



Training skills overview

When delivering this training in a way that matches adult learning theory, trainers need to know and use both “platform” skills and “facilitation” skills¹.

Platform skills

Platform skills include how one presents, both verbally and visually.

Verbal platform skills for good trainers include the following:

- ▶ Eliminate weak words/phrases, such as “sorta” and “later”
- ▶ Replace non-words (like “um”, “ah” and “er”) with pauses
- ▶ Use vivid language
- ▶ Use simple and direct language
- ▶ Emphasize beginnings and endings; transitions are important
- ▶ Project your voice so everyone can hear, but not too loud
- ▶ Vary vocal pitch and inflection for emphasis
- ▶ Vary vocal pace and rhythm to keep participants’ attention
- ▶ Use pauses for emphasis and to allow participants to think about what was just said
- ▶ Enunciate clearly
- ▶ Practice breath control for smooth delivery
- ▶ Be natural; loosen up (keep training serious, but also fun)

Visual platform skills include the following:

- ▶ Stand up straight and confidently
- ▶ Move around the room to talk with all participants, but don’t move so much that it is distracting
- ▶ If it is culturally appropriate, use eye contact to keep participants’ attention
- ▶ Use hand gestures for emphasis, but not to the point of distraction
- ▶ Vary facial expressions for emphasis and to indicate your own interest
- ▶ Maintain a “match” between visual and verbal elements

¹ Training Skills overview is adapted from the Universal Treatment Curriculum (UTC) materials. Curriculum 3: “Common Co-Occurring Mental and Medical Disorders, Trainer Manual, pp. 577-587

Facilitation skills

Rather than simply providing information and giving answers to questions, facilitating trainers create a positive and productive environment that supports learning. The good facilitator:

- ▶ Defines his or her role for participants
- ▶ Is positive
- ▶ Doesn't judge
- ▶ Focuses participants' energy on a task
- ▶ Suggests methods or procedures for accomplishing the task
- ▶ Protects individuals and their ideas from attack
- ▶ Helps find win/win solutions by seeking agreement on problems and process
- ▶ Gives everyone an opportunity to participate
- ▶ Resists the temptation to give immediate advice and offer solutions by redirecting questions back to the group
- ▶ Is not afraid to make mistakes

Effective **communication skills** for facilitators include:

- ▶ Listening with full focus on the speaker
- ▶ Focusing the training group's attention
- ▶ Recognizing progress
- ▶ Scanning/observing
- ▶ Modelling
- ▶ Summarizing
- ▶ Using silence appropriately



Dealing with difficult participants during training

During training, you may encounter participants who display difficult or challenging behaviour². As the trainer, you have the responsibility for ensuring a comfortable and safe environment for the other members of the group. Remember the following points:

- ▶ Project confidence and good humour
- ▶ Be prepared
- ▶ Don't take it personally
- ▶ Use effective communication skills
- ▶ Avoid an authoritarian/lecturing approach
- ▶ Have clear guidelines for the group

- ▶ Avoid sarcasm
- ▶ Be patient and polite
- ▶ Redirect
- ▶ Assess whether you need to change your approach
- ▶ Ignore "bad" attitudes

You will encounter a range of learning styles across the group. If possible, try to establish the expectations of the participants and incorporate different strategies to meet these expectations in a range of ways to engage all learning styles.

Prevention and early interventions

- ▶ Make the environment comfortable and the programme interesting
- ▶ Explore participants' motivations for being in the group
- ▶ Establish group rules and boundaries
- ▶ Involve participants in decision-making
- ▶ Establish a positive relationship and encourage relationships in the group modelling
- ▶ Aim your intervention at the behaviour and consequences not at the person (same principle applies for groups and individuals)
- ▶ The intention is not to apportion blame, it is to resolve the problem

² Dealing with difficult participants during training is adapted from the Universal Treatment Curriculum (UTC) materials. Curriculum 3: "Common Co-Occurring Mental and Medical Disorders, Trainer Manual, pp. 577-587

