience as the people in my group.”

- **An authority on the matter**
  “I am more of an authority on this than anyone in the group.” With the belief that we must know or do know all the answers, we may tend to get nervous, lose our focus, become uptight if we don’t know the correct answer.

- **Being perfect**
  “I need to teach perfectly, everything must go right.” When things don’t go right, our own tension increases and causes us to concentrate on ourselves and not on the training. We should strive for excellence and not perfection.

- **Ruled by the clock**
  “I must get through all the material in the time frame I set up at the start of training.” When this belief is present, we may accomplish the task, but, in many cases, sacrifice the results.

- **Being in control**
  “I must have control over the group at all times.” This should definitely stifle creativity and restrict the group from actually learning all it can.
• **Must be loved**
  “I must be loved.” Ask yourself, on a scale from one to ten, how important it is that you be liked by your learners. Sometimes, if we feel we must be loved, we concentrate too much on winning over each and every learner and forget the responsibility to the main group.

• **Learner cannot be trusted**
  “Participants can’t be trusted to pursue their own learning.” This causes us, at times, to treat them like children when in effect they are adults and need to be treated as adults in order to learn.

• **Learners need to perform**
  Some of us have the belief that we, as facilitators need to perform, to be funny, to have all the great stories. This leads us to the problem of feeling that at every minute the group must be entertained. If they’re bored or slow down something is wrong, and “I” need to do something.

**BELIEFS THAT HELP THE FACILITATOR**
Some of the beliefs about learning and the facilitator’s role that can help us are the following:

• **Human beings have a natural potential for learning**
  They are responsible for taking the opportunities to learn. This belief will help us to treat the learners as adults. We are not responsible for whether they learn all that is being taught or not. We are responsible for setting a climate, as best we can, to make it possible for learners to learn, if they’re willing to accept the opportunity and the responsibility.

• **We learn by doing**
  In many ways, this belief will help us to not concentrate so much on the theory of what we’re talking about, but on the application.

• **I am a guide and a resource on the subject**
  “I am not the authority. I am not the sole expert.” This, if anything, can go a long way to help us not feel defensive when things don’t go as planned or when we don’t always know the answers. If all the years of experience of the learners in your group were added up, the total would, in most cases, exceed yours.

• **Training is like problem solving**
  The learners must find the course relevant to their daily experience. If they do not buy into the need for the training, then our solution, which is the training, may not appear important to them. It becomes our responsibility to set up the problems the training is designed to solve, to determine if they are relevant to the group.

• **Learning is noisy**
  This will allow you, in many ways, to realise that learners talking to each other, challenging and discussing, are learners involved and learners learning. This may allow us to give up a little of that control and realise that when I talk all I learn is what I already know, but when the learners talk and discuss I learn as well.

• **Start with where your learners are**
  The participants’ needs, concerns and questions are to determine the emphasis of the programme. This will deter us from concentrating solely on accomplishing, forgetting to make the programme relevant. The facilitator needs to be him or herself, needs to be flexible, needs to be mature, needs to be accepting. It is important for us to deal with our own tension, it is important for us to talk and not to tell, it is important to listen, illustrate, and to get involved, it is important for us to encourage change and support new behaviour.

• **Be prepared**
Little details like the video operating correctly, materials prepared and ready, lunches and teas organised, are important points of your preparations. A smooth running course will increase your confidence as a facilitator.

**LEARNING METHODS**
The learning methodology describes the methods selected and applied during training in order to enable learners to achieve the learning outcomes.

When selecting appropriate learning methods and activities, the main objective is to ensure that the planned learning actually takes place. This implies that there should be a correlation between the learning outcome and the applied methodology, meaning that different learning outcomes call for different learning activities, and there should not be a consistent use of only one or two learning methods. Through the effective choice of methods, the learning outcomes can be clustered so that the learning activities incorporate knowledge and skills required for the achievement of a group of outcomes.

