

Initial meeting: Criteria for the selection of adult education training techniques

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Abstract

The first contact of the trainer with the trainees is a very important moment during a program. Its outcome will determine whether the trainees are interested in the program and will get actively involved and on the other hand, if the trainer himself feels he is acting in a creative environment that will affect his/her performance during the program. For this reason, a text that will describe and give guidance for the first meeting must be carefully designed, considering of all factors for an effective kick-off meeting.

Keywords: adult education, adult educator, trainer, initial meeting

Introduction

The initial meeting has a special significance, since the foundations are set for the course that is to be followed. The goal of the initial meeting is to clarify the possibilities offered to the students, to provide explanations for any possible obscure points and the processing of the material given. The objectives of the initial meeting are to familiarize the students with each other, as with the teacher and to build a team spirit, the development of trust between teacher and students, discussion for the program in order to adapt it to the needs of the learner, details concerning the structure and the way of writing the work, and the manner of indicating references and literature.

Initial meeting

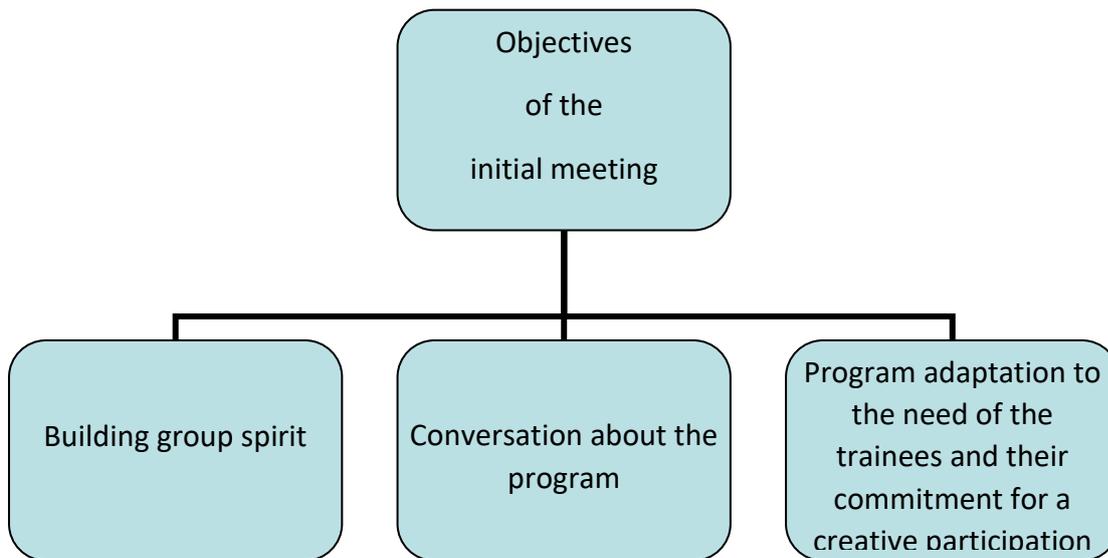
The initial meeting has a special significance, since the foundations are set for the course that is to be followed. In the first meeting the learning process will be set and the processing of

the key methodological issues will take place (Kokkos, 2005). Before we address the goals, it is advisable to record the factors that affect the initial meeting.

- Characteristics of the trainees.
- The duration of the program.
- The content of the program.
- The personality and skills of the trainer.

Objectives

There are three main goals that every trainer who is about to carry out an initial meeting should have in mind. These are: building group spirit, conversation about the program, and program adaption to the need of the trainees and their commitment for a creative participation.



Techniques

A. Interviews

The first technique proposed are interviews

Detailed description of the process:

1. The trainees are grouped in couples. The members of each couple are asked not to know each other and to have as many different characteristics as possible (gender, age, occupation, etc.).
2. The couples discuss for 10-15 minutes aiming the two members to get to know each other.
3. Pairs create fours. In the quartet, each participant presents the person with whom he was grouped as a couple during face A and speaking as though he was the other member of the couple.
4. Each quartet then designates a representative for the plenary.
5. The activity is completed with a brief discussion, asking: "How did you feel?" Encouraging group members to talk about their feelings in a specific and personal way and not in general. Enhancing formulations like: "I liked ... I felt good" and asking for formal formulations like: ".. I think we all went well", to be avoided.
6. Evaluation of the activity in terms of achieving the goals.

Prerequisites for applying the technique

- We always start such an activity with the statement that there is no intention of exposing or ridiculing anyone and that participation is not mandatory (Rogers, 1999).
- We respect the cowardice or the reservation of any member to engage in such activities. We ask of these members to help us as observers.

What is the purpose of this activity:

- Building group spirit.
- The acquaintance of the learners.
- Creating a climate of reciprocity, trust and cooperation.

B. General overview of the program

The following technique is proposed for the initial meeting, given that trainees do not have any kind of training in adult education.

Detailed description of the process

1. The trainer shares the text of Alan Rogers's interview with George Kolauzidis, to the four-person groups (quartets) (Kokkos, 2005).
2. The trainees process the text, and note whether they agree or disagree with Rogers's answers.
3. As soon as each group finishes the above step, they present their results to the plenary.
4. There follows a general discussion and synthesis of the different views from the trainer.

Prerequisites for applying the technique

- The trainer has studied the interview and has highlighted any key points on which the trainees can prepare some homework until the next meeting. The trainer can also point out elements of the interview that will create a link with the following session.
- If there is time left from the first 5 hours, the trainer can ask any trainee who believes he was passed up by the "team obscurity" to present his or her own comments on the interview and to conduct a dialogue.

The purpose of this activity is:

- To provide trainees with a first general overview of the program-based issues that the trainer will present, and thus better understand its objectives (Knowles, 1978).
- Express their attitudes and moods.
- To gain a sense of direct participation in the learning process.

Conclusion

Taking into account time availability, the theoretical background of the trainees and the abilities of the trainer, we believe that the two above-mentioned techniques will create the necessary learning environment and the trainees will be introduced to the content and methodology of the program from the very first meeting so they can have a general overview of the program.

References

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