

Strengths and Limitations of Teaching Methods

Lecture

STRENGTHS:

- presents factual material in direct, logical manner
- contains experience which inspires
- stimulates thinking to open discussion
- useful for large groups

LIMITATIONS:

- experts are not always good teachers
- audience is passive
- learning is difficult to gauge
- communication in one way

PREPARATION:

- needs clear introduction and summary
- needs time and content limit to be effective
- should include examples, anecdotes

Lecture with Discussion

STRENGTHS:

- involves audience at least after the lecture
- audience can question, clarify & challenge

LIMITATIONS:

- time may limit discussion period
- quality is limited to quality of questions and discussion

PREPARATION:

- requires that questions be prepared prior to discussion
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Panel of Experts

STRENGTHS:

- allows experts to present different opinions
- can provoke better discussion than a one person discussion
- frequent change of speaker keeps attention from lagging

LIMITATIONS:

- experts may not be good speakers
- personalities may overshadow content
- subject may not be in logical order

PREPARATION:

- facilitator coordinates focus of panel, introduces and summarizes
- briefs panel

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Brainstorming

STRENGTHS:

- listening exercise that allows creative thinking for new ideas
- encourages full participation because all ideas equally recorded
- draws on group's knowledge and experience
- spirit of congeniality is created
- one idea can spark off other other ideas

LIMITATIONS:

- can be unfocused
- needs to be limited to 5 - 7 minutes
- people may have difficulty getting away from known reality
- if not facilitated well, criticism and evaluation may occur

PREPARATION:

- facilitator selects issue
- must have some ideas if group needs to be stimulated

Videotapes

STRENGTHS:

- entertaining way of teaching content and raising issues
- keep group's attention
- looks professional
- stimulates discussion

LIMITATIONS:

- can raise too many issues to have a focused discussion
- discussion may not have full participation
- only as effective as following discussion

PREPARATION:

- need to set up equipment
- effective only if facilitator prepares questions to discuss after the show

Class Discussion

STRENGTHS:

- pools ideas and experiences from group
- effective after a presentation, film or experience that needs to be analyzed
- allows everyone to participate in an active process

LIMITATIONS:

- not practical with more that 20 people
- few people can dominate
- others may not participate
- is time consuming
- can get off the track

From "Getting the Most out of Your AIDS/HIV Trainings"
East Bay AIDS Education Training Center
Revised from 1989 addition by Pat McCarthy, RN, MSN, 1992

Strengths and Limitations of Teaching Methods

PREPARATION:

- requires careful planning by facilitator to guide discussion
- requires question outline

Small Group Discussion

STRENGTHS:

- allows participation of everyone
- people often more comfortable in small groups
- can reach group consensus

LIMITATIONS:

- needs careful thought as to purpose of group
- groups may get side tracked

PREPARATION:

- needs to prepare specific tasks or questions for group to answer

Case Studies

STRENGTHS:

- develops analytