

Module 1

Peer Education



FLOW CHART

Content Flow at A Glance Module 1: Peer Education

Subject/topic/activity	Objective	Page No.
Reading material for the peer educator.	To know about the concept of peer education.	1-2 to 1-8
Some games to introduce the concept of peer education to the participants.	To introduce some basic principles and qualities required for becoming a peer educator.	1-9 to 1-14
Material for reading, preparation of handouts and facilitation of sessions.	To help the peer educator in the facilitation of sessions.	1-15 to 1-16
Games for learning to communicate and identify the qualities of a peer educator.	To introduce the participants to the importance of communication in peer education. To facilitate the identification of the qualities of a good peer educator.	1-17 to 1-20

Module I

Peer Education

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has”.

Margaret Mead

I Definition of Peer Education

Peer education is a popular concept that implies an approach, a communication channel, a methodology, a philosophy, and a strategy.

In the olden days of kings and queens (in England), peers were nobleman, aristocrats, lords, titled men and patricians. The English term “peer” refers to “one that is of equal standing with another; one belonging to the same societal group especially based on age, grade or status”. In modern times, the term has come to mean fellow, equal, like, co-equal or match according to the dictionary of synonyms (Oxford Thesaurus). Recently the term is used in reference to education and training. Peer education is now viewed as an effective behavioural change strategy, and it draws on several well-known behavioural theories – Social Learning Theory, Theory of Reasoned Action and Diffusion of Innovation Theory.

II Theories of Peer Education in Brief

Social Learning Theory asserts that people serve as models of human behaviour, and some people (significant others) are capable of eliciting behavioural change in certain individuals, based on the individual's value and interpretation system (Bandura, 1986).

Theory of Reasoned Action states that one of the influential elements for behavioural change is an individual's perception of social norms or beliefs about what people, who are important to the individual, do or think about a particular behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

Diffusion of Innovation Theory posits that certain individuals (opinion leaders) from a given population act as agents of behavioural change by disseminating information and influencing group norms in their community (Rogers, 1983).

The Theory of Participatory Education has also been important in the development of peer education (Freire, 1970). Participatory, or empowerment, models of education posit that powerlessness at the community or group level, and the economic and

social conditions inherent to the lack of power are major risk factors for poor health (Amaro, 1995). Empowerment, in the Freirian sense, results through the full participation of the people affected by a given problem or health condition. Through such dialogue the affected community collectively plans and implements a response to the problem or health condition in question. Many advocates of peer education claim that this horizontal process of peers (equals) talking among themselves and determining a course of action is key to the impact of peer education on behavioural change.

III Application of Peer Education

Peer education has been used in many areas of public health, including nutrition education, family planning, substance use and violence prevention. Use of peer education in the realm of HIV/AIDS stands out because of the number of examples of its use in the recent international public health literature. Because of this popularity, global efforts to further understand and improve the process and impact of peer education in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support have also increased.

Questions concerning the nature of a peer and what constitutes education have a range of answers. Peer education typically involves using the members of a given group to effect change among other members of the same group. Peer education is often used to effect change at the individual level by attempting to modify a person's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours. However, peer education may also effect change at the group or societal level, by modifying norms and stimulating collective action that leads to changes in programmes and policies.

Learnings from Experience

A study of 21 peer education and HIV/AIDS prevention and care projects in 10 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean (AIDSCAP) revealed that peer education has been an effective strategy in the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Study findings documented the need for initial and reinforcement trainings, ongoing follow up, support, supervision, clear understanding of the role of peer educators and continued incentives and motivation techniques. The study also documented that peer educators must broaden their understanding of HIV/AIDS to include care of people living with HIV/AIDS and family planning. The final output of the review was a handbook of guidelines from which future peer education programmes could be designed, entitled "*How to Create an Effective Peer Education Project*" (Flanagan and Mahler 1996).

A comprehensive and participatory assessment of HIV/AIDS peer education programmes was recently conducted in several clusters (regional HIV/AIDS NGO networks) in Tanzania (Hooks et al. 1998). The results of this assessment stated that:

- Community involvement and ownership is critical for the continuity and sustainability of a peer education programme.
- Ongoing capacity building and supervision are important for the maintenance of quality in the programme.
- One should capitalize and build on the knowledge, creativity and energy of

- peer educators, through their involvement in programme planning.
- The reach of peer education should be increased through more training of trainer programmes in new geographical areas.
- Both financial (such as access to credit and compensation for expenses) and non-monetary (such as bicycles, T-shirts and materials) incentives are important to motivate peer educators.
- Reproductive health and other topical areas, as identified by communities, should be included in the scope of peer educators (Hooks et al. 1998).