Also the learning activities should take into consideration the group of learners, their level, context, background, etc. In order to acknowledge this, the methodology should be based upon:

- A climate of respect
- A collaborative mode
- An achievement of the learners’ self-direction and empowerment
- A capitalisation on the learners’ experience and skills
- Participation and cooperation
- Critical, reflective thinking
- Learning for action
- Problem posing and problem solving
- Emphasis on application and transfer of skills

Along with the core outcomes of this learning programme through which the learners are being prepared for employment in the transport industry, they are also being equipped with the ability to reflect on and make informed choices about their attitudes and behavioural practices in the work and home environment. They should therefore also be equipped with competencies like self-reliance, problem solving, decision-making, innovativeness as well as the ability to work individually and in teams. If such competencies are to be developed during the learning programme, the learning methods should support their development. This means that a learning situation where the learner is the passive receiver of information passed on by the facilitators will not contribute to the development of such competencies. Rather the learner will have to be involved actively in the learning process in terms of goal setting, planning, implementation and evaluation.

**Project Work**
Central to the inductive learning principle which emphasises outcome and puts the learner in focus is the project based learning whereby learning is organised through a number a projects undertaken by the learner individually or in groups. During the project work knowledge and skills of occupational specific as well as of more general nature should be joined in a holistic, real and meaningful relation.

The project-based learning should give a stronger experience, deeper understanding as well as increased perspective. The problems should be addressed from different viewpoints, independent of traditional occupational and subject barriers. Selection of methods and tools is determined by the nature of the problem, the expected outcome as well as under due consideration of the learning process.
The objectives of the problem based learning is, that the learner actively and with the starting point in a real problem will be able to:

• understand the area which they explore better
• acquire the necessary knowledge and skills needed to understand and solve the problem
• relate analytically to ideas and opportunities
• explain to others about findings and conclusions
• apply the acquired insight purposefully
• plan, implement and assess own intervention
• select and reject methods
• relate to learning motive and self understanding
• recognise individual and common goals from the learning

Traditionally the following principles apply to project work:
1. Problem orientation or simply curiosity
2. Self governance
3. Application of skills and knowledge across traditional departmental boundaries
4. Presentation of findings

Schematically project work can be divided into a number of phases. The phases may be seen distinctly or they may be interwoven. The phases are:

1. **Preparation.** What areas do we want to investigate? What causes my/our concern or curiosity?
2. **Planning.** How is the work going to take place and be organised? What are the objectives? Formulation of problem or hypothesis
3. **Implementation.** The actual work process
4. **Presentation.** What have I/we done? What were the findings?
5. **Evaluation.** How do we/l assess the product as well as the process. What went right? What went wrong? What improvements could be suggested for future projects

The facilitator will have to play important roles in all five stages. The roles however will be very different from the traditional “talk and chalk”. Also the facilitator’s role changes when the project moves through the five stages. For the facilitator to be able to exert some control of the process, she could emphasise to the learner that before advancing to a new phase she should have approved the learner’s completion of the previous phase.

During Preparation the facilitator should assist and encourage the learner to develop a suitable problem or some specific objectives. The learner may have good ideas and suggestions already. In that case the facilitator should ensure the scope is realistic in terms of time resources and most of all the wanted outcome which the project should create. If the learner is “blank” and overwhelmed by the task at this stage, the facilitator should try to encourage, e.g. using guiding question - depending on the expected outcome of the project - like: “What could be relevant for your future work?”, “What do you still need to investigate about your future work?”. The important issue is that the facilitator supports and stimulates without taking over the responsibility.

During planning the facilitator should assist the learner focussing her attention on specific outcome(s), which should be realistic and measurable. Typically the learner is very unrealistic, often overestimating the possible achievements. Also during this phase the
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facilitator should encourage the learner to draw up a work plan. This of course is of special importance when more learners are involved.

During implementation the facilitator should assist the learner in collecting relevant material, as well as structuring that material. The learner may have to seek information outside the classroom, from libraries, newspapers, work places etc. At the end of this phase the learner has to make a conclusion about her work. This is by experience very difficult to many learners. An important task for the facilitator is to draw the learner’s attention to the importance of tuning in the conclusion according to the problem formulation or the objections put forward during the planning phase.

During the presentation phase the facilitator should encourage the learner to present her findings to others, typically to other classmates. Depending upon equipment available the learner should have access to computers, projectors, blackboard, etc. This will train the learner in applying communicative skills. Upon completion of the presentation the learner should receive feedback from fellow learners as well as from the facilitator. Giving as well as receiving constructive feedback should be seen as an important competency which the learners don’t necessarily possess already, consequently the learners need guidance on this.

