

# 11 Practical advice from trainers

A group of trainers in Kilifi brainstormed and identified a methods they use when preparing for or running exercises, to be shared with readers of the manual. The exercises are described at the end of each of the modules.

## 1) Choosing volunteers from the group to do a demo

### Things to consider:

- Participants should speak clearly with a good voice and not be shy
- Avoid domineering participants/who talk too much, sometimes they can make a demo too complex as they have a lot to share.
- Participants should be in the role they are familiar with (e.g. it may be challenging to ask e.g. a pharmacist to play the role of a nurse/a doctor in a demo). Preferably, choose a nurse or doctor to play the role.

## 2) Running an exercise where participants (in groups) will write points on flip chart

- Give flip chart with different colour marker pens to the groups
- Introduce the exercise, let the participants know how much time they will take to do the exercise
- Ask them to write on the flip chart using different colours on different points
- After the exercise, ask them to hang the charts on the wall
- Ask participants to stand up and move close to the flip charts on the wall
- Ask them to read each other's responses
- The facilitator should then ask specific questions to guide the discussion e.g. What strikes you on the responses on point A?  
What can you say about the feelings illustrated by the groups?
- The facilitator should avoid reading one point after the other from all what the groups have written as this can make the discussion boring - too long and not focused.

## 3) "Golden rules" when writing on flip chart

- Write clearly (others should read!)
- Use different colours to illustrate different points
- Write date on the chart
- Do not write using capital letters

## 4) Facilitating a role play

- Ask participants to sit in groups of three
- Ask each of them to pick a role to play i.e. health provider, patient and observer
- Explain the roles of each actor to the class
  - Health provider – will act as the provider according to the script that will be given
  - Patient - will play the role of the patient/relative as per the script
  - Observer – will observe the interaction between the provider and patient, and lead the feedback session in their group at the end.
- Distribute the script to the groups; ask them to read only their own script (observer gets all three scripts)
- Let them know how much time the role play will take. Before the play, ask the groups if they need anything to be clarified and ask the trainers to sit in the groups to observe. They should only offer guidance if really needed.

NB/ If a patient is to show anger in the role, it may be advisable to call all patients actors into a group and let them know/show them exactly how they are supposed to act, to allow the HP to put the skills into practice “with some sweat”.

- After the role play - ask the provider to appraise his/her performance constructively, starting with what he did well and the areas to improve
- Then let the patient say how he/she felt she was handled, starting with areas the provider did well and then areas to improve
- Lastly, let the observer give the provider constructive feedback as per his observation and the script instructions.
- The facilitator then calls the discussion together in plenary and ask the following questions:
  - How was it doing the role play? Let them share their experiences
  - What did you learn from doing this role play?
- Put the learning points on a flip chart and use them as a summary of the discussion

### **5. How to recap the previous day learning**

**Things to consider:**

- It is important for the facilitator doing recap tomorrow to sit through the day’s learning
- It important for them to know at the end of the day’s events that they will be doing the recap tomorrow
- Let him prepare summary points of what was learnt, to use as a guide when doing the recap
- There two things to consider when asking questions
  - **Asking for learning points, and**
  - **asking for cognitive knowledge**

**When asking for learning points- the facilitator can ask open questions like:**

- ✓ What did you learn yesterday that was important to you as a person/provider? Or
- ✓ What did you learn yesterday that was significant to you as a provider?
- When asking for cognitive knowledge (i.e. to recall the points from the sessions), the facilitator should ask specific questions e.g
  - Yesterday we learnt about active listening. What did we say active listening is? Why is it important to listen actively to our patients? What disturbs active listening?
  - The questions here are very specific, and asks them to remember.
- As a facilitator you can use the two methods interchangeably, you can start by asking for learning points then follow it up with specific knowledge questions.

### **6. Running an Exercise**

Facilitating an activity to bring out learning on a topic

**Why important?**

- Can be used as an energizer to break the monotony of trainer talking about it. Brings in energy to participants hence still facilitating their learning.
- It enhances participants’ involvement in the learning. They become responsible for their own learning; they feel empowered.
- It gives a chance for all participants to take part in the session especially those who feel “shy” to contribute in the larger group.