IV Peer Education and Youth

In most societies, young people often find it difficult to obtain clear and correct information on issues that concern them such as sex, sexuality, substance use, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and STIs. This happens for many reasons: socio-cultural norms and taboos, economic deprivation or lack of access to information. Many times, information is available but it may be given in a manner that is authoritarian, judgmental, or non-adapted to the young people's values, viewpoints and lifestyle.

One effective way of dealing with these issues is peer education, because it is a dialogue between equals. It involves members of a particular group educating others of the same group. For example, young people share information with each other, some acting as facilitators of discussions. It usually takes the form of an informal gathering of people who, with the help of the peer educator, (someone of a similar age or social group), discuss and learn about a particular topic together. Peer education works well because it is participatory and involves the young people in discussion and activities. People learn more by doing than just getting information. Peer education is, therefore, a very appropriate way to communicate in the context of HIV / AIDS. It empowers young people to take action. Examples of participatory activities used in peer education are games, art competitions and role-plays. All of these can help people to see things from a new perspective without “being told” what to think or do.

V Relevance of Peer Education for Young People in the Context of HIV/AIDS

Peer education works very well for students and young people. Sharing a conversation on HIV/AIDS with people of the same age or social group makes for a relaxed learning environment. Young people feel free to ask questions on taboo subjects, such as sex and men who have sex with men (MSM) and are able to discuss without the fear of being judged and labelled. They can discuss issues that are difficult to discuss with an adult and gain insights through mutual sharing of experiences, knowledge and information.

VI Role of the Peer Educator

The main role of the peer educator is to help the group members define their concerns and seek solutions through the mutual sharing of information and experiences. S/he is the best person to disseminate new information and knowledge to the group members and can become a role model to others by “practicing what s/he preaches”. Since s/he is from the same group, s/he can empathize and understand the emotions, thoughts, feelings, language of the participants, and, therefore, relate better.

A peer educator not only tells the peers about a desired risk reduction practice but also models it. S/he demonstrates behaviour that can influence the community norms in order to promote HIV/AIDS risk reduction within their networks. They are better able to inspire and encourage their peers to adopt health-seeking behaviours because they are able to share common weaknesses, strengths and experiences.

VII Knowledge and Skills Needed to be A Peer Educator

The basic requisite for becoming a peer educator is to be a **peer**. For example, a sex worker peer educator will be more comfortable working with sex workers, a migrant worker peer educator will be more at ease with migrants and so on. If you are a peer, you speak the same language and are familiar with the cultural norms and values of the group/community.

It is important for them to have had some training in group facilitation or peer education. In order to answer questions clearly and correctly, the peer educator also needs to have an overall knowledge of the subject. It is not necessary to be an expert. It is generally better to refer people to organizations or leaflets where more information can be found. A peer educator should be aware of where more information and support can be accessed. As a person grows into the role of a peer educator, one should increase one’s knowledge of the subject and include related subjects, such as reproductive health care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS. Updating knowledge and skills in group facilitation continuously, increase a peer educator’s value for the group.

A peer educator should be sensitive, open minded, a good listener and a good communicator. S/he should be acceptable to the community and be trust worthy. In brief, s/he should possess good interpersonal skills.

A peer educator should also develop leadership and motivation skills.

People often tend to judge others. Peer educators need to be non-judgmental and open minded. Being non-judgmental means not making judgement statements out loud or in one’s mind

VIII Organizing A Peer Education Programme

Use the six helpers in organizing your programme:

- Who are the participants?
- Why is the programme/session being organized; define specific objectives.
- What are the needs of the participants and the content of the programme/session?
- Where will the programme/session be held (venue)?
- When will the programme/session be held (time)?
- How will the programme/session be conducted (methodology)?

IX Starting A Session

A session can be started in several ways. There is no fixed rule. Sometimes, it can be done with a game, which is great to get people laughing and relaxed. At other times, it can be through relevant exercises. For example, to start a discussion on sexual behaviour, one can begin by asking the group to draw a picture of the male and female reproductive organs. The next step is to name the body parts in non-scientific language. This gets everyone involved and discussing. Whatever topic the session is on, it should include everyone and be simple enough to understand. Just remember that people learn best by doing. Every session should be a combination of listening, speaking, seeing and doing.