Finally during the evaluation phase the learners should critically assess her own work in terms of process as well as outcomes. Some learners might want to leave out this phase. The facilitator here draw upon her observations during the process and encourage the learner to focus on positive as well as negative elements trying to make the learners suggest possible alterations for future work.

Role Play
The purpose of applying role play as a learning methods is to involve the learners actively in a real life situation, by letting the learners play the part of various individuals according to a broad introduction given to each learner individually. This forces the learners to involve themselves emotionally in the way of thinking of other persons. Role-play is especially effective as a learning method when it comes to outcomes within the affective domain, such as politeness, correct behaviour towards customers.

Typically role-play will involve the following phases:

1. **Planning.** The facilitator will beforehand select the target area, the specific setting and the persons involved. Target area could be customer/company relations. The specific could be the shop premises. The persons involved could be the shopkeeper (the entrepreneur), an employee as well as a customer. Separate information sheets are worked out, one for each person involved. The facilitator moreover that all equipment (keep it simple) needed for the play is available.

2. **Setting Up.** One person for each role is assigned. The assigned persons will spend sufficient time to read their specific instructions. The audience (= the learners not assigned to play roles) are informed about the setting. Alternatively all learners could be divided into as many groups as the number of roles in the play. Each group will receive and discuss the specific instructions and select a role player. Important is that only those responsible for playing a certain role is informed about its specific information. The facilitator will announce a specific duration for the play (Make it short since dealing with amateurs).

3. **Carrying Out.** During this phase the players will use their specific information to play their roles. The specific information is designed in such a way that the players have to pursue different objectives, easily resulting in conflicts, but also a lot of fun for the spectators.
4. **De-roling.** This part is very important and is directed towards those who participated in the play. Conflicts and aggression arisen during the play must be defused immediately afterwards. Questions like “How did you feel during the play” and “What did you experience” should be put directly towards the players. It is important that they get a chance to offload all their feelings. When that has happened the different instructions can be revealed to players and spectators.

5. **Reflecting/Integrating.** This activity should involve everybody, players and spectators alike. During this phase the facilitator should encourage the learners to draw out some conclusions. The learners should see that various players have different agendas and objectives. As coming business people it is important that they learn to understand the agenda and objectives of their customers. Such awareness should be integrated in business plan, market strategy etc.

**Case Study**

The purpose of applying case study as a method of learning is to present the group of learners with a real life case, e.g. news paper article or TV-program. During the process the learners should develop understanding and insight as well being training in formulation and argumentation.

Typically the case study can be divided into the following phases:

1. **Drawing up the scenario.** The learner decides upon the problem area to be analysed and selects the relevant material accordingly, in the case of lack of relevant material the facilitator will have to develop real-life-like material on her own, such material could be a short article or interview.

2. **Create questions.** Based upon the desired outcomes and the selected/developed material the facilitator will develop questions that will lead the learners in direction of developing the desired outcomes. In order to stimulate the creativity of the learners, the questions should be open, leaving the possibility of several answers or responses open.

3. **Explain purpose and procedure.** The facilitator will give a brief introduction to the learners. The learners will be given a time frame and then divided into groups. In the groups the learners will study the material and develop responses and answers to the questions given.

4. **Learners work on case study.** The learners will in work in groups. The facilitators will circulate between the groups listen to the discussion, raise questions and provide additional information if necessary in relation to the desired outcomes.

5. **De-briefing.** In plenum the learners will present their answers/findings. The learners will provide each other with feedback. Finally the facilitator will draw up conclusions.

As learning programme facilitators we all know that using the same facilitation methods all the time can build a barrier to learning.

Factors to consider when selecting facilitation methods:

- Group Size
- Degree of Learners’ Knowledge
- Environment
- Learning outcome

**DIFFERENT FACILITATION METHODS**

**Lecture:**

This is probably the most commonly used method. It is often used for the wrong reasons and frequently does not lead learners to the achievement of the learning out-
comes. A lecture is a carefully prepared formal presentation of learning material. It is talking to or talking at a group.