Coping strategies

- ▶ Assess the situation; keep yourself and participants safe
- ▶ Ignore negative or non-damaging behaviour
- ▶ Remain calm; don't argue with the other person or make accusations; be discreet
- ▶ Avoid ultimatums
- ▶ Use active listening skills to check your understanding of the situation
- ▶ Refer back to group rules set up at the beginning of the session. What behaviour will or will not be accepted; and don't get pushed beyond this limit
- ▶ Be persistent and consistent in your response, which conveys to the difficult person that you mean what you say
- ▶ Provide an opportunity for time out or a private chat
- ▶ Believe in yourself and your ability to deal with others
- ▶ Look for ways to reduce the causes of the behaviour
- ▶ Monitor the effectiveness of your coping strategy, modifying it where appropriate
- ▶ Assess the impact on others
- ▶ Seek advice if necessary

Dealing with difficult behaviour can be emotionally tiring. **Caring for yourself** during this time is vital to the effective management of the situation:

- ▶ Recognize the effect an interaction has on you
- ▶ Allow yourself recovery time
- ▶ Be aware of things that help you recover effectively and quickly
- ▶ Use your co-trainer for support

Behaviour The participant is:	Possible Reasons The participant may be:	What to do
Overly talkative – to the extent that others do not have an opportunity to contribute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An “engager beaver” • Exceptionally well informed • Naturally wordy • Nervous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrupt with “That’s an interesting point. Let’s see what everyone else thinks.” • Directly call on others • Suggest, “Let’s put others to work.” • When the person stops for a breath, thank him or her, restate pertinent points and move on.
Argumentative, to the extent that others’ ideas or opinions are rejected or others are treated unfairly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be seriously upset about the issue under discussion • Be upset by personal or job problems • Be intolerant of others • Be lacking in empathy • Be a negative thinker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your temper in check. • Try to find some merit in what is being said; get the group to see it, too; then move on to something else. • Talk to the person privately and point out what his or her actions are doing to the rest of the group. • Try to gain the person’s cooperation. • Encourage the person to concentrate on positives, not negatives.
Engaging in side conversations with others in the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be talking about something related to the discussion • Be discussing a personal matter • Be uninterested in the topic under discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct a question to the person. • Restate the last idea or suggestion expressed by the group and ask for the person’s opinion.
Unable to express himself or herself so that everyone understands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be nervous, shy, excited • Not be used to participating in discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rephrase, restating what the person said and asking for confirmation of accuracy. • Allow the person ample time to express himself or herself. • Help the person along without being condescending.

<p>Always seeking approval</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be looking for advice • Be trying to get the trainer to support his or her point of view • Be trying to put the trainer on the spot • Have low self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid taking sides, especially if the group will be unduly influenced by your point of view. • Show support without favouritism.
<p>Bickering with another participant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying an old grudge • Feeling very strongly about the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasise points of agreement and minimise points of disagreement • Direct participants' attention to the objectives of the session • Mention time limits of the session • Ask participants to shelve the issue for the moment
<p>Uninvolved and unwilling to commit to new tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be lazy • Be too busy already • Feel he or she should not have been made to attend the session in the first place • Be unaware of his or her own skills and abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the person to volunteer for tasks (others in group must volunteer as well). • Clearly explain the purpose of the training and the benefits to individuals and the organization. • Identify how the outcomes can be applied in the workplace. • Privately ask why the person won't become involved and is unwilling to commit to new tasks. • Provide constructive feedback and provide reassurance and encouragement

Icebreakers and energisers

The purpose of icebreakers³ is to create interaction among participants and reduce tension. This activity is optional but highly recommended in the beginning of every module and, if time allows, every workshop. Icebreakers help motivate and involve participants at the beginning of a training session, by introducing a fun exercise that requires them to interact.