X Facilitating Participation

Facilitating and enabling maximum participation by the group members is the prime responsibility of the peer educator. This is possible with the use of various tools, such as small group discussions, games, role-plays, case studies and a host of others. It is always useful to divide people into small groups, as this increases interaction between people and encourages shy people to contribute.

XI Tips for A Peer Educator

Peer educators need the skills to bring out the views and concerns of the participants. It is important to realize that the peer educator's role is to give information, and let young people make their own decisions based on facts. A peer educator should always avoid being directive and authoritarian. S/he is a peer and not a parent. Make sure participants know that there will be no report of the session made. Ask them to try not to discuss the opinions of particular individuals outside of the group, but warn them that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The discussion should be conducted in a manner that is not personalized and specific. If possible, give out information about where individuals, who want to discuss a personal situation, can get confidential advice. At the end of the training, do not forget to ask them to fill out the evaluation forms you have prepared. It makes the work much easier the next time around.

XII Developing A Peer Educator

The development of a peer educator involves the application of various methods such as counselling, training, personal orientation, exposure visits, improving social contacts, participatory planning and assessment.

Probation	It is advisable to have the peer educators work on probation for 2-3 months on a project or programme so that they can receive training in the basic skills required for their work.
Counselling	Continuous sessions of counselling will help to improve communication patterns, family and interpersonal relations, self-confidence and self-respect.
Training	Is very effective for skill development and education. It increases motivation and self-respect.
One-to-one Education	Personal and individual education are of prime importance in equipping the peer educators with information on sexual health and related matters.
Exposure visits	These are highly useful for refreshing and developing relationships, motivation, cohesion, “we feelings” and pride in one’s work.
Social Contacts	Peer educators make many social contacts when they are involved in the advocacy process. This increases their motivation and commitment.
Participation	Participation in the planning and evaluation of their work leads to better understanding and improves skills for implementation.

Tips for a basic training course for peer educators

Knowledge	Skills	Personal development
HIV/AIDS	Group Work	Communication
Routes of transmission, prevention	Facilitation	Empathy and non-judgmental attitude
Fears about HIV/AIDS, prejudice, stigma and discrimination	Communication	Assertiveness
Risk behaviours/practices	Basic counselling	Self confidence and self worth
Safe/safer behaviours	Methods of delivering	Group dynamics
Drugs	Information	Sensitivity
Drug use	Presentation	Gender issues
Condoms		Socio-cultural and economic dynamics
Rights and responsibilities		
STIs – symptoms and treatment		
Contraception		
Physical anatomy of a man and woman		

Session 1.1

Peers influence Your Life

Expected Outcomes

Participants will become aware of the influence their peers have on them. Participants will become conscious of this influence and take measures to protect themselves from negative influences.

Understanding Peers

<i>Objective</i>	To understand that peers can influence you.
<i>Materials</i>	Flip charts, markers, crayons, pencils
<i>Time</i>	1 hour
<i>Process</i>	Invite the participants to sit in a circle. Explain that they will be doing an exercise to understand the influence their peers can have on them.

Ask the participants to divide into groups of 4-5.

Ask each group to do the following:

Reflect for sometime on your peer group.

Discuss and list (on the flip chart) the things you have learnt from your peers, both negative and positive (for example, new phrases, dressing style, mannerisms, habits etc.).

Against each learnt thing recorded, on the flip chart, mention how you learnt it from your peers.

Give the groups 30 minutes to do this exercise.

Ask them to reassemble in the large group and present their work.

Encourage the participants to discuss each other's presentation. You can facilitate the discussion by asking the following questions:

- *Were you surprised at the things you have learnt from your peers? Why/ Why not?*
- *Have you ever reflected on the influence your peers can have on you? Why/ Why not?*
- *How do you feel about the ways in which you have learnt things from your peers?*
- *What are the positive things that you have learnt from your peers?*
- *Are there some things you should avoid learning from your peers? What/Why?*

Notes for the Facilitator

Young people are often deeply influenced by their peer group. However, most of the time, this influence is very subtle, and they do not notice the changes in their behaviour, attitudes and skills. Peer influence also exerts pressures. At times, many young people end up doing things they would not have done on their own. This exercise provides many opportunities for discussion on the pros and cons of peer influence.