What can lectures do?
- Present factual material in a logical sequence
- Stimulate thought
- Present various points of view
- Record personal experiences or applications.

Advantages of this method
- Fastest way to cover any learning material
- Permits an organised presentation of facts to a number of learners at once
- Suitable for an audience of any size
- Easy to organise
- Very controlled
- Presentation time can be judged to the minute

Limitations of this method
- The audience is passive
- Usually a one-way flow of information, limiting feedback and learner participation
- Demands extreme concentration from the audience
- The lecture is the traditional, but often very ineffective method of imparting skills
- The lecture proceeds at one rate; the learner either being forced to keep up or fall behind with little provision for individual differences
- The effectiveness of the lecture is dependent on either the style and presentation (and personality of the lecturer) as well as the particular topic on which the lecture is based
- Does not generally allow for any form of evaluation

Tips when lecturing
- The use of good presentation skills is essential
- The lecturer must know the content of his lecture
- The lecturer needs to be aware of the learner at all times (and if necessary, change instructional method)
- The material must be meaningful to the group so that they will want to listen
- Use various training aids when lecturing

Group discussion:
This is an opportunity for group members to explore given topics, interact with each other, share information, express their views and respond to each others’ ideas and opinions.
Discussion is an informal training method, which still requires preparation and planning. Learning strategies must be carefully prepared and structured.
A good way to start is by posing a stimulating question or statement that you have prepared in advance. Try to anticipate answers and responses to questions, so that you are able to fill in information and facts where needed, and guide the group towards achieving the outcomes.

What can discussions do?
- Aid participation
- Provide an atmosphere for learners to present their viewpoints and defend them within the group
- Provide you with details of the level of knowledge and attitudes regarding the topic
Stimulate thinking and interaction during training sessions
Create enthusiasm for the topic
Explore applications of course content
Encourage learners to think creatively about the learning material and to learn through deduction
Assess learners’ comprehension of the material

Advantages of discussions
- They require active involvement
- They provide opportunities for learners to ask questions and to identify and clarify problems with the material
- They use the collective knowledge and experience of the group as a resource for learning
- Develop confidence
- Encourage teamwork

Limitations of discussions
- Dominant talkers may be difficult to work with
- Effective discussions must be constantly controlled to limit digressions
- Discussions require more time than other methods of facilitation
- Not all facilitators are skilled to allow the proper dynamics of the discussion to develop
- The topic must lend itself to discussion
- It can be an extremely slow process

Games and simulations:
A game is a structured activity in which learners observe set rules and compete to achieve an outcome. The use of games allows learners to discover outcomes, rather than being told everything. They support the point the facilitator is getting across to the learner.
A simulation is a training activity designed to mirror an actual situation.

What can games and simulations do?
- Get learners involved so they can learn by doing
- Review learning
- Teach problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Encourage peer learning and show learners that the group is a good learning resource

Advantages of games and simulations
- Involves the whole group and can be fun
- Teaches skills quickly
- An efficient substitute for reality
- Allow variety
- Changes pace of the training session
- Allows risk-taking in a safe atmosphere
- Can provide a change in pace in a learning programme
- Simulations allow learners to try new behaviours without endangering the real product or suffering terrible consequences if something goes wrong.

Limitations of games and simulations
- Some people dislike competition
- Although a game models reality, no game can be totally realistic
- If not discussed properly, the learning points can be lost
• Simulations can be very expensive to produce

**Tips for games and simulations**
• Be clear and concise when giving the instructions
• During the game or simulation, spend time with the learners to ensure they are on track and to stimulate discussions
• Debrief appropriately
• Refer to incidents observed to make discussion relevant
• Link game or simulation to main learning points

**Case study**
A case study is a documented account of an event or series of related events, given to learners to relate to their actual working situations. It gives them the opportunity to discuss the case and solve the problems related to the case. The learner must be able to recognise the parameters of the problem and, with the acquired knowledge based on the information contained in the case, prepare and defend alternate solutions.