Getting to know each other

Postcards / Colour cards

1. Prepare a set of postcards and cut them into 4/5/6 even pieces (depending on the number of participants required for group work), but each participant to have one.
2. Distribute the pieces among participants before asking them to find the matching parts and to form a whole post card.
3. Alternatively, groups can be formed according to colour (i.e., give them a different coloured piece of card or paper for as many small groups as need to be formed).

To use this exercise at the first session **as an icebreaker**:

- ▶ Once everyone has found the group, ask participants to introduce themselves or to get to know each other further and each of them to share one interesting/fun fact about themselves.

Nametags (1)

Materials: Markers, flip chart paper, big cards/signs, postcards, colour cards, white sheets of paper for biographies, Polaroid camera, film.

Time: 30 minutes

Name tags are useful and can be made more interesting with Polaroid photos.

1. Choose someone to take a snapshot of each participant as participants arrive at the workshop venue.
2. Give a blank sheet of paper to each participant and invite that person to write information to share with others.
3. Their photos will be pasted on the written sheets and exhibited on a panel.

³ Most of the icebreakers on this list are adapted from Guiding the Recovery of Woman (GROW), Trainer Manual, pp. 371-386.

Nametags (2)

The trainer prepares a name tag for each participant and places the name tags in a box. Each participant picks a nametag from the box. Participants locate the person whose name tag they drew and introduce themselves. (This is especially useful for larger groups—20 or more.)

Unique Characteristics

Even if participants already know each other, the trainer must get to know them. Instead of asking participants to say their names, the trainer can divide the group into pairs and give participants a few minutes to interview each other. Then, participants should introduce their partners by name and share at least two unique characteristics about them.

Your Favourite Things

The trainer divides the group into pairs and asks participants to tell each other their favourite food or to name the animal they feel best describes them and why. This information is shared with the group when participants introduce their partners.

Ball Toss

Participants and the trainer form a circle and toss a softball around the circle. Participants state their names as they catch the ball. After a few minutes, when they catch the ball, they call out the name of the person who tossed it to them. This activity can also be used throughout the course by substituting a quick information exchange for people's names. For example, the trainer may ask, "What are some Challenges that women face when getting substance abuse treatment?" The ball is tossed around the circle, and participants call out a different barrier as they catch the ball.

Three Questions

Participants write down three questions and find someone in the room they do not know well. Each participant then asks questions of the other. The participants then introduce their partners to the group by sharing both the questions and the answers.

Find the Missing Piece

The trainer prepares pieces of paper, enough for everyone in the group. The papers include words that are split into two, for example:

COCOA BUTTER

MILE STONE

ICE CREAM

Each person picks one piece of paper and then begins to look for the person who has the matching word. After finding the match, the participants should get to know the other person. Then, they will be asked to introduce one another to the rest of the group.

Fact or Fiction

Participants write down four facts about themselves, one of which is not true. Each person takes turns reading the list aloud, and the rest of the group writes down the one they think is not true. When everyone has finished reading, the first person reads the list again and identifies the fact that is not true. Participants should compare their written responses with the correct answers.

Everyone's a Liar

1. The trainer writes three statements on the board. Two statements are true, and one is false. Example:

I have been training for 10 years.

I have a pet dog called, "Dog."

I lived in Switzerland for a year.

2. The participants ask "lie detector" questions to get further information, so they can determine which statement is false. Example:

Training: *Where have you conducted training? What have you taught?*

What year did you start?

Pet: *How old is Dog? What does Dog eat? Where do you keep Dog?*

Switzerland: *Where did you live in Switzerland? What language was spoken in that part of Switzerland?*

3. Participants vote on which statement is a lie. The trainer reveals the true and false statements.
4. Place participants in small groups (three or four per group works well). Small groups repeat the steps. Have participants introduce each other to the large group.

Marooned

Divide the participants into teams. Ask participants to pretend they are marooned on an island. Have the teams choose five (the trainer can use a different number, such as seven, depending on the size of each team) items they would have brought with them if they had known there was a chance that they might be stranded.

Note that they are only allowed five items per team, not per person. Ask each team to write their items on a flip chart and discuss and defend their choices with the whole group. This activity helps them to learn about other's values and problem-solving styles and promotes teamwork.

What Do We Have in Common?

Split the participants into pairs. Each pair will have 30 seconds to think of five things they have in common. At the end of the 30 seconds, put two pairs together and give the group a minute to find something all four participants have in common. Finally, each group can present the list of things they have in common.

Tell Us About Yourself

Pass around a bag of candy. Tell the participants to take as many as they want. Once all the participants have candy, tell them that for each candy they took they should say one thing about themselves. For instance, if a participant took 10 candies, they would have to say 10 things about themselves.

Work and training related icebreakers

Ball Toss Brainstorming

Announce a topic (things associated with a topic, a holiday, the course content etc..) Then, toss around a ball. When someone catches the ball, that person shouts out something related to the topic and then tosses the ball to someone else. Continue the exercise until everyone has had a chance to speak.

Variations:

When they catch the ball, participants tell what they thought the most important learning concept was. Continue the exercise until everyone has caught the ball at least once and explained an important concept of the material covered in the previous workshop(s).

Each person tells one step of a process or concept when the ball is tossed to them. The trainer or participant, in turn, writes it on a chalkboard or flip chart. For example, after covering "client assessment," the trainer would start the ball toss by having everyone give one step in the client assessment process.

The Magic Wand

Ask the participants what they would do if they just found a magic wand that allows them to change three work-related activities. They can change anything they want. How would they change themselves, their job, their supervisor, those they work with, an important project, and so forth? Have the participants discuss why it is important to make the change.

Another variation is to have them discuss what they would change if they became the supervisor for a month. This activity helps them to learn about others' desires and frustrations.

Finish the Sentence

Ask each person to complete one of these sentences (or something similar):

The best job I ever had was. . .

The worst project I ever worked on was. . .

The riskiest thing I ever did was. . .

When you want everyone to introduce themselves at the beginning of a training, you can have them complete:

I am in this course because. . .

Calm Down!

Sometimes participants need to calm down or “come down” to reality after some intensive material presented. Also, to get the full benefit of new material, some “introspective time” is needed.

Have the participants lay their heads on the table or get in a comfortable position. Then, have them reflect on what they have just learned. After about 5 minutes, say a key word or short phrase and have them reflect on it for a couple of minutes. Repeat one or two more times then gather the group into a circle and have them share what they believe are the most important points of the concept and how they can best use it at their place of work.

Note: This may seem like a waste of time to many, but reflection is one of the most powerful learning techniques available.

Drugs in my country

This icebreaker is most appropriate if participants are from different countries. If the number of participants is relatively small (about ten), the trainer may just ask them the following questions:

What is the main consumed drug in your country?

What are the main problems that this drug is creating among people in your country?

If participants are predominantly from one country, the trainer may adapt questions, for example, like this:

What type of drugs do your clients consume?

What are the main problems that these drugs create among people in your city/town/village/community, etc.?

Alternative for a group with a larger number of participants:

Divide participants into the groups of 4-6 people and ask to share their opinion and experience about the two questions first in a group and then report to all participants a short summary.

Energisers

An energizer⁴ is a brief activity that is intended to increase energy in a group by engaging them in physical activity, laughter, or in ways that engage the members cognitively (problem-solving). They can be used with any group, including during training. Some energizers are cooperative; some are competitive. It is best to use each type and to base your choice on the mood and functioning of the group.

The Carrot

Ask participants to stand up and move to the end of the room.

Tell them that you will name a list of things that might be motivating or not to them at the current moment. They should choose to move, or not, depending on how motivating that thing is for them. If they move, they can move from 1 to 3 steps forward (1 step if it is a little motivating, 3 steps if it is very motivating to them). They also may choose to move back (1 step if it is a little discouraging to 3 steps if it is very discouraging).