Session 1.2

Influencing the Peers

Expected Outcomes

Participants will become aware of the influence they can exert on their peers. Participants will have the potential to influence their peers in positive ways.

Objective To understand that you can influence your peers.

Materials Flash cards, markers

Time 45 minutes

Process Invite the participants to sit in a circle. Explain that they will be learning about the influence they can have on their peers.

Ask the participants to pick up 2 flash cards and a marker each.

Ask them to close their eyes for a few minutes and think about their peers. Ask them to think of situations when they have been able to influence them to do or not do something.

Explain that they should use one flash card for writing a positive influence and one flash card for writing a negative influence.

Assure the participants that we all influence people with positive and negative effects, and there is no harm in learning from both.

Ask the participants to place the two sets of cards in two vertical lines. Invite them to read the cards. Ask a volunteer to do this.

Then, ask the group to cluster similar cards from both the lines.

Ask the participants to put the cards up on a wall, so that everyone can see them.

Invite the group to sit facing the cards, and facilitate a discussion using the following questions:

- *How did you feel writing about the positive and negative influences that you may have had on your peers? Why?*
- *Have you ever reflected on your ability to influence others? Why/Why not?*
- *Can you think of ways you can use the ability to prevent your peers from indulging in risk behaviours? How?*

Notes for the Facilitator

This exercise is useful when it is done with the previous exercise. The outputs of both exercises allow the participants to compare and analyze their results. Help them understand that peer influence is a mutual process in which everyone can be influenced, and, in turn, influence others. This is one reason why peer education programmes are effective in the behavioural change processes.

Session I.3

Appreciating Others

Expected Outcomes

Participants will become aware of each other's positive traits.

Participants will become more appreciative of people around them, especially their friends and family.

I like You

Objective To learn to appreciate each other's good qualities.

Materials None

Time 45 minutes

Process Invite the participants to sit in a circle.

Explain that we all have good and bad in us, and it is important to recognize the good.

This exercise will enable us to appreciate each other's positive qualities.

Start at one end of the circle, and ask each participant to tell the person on his/her left one thing that s/he likes about him/her.

When the circle is complete, repeat the exercise in reverse order (i.e., each participant tells the person on his/her right one thing that S/he likes about him/her).

You may use the following questions to facilitate a discussion after the exercise:

- *How did you feel giving a compliment? Why?*
- *How did you feel receiving a compliment? Why?*
- *How often do you appreciate your friends and family members for the things they do for you?*
- *How do you feel when your friends criticize you or say negative things about you? Why?*
- *Can you think of ways in which you can use your good qualities to help your friends? How?*

Notes for the Facilitator

This is an enjoyable exercise that produces good feelings in the group. You can use this opportunity to discuss the ways in which young people can help friends in difficult situations. You can alternatively follow this exercise with an exercise on helping friends in need.

Session 1.4

Helping Friends

Expected Outcomes

Participants will learn ways to help friends in times of need.

Participants will support and help friends who need their support in managing difficult situations.

I Can Help You

Objective To practice ways of helping friends.

Materials As needed by the participants

Time 1 hour 30 minutes

Process Use an energizer to form groups of 4 or 6.

Explain that the groups will prepare role-plays to show ways they can help their friends based on the scenarios provided.

Give one scenario to each group.

Explain that they have 20 minutes to prepare the role-plays and can use whatever props and materials they need for an effective display.

After all the groups have completed their presentations, invite them to sit in a circle and facilitate a discussion using the following questions:

- *How did you decide on the things to show in your role-play?*
- *How did you feel during the other role-plays? Why?*
- *Can you use similar ways to help your friends if required? Why/why not?*
- *Have you ever helped a friend in similar circumstances? Would you like to share it with the group?*
- *How easy or difficult is it to help a friend solve his/her problem? Why?*
- *What qualities help you to help others? Why?*
- *What qualities prevent you from helping others? Why?*

Notes for the Facilitator

This is an effective exercise for promoting qualities of cooperation and care. The discussion can be used to enable reflection and analysis in relation to the participant's real life experiences. It is possible that good intentions and attempts to help can produce an undesirable effect. Help the participants find ways of dealing with this kind of situation. Focus on qualities that help to resolve difficult situations and how these can be nurtured.

Scenario 1

Your friend has suddenly become very withdrawn and sad. S/he has stopped participating in group activities and spends most of his/her time alone.