**What can case studies do?**
• Present a situation for discussion
• Teach problem-solving
• Build a complete picture

**Advantages of case studies**
• Helps develop analytical, problem-solving skills
• They generally represent the actual business world
• Helps identify alternative solutions
• Can be customised for specific training situations
• Exposes learners to real problems
• Learners test abstract theories on concrete problems

**Limitations of case studies**
• It can be time consuming
• The relevance may not always be obvious
• Unlikely that any solution put forward will be entirely correct
• There will be some who will not participate in the discussion
• No case study can portray all the factors of a real situation
• Time limits

**Tips for case studies**
• Elicit as many solutions and opinions as possible
• Ensure case is relevant to the discussion
• The case must contain as much information as possible to avoid learners making assumptions

**Role play** (or skills practice)
A role-play is a “real-life” situation, improvised and acted out in front of the group who then discuss the implications of the role-play for the situation under consideration. Role-playing is normally used when interpersonal skills are being taught, practised and tested.

**What can role-plays do?**
• Examine problems in human relationships
• Seek out possible solutions to problems
Practice new skills in a controlled environment
Provide a group with insight into attitudes that differ from their own

**Advantages of role plays**
- An effective way of stimulating discussion aimed at problem-solving
- An effective means of avoiding the real-life dangers of the ‘trial and error’ approach
- Can add variety and fun
- The chance to see if skills being taught are understood and used.

**Limitations of role plays**
- People feel threatened about ‘acting’ in front of their peers
- Unless properly controlled and facilitated, people could view it as a joke
- The facilitator must ensure that the behaviour reinforced by the learner is the correct one and not just one they are used to
- Can be time consuming.

**Handling tips**
- Study your learners’ background, age, personalities and try to anticipate their reactions to the role play
- Reduce the possible fear of the learners by:
  - Explaining the situation to be dramatised
  - Briefing the learners thoroughly on their roles
- Control the role play
- If the role play fails to generate the proper response, cut it off at a point where the players can summarise what they thought of each role and its meaning.

**Pen and paper**
This requires the learners to answer questions on a specific topic or use a new skill taught.

**Advantages of pen and paper**
- Provide a learning experience based on actual facts
- Aids the assessment process
- Has a wide variety of applications

**Disadvantages of pen and paper**
- If used too often, learners get bored
- Activities may not stimulate too much thought
- Learners must have a high level of literacy

**Brainstorming**
This technique describes the method employed to solicit and generate ideas within a group without making judgements about them. It has been used extensively and successfully, to identify workable ideas as well as solutions.

**Advantages of brainstorming**
- Uses learner own thoughts and thereby elicits greater involvement
- Group gives more and generally better ideas than the individual

**Disadvantages of brainstorming**
- People become reluctant to contribute for fear of criticism, ridicule or irrelevance
- Group-think could occur
- The inability of the facilitator to correlate the ideas into a successful strategy
Brainstorming tips

- No criticism of any nature of individual’s ideas is allowed
- All ideas, no matter how outlandish or wild (or solutions, even if apparently irrelevant;) are encouraged and recorded
- Quantity above quality of suggestions is encouraged
- “Piggy-backing” or taking up of previously suggested ideas is encouraged to improve and widen/deepen possible solutions/suggestions.

Demonstrating a new skill

Demonstration involves four steps:
1. Preparation
2. Demonstration
3. Student practice
4. Assessment

Demonstrate

This step requires 3 activities:

1. **Demonstrate at normal speed**
   - Learners can see final result and what is expected of them at the conclusion of the training
2. **Demonstrate again slowly**
   - Demonstrate the skill again, slowly
   - Introduce each step, highlighting key points
   - Use deliberate and exaggerated movements when demonstrating a skill
   - Highlight steps by giving reasons or repeating steps
   - Ask questions of learners whilst demonstrating
   - Explain how skill is performed whilst demonstrating – be careful about what you say and how you say it
   - Refer to notes provided to the learners
3. **Ask learners for verbal instruction**
   - Learners tell you how to carry out task in correct sequence
   - Perform the task as instructed by learners

Step 3: learners practice

The two activities required in this step are:

1. **Controlled learner performance**
   - Learner must carry out skill under close supervision and at a controlled pace.
2. **Learner practice**
   - Learner to practice for 50% of allocated session time.
   - Answer questions that arise, but don’t take over from learner
   - Use peers to assist with problems

Step 4: assessment

- Learners must expect the type of assessment activity to be given
- The assessment activity must be relevant to the specific skill being learnt