⁴ Definition taken from [http://thetrainingworld.com/resources/Training Methods and Activities/Energizers/](http://thetrainingworld.com/resources/Training_Methods_and_Activities/Energizers/)

As an alternative, you could ask each participant to name something that is motivating for them and then have group members respond.

For example, motivating things the trainer could name:

water, ice-cream, donuts, coffee, tea, getting news of an extra day of vacation, \$10 (cash), playing with your child, hugging your best friend, learning something new for your career, dancing, meeting new people, etc.

Once the trainer has named around 8-10 items, ask participants to observe their positions in the room, and have them reflect on how rewards have different effects on each of us.

Balloon juggle and sort⁵

Supplies: Balloons (one+ per person)

Challenge participants to keep all balloons in the air. This gets the group moving and cooperating. Once participants get the hang of it, make it harder by adding more balloons, placing restrictions (e.g., no hands to keep balloons up), or asking participants to keep juggling the balloons.

Balloon frantic

Supplies: Balloons (two or three per person) , stopwatch or watch with a second hand.

Give each person one balloon, with the rest in a nearby pile. Everyone begins bouncing the balloons in the air. Every 5 seconds, another balloon is added. See how long the group can keep the balloons bouncing before it receives six penalties. A penalty is announced loudly (to create stress!) by the energizer leader when a balloon hits the floor (or, once on the floor, if it is not back in play within 5 seconds). The leader keeps a cumulative penalty score by shouting out “one,” “two,” and so on. When the leader calls “six,” time is stopped. After some discussion, the group tries to improve its record with another attempt.

Chicken stretch

IMPORTANT!! Do not reveal the name of this activity until afterward! It relies on an element of surprise.

Have participants form a circle and explain that it is important to warm up one’s body from head to toe before participating in physical games and activities. Starting with legs, ask people to try to get one of their knees to touch their chin. Try each leg

⁵ Energisers on this and the next page are adapted from the Universal Treatment Curriculum (UTC) materials. Curriculum 3: “Common Co-Occurring Mental and Medical Disorders, Trainer Manual, p. 577

alternately. Ask for 10 knee-to-chin touches. It is not easy: some can do it, many can't.

Then move on to the arms. One side at a time, stick a thumb under the armpit and move the elbow up and down and do a side stretch. Do this three times on each side.

Then explain that it's important to warm up one's vocal cords for group games. Grab the skin on your neck to demonstrate and waggle it side to side. Ask for some guttural noises, as much as possible; then ask for some animal noises.

Finally, have participants put it all together — walking around raising knees in air, flapping both arms, and making animal noises (at some point start encouraging the chicken noises), and you have a clucking and squawking chicken yard. Very funny.

Simon says

The trainer is “Simon” (use your own name). “Simon” instructs participants to follow his or her instructions, but ONLY if he or she says “Simon says” first. Simon can have the group do anything possible and safe (e.g., “Simon says raise your right leg” or “Simon says turn in a circle”). If a participant follows an instruction made without “Simon says” preceding it or doesn't follow a “Simon says” instruction, that participant is out. Continue the game until four or five participants are out, then stop the game, and have the group come up with a “punishment” for those people.

Animal Crackers⁶

Place participant's chairs in a large circle and ask them each to take a seat. Stand in the middle of the circle and explain that you are now going to demonstrate three different types of animals to the group.

Elephant – Hold shoulder of one arm against nose and wave it at the floor.

Monkey – Hold each ear and puff out cheeks.

Alligator – Place both arms out in front of you and clap your palms together, up and down in a snapping motion

Explain that you will go around the group and point to a person. That person must immediately take the shape of an elephant (as above), while the person to the right of them takes the shape of a monkey and the person to the left takes the shape of an alligator.

The person out of the three that is slowest to take the correct shape loses and must come to the centre of the room and start the process again.

The game ends when you feel that enough people have been involved in the process and the energy levels are raised. This energiser causes much laughter and is great for re-energising a group.

⁶ Energiser from <https://www.trainerbubble.com/downloads/animal-crackers/>