**When do you do it?**

- Mainly pre-planned (when preparing presentation)
- When energy in the room is low, you can run an impromptu exercise e.g. asking them to discuss a specific point.

- When a point is not clear; ask them to discuss and come up with questions and reflections.
- When you want participants to practice a skill.

**How do you do it?**

- First and foremost, prepare objectives for the exercise. What is the purpose of it?
- Decide on how to achieve these objectives e.g.
  - Discussions
  - Ask them to share experiences
  - Role play
- Formulate questions to draw learning points, analytical ones
- Come up with a list of what you expect to bring out from the exercise.
- Decide how long exercise will take
- Summarize important points at the end
- Be very clear on what you expect them to do
- If intending to put instructions on exercise on a flipchart, do it before the time you intend to begin exercise to avoid delays.
- Insights: To get insights, participants need to share real experiences through role play or sharing their own experiences they encounter or through showing a demo.
- An exercise needs to be simple i.e. minimize number of questions. Questions need to be straightforward.
- Besides objectives, be open to any important points that may come up from the exercise that you had not captured.

**How does it affect me as a trainer?**

- It allows me to assess progress of my presentation and make adjustments when need arises
- When I do it well, I draw out learning from participants' point of view. Learning becomes relevant to them because they come up with what they feel is important.
- It helps me to be present when I run it because when getting feedback from the exercise I have to be there, engaged with participants in order to bring out learning from their contributions.
- Exercises, when well facilitated bring learning on the "ground" as opposed to lecturing which leaves participants at descriptive/cognitive level.
- The ability to get insights requires one to formulate analytical questions and linking them to participants' experience. This engages their emotions hence facilitate learning.

**Example 1(Chea)**

I ran an exercise on advising a mother how to give resomal. I didn't explain that participants must discuss then practice how to give advice.

When it came to getting insights from this exercise, they did not have any insights. Reasons being, I did not make it clear that they needed to practice so they only discussed (talked about it). This means they did not share a common experience hence impossible to get insights.

**Learning points;**

- To get insights, participants need to share experiences e.g. show a demo, reflect on a past experience and share, or have a role play so that they have an experience to relate to.
- It is important to give clear instructions on an exercise for participants to do exactly what facilitator expects them to do.

### **Example 2(Hiza)**

I ran an exercise on effects of lying on emotions and communication. I asked participants to share an experience where they felt patient lied to them and how they handled. And the strategies they used to handle patient well.

#### **Learning points;**

- Writing on flipcharts was not done before the exercise so it took a long time to run it. Writing on flip charts should have been done earlier before time for starting the exercise.
- I need to wrap up main points by summarizing at the end of the feedback session.
- I can also ask them if they have ever lied to patients....this makes participants laugh at themselves but also reflect on what they do.
- The strategies they came up with from their experiences I could link directly to the theory
- It was easy for them to come up with insights since they reflected deeply hence learning from themselves.

#### ***The power of using open questions***

*“For me when using open ended questions it’s like a weapon that can be used to disarm any person who is angry, who has tension, who has fear if you use open ended questions you actually can see the effect on the spot. And in my experience I was involved recently in a study following people who refused to participant in studies and these people who have at times been very violent to the staff who are visiting them. When I got the assignment I was filled with fear because I was like how am I gonna follow these people who have already refused to participate in these studies some of them have actually chased away the staff because they say they do not want to be involved in research activities. So the only “weapon” that we used are the open ended questions.*

*The only weapon that we carried with us to follow up these people who had refused were the open ended questions so I could visit the home, and introduce myself and right from the beginning used open ended questions to try to understand what happened and these guys would just confront you like, “I told your people never to visit this home again why are you here?” So but now the use of open ended questions... you would see these people immediately coming down from being very high tall looking very angry, wanting almost to confront you head on but then you try to understand, “Okay I’m here to try to understand more about what experiences you have, what exactly happened”. And based on those questions you actually feel them, you see them relaxing down and open up and share a lot of information and eventually majority of them actually could say, “I wish all the people who were coming here were like you, they were patient enough they were inquisitive enough to know what we are experiencing”. So the open ended questions is a very powerful weapon that’s what I can say.*

*Francis Kombe, Kilifi*