Scenario 2

Your friend is unable to concentrate in the classroom and plays truant. You have observed that s/he is becoming very erratic and showing signs of weight loss.

Scenario3

Your friend is constantly worried about his/her weight. S/he avoids eating and stays away from group activities like picnics and parties.

Scenario 4

Your friend has been indulging in sexual activity and is now worried that s/he may be HIV infected.

Scenario 5

Your friend is pregnant. She is unmarried and scared about her future.

Scenario 6

Your friend is married and contemplating divorce.

HELPLINE for the peer educator

Material for reading, preparation of handouts and facilitation of the session

Ways friends help each other

- Sharing information or knowledge.
- Motivating each other to do certain things.
- Giving encouragement and emotional support.
- Being attentive and making one feel important.
- Giving material things.
- Being a companion.
- Sharing happiness together.
- Being a role model (someone you want to behave like).
- Teaching social skills.
- Helping to do things at home or at work.
- Introducing new people and friends.
- Helping convince parents when one wants to tell or do something.
- Introducing one to a new behaviour.
- Warning one against doing something wrong.
- Praising ones good qualities.
- Looking after one in times of illness.

Helping Your Peers:

- You can share and discuss opinions, feelings, ideas, experiences, information and knowledge.
- You can demonstrate new behaviours.
- You can do things together and promote safe behaviour and practices.
- You can teach your friends to say “no” to things that may have negative consequences, after discussing reasons or motivations.
- You can create pressure that will stop one from doing harm to self and others.
- You can be a role model and encourage your peers to adopt desirable qualities, skills and knowledge.

Help from peers is more effective and desirable because

- You see each other often.
- You enjoy doing things together.
- You understand each other’s feelings and motivation.
- You know each other’s language and needs.
- You are less likely to form judgements and more likely to be patient and concerned.
- You can keep secrets and share feelings of trust and confidentiality.
- You like to keep the “we feeling” and therefore, do your best to help each other.
- You would rather seek help from peers than your parents and family.

Peer education can help in HIV/AIDS prevention and care:

- By providing information about STIs, HIV/AIDS and behaviour related to the risk of infection.
- By helping each other through discussions, sharing information and experiences related to risk behaviour for HIV infection and STI infection.
- By encouraging compassion and non-discriminatory attitudes and practices towards persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, including how to provide basic care for persons living with HIV/AIDS.
- By developing group norms among peers to support each other to resist behaviour that puts them at risk of infection of STIs and HIV.
- By holding awareness-raising campaigns and drives in the community.
- By developing a network for home-based care of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Session I.5

Learning to Communicate

Expected Outcomes

Participants will acquire some of the basic communication skills required to be a peer educator.

Lets Talk!

Objective To practice some basic communication skills for peer education.

Materials Slips with scenarios

Time 1 hour 30 minutes

Process Invite the participants to sit on the floor in a circle.

Explain that peer education is possible among friends, and that in this session, participants will be practicing some basic communication skills needed for this purpose.

Pass the container, full of the slips of paper, around the circle. Ask each participant to pick one slip.

Ask them to read the slip and prepare themselves for the exercise.

Allow 5-10 minutes to prepare (individually).

Then, start at one end of the circle, and ask the participant to give a response to the situation written on the slip.

Explain that they can choose a partner to do the exercise.

Complete the circle.

After each presentation, ask for feedback and suggestions.

After the exercise is over, facilitate a discussion in the large group using the following questions:

- *How did you feel doing this exercise? Why?*
- *In a real-life situation, would you be able to use these skills? Why/Why not?*
- *Have you ever discussed these kinds of issues in your circle of friends/peer group? Would you like to share some of the experiences?*
- *What are the basic requirements of good communication?*

Notes for the Facilitator

This exercise creates confidence among the participants concerning their ability to communicate on issues related to HIV/AIDS. It can also be useful for re-capping basic HIV/AIDS issues. You can create similar exercises to practice other skills, such as designing messages for a public campaign or making presentations. Encourage the participants to experiment and ask questions. The scenarios for this exercise should be based on the aptitude and readiness of the participants. If you feel that the exercise cannot be conducted in a mixed group, due to socio-cultural reasons, divide the group and conduct the exercise separately. Alternatively, you may wish to do this exercise in pairs.

Scenarios for the slips of paper required for this exercise

Your friend starts a discussion on HIV/AIDS and asks you about the ways in which it is spread.	Your friend asks you about the ways in which HIV cannot be spread.	Your friend is very depressed and seeks your advice on STIs.
Your friend is curious about homosexuality and asks you about it.	Your friend has just seen a film on AIDS and wants to know how he can avoid it?	Your friend wants to try smoking and asks your advice.
Your friend is going to a new city and wants your advice on how s/he should conduct his/her life.	Your friend is worried that S/he is becoming obese and wants to know what S/he should do.	Your friend wants to go to a party and you know there is going to be alcohol and drugs.
Your friend is smoking marijuana and asks you if it is okay?	Your friend has been asked to go for an HIV test and s/he asks you to tell him/her about the possibilities.	Your friend is HIV positive and wants to know if you will continue being his/her friend.
Your partner has been diagnosed with STI and asks you to have a check up as well.	Your friend asks you about condom use.	Your friend asks you if birth control pills are useful in protection against HIV/AIDS.
Your friend wants to donate blood and asks you what precautions s/he should take.	Your friend is pregnant and asks you if she can smoke and drink alcohol.	Your friend is very sad and lonely because s/he is HIV positive.
Your friend wants to become a musician, but his parents want him to become an engineer. He asks your advice.	Your friend is planning to get married and asks your advice, as S/he is HIV positive.	Your friend is injecting drugs and shows you the needle marks on his/her arms.
Your friend is very ill and asks you if s/he is going to die.	You are very busy but your friend wants you to go to a movie with him/her.	You are feeling tired but your friend wants you to talk with him/her.

Session I.6

Identifying the Qualities of a Peer Educator

Expected Outcomes

Participants will realize the importance of the certain qualities for a peer educator.
Participants will become aware of whether they possess those qualities, or not.

Qualities Of A Peer Educator

Objectives To arrive at a consensus on the qualities of a peer educator.
To assess oneself against the identified qualities.

Materials Flash cards, markers, stones/pebbles/seeds

Time 1 Hour

Process Invite the participants to sit in a circle.

Explain that a peer educator must have or develop qualities that allow him/her to work with people. This exercise will enable the group to discuss and list the essential qualities for a good peer educator.

Ask each participant to take a flash card and a marker.

Ask them to close their eyes. You might want to play some soft music on a tape recorder.

Explain that everyone should think of a person they love and can talk with.

After 5 minutes, ask them to open their eyes, and write the one quality they like the most in the person they just thought of.

Ask them to place their respective cards on the floor after they finish writing.

Invite the participants to read the cards and group the cards that are similar.

Ask them to arrange the cards in a vertical line on the floor.

Ask each participant to take as many stones/seeds/leaves (marker) as there are cards. For example, there may be 6 cards on the floor so every participant must have 6 markers.

Start at the top of the vertical line. Ask the participant to think for a moment and place one marker in front of the card if they feel that they possess that quality. If someone feels that s/he does not possess that quality, they should not place their marker against it.

Finish marking all the qualities in this manner.

Invite the participants to sit in a circle around the display, and facilitate a discussion based on what you observe. For example, card number one may have as many stones as there are participants. This means that every one thinks they have the quality written on that card. Ask how this quality can help them in their own lives and when helping their friends.

Cover all the cards in this manner.

Sum up the discussion and the results of the exercise, by emphasizing the importance of those qualities for a peer educator.

Notes for the Facilitator

This exercise is fairly simple and allows the participants to determine the qualities that a peer educator should have. You can use this exercise to focus on the qualities that need to be developed by a peer educator. You can take this exercise a step further, and ask the participants to list the manner in which these qualities can be developed. Ask them to list the method for each quality. Once this is done, it will be easy for you to design a session for them. You could also undertake a similar exercise to determine the skills and knowledge required by a peer educator.

Listed below are some qualities that need to be developed by a peer educator in order to be effective in his/her work:

- Ability to keep abreast of new information and knowledge in the area of HIV/AIDS and related subjects, such as reproductive health and family planning.
- Ability to listen and communicate effectively.
- Ability to deal with emotions and difficult situations.
- Non-judgmental attitude and ability to express emotions.
- Adaptive and flexible nature.
- Ability to encourage and provide support.
- Ability to lead by example.
- Ability to keep confidences and foster trust.
- Ability to look at things from various perspectives.
- Ability to make decisions and encourage others to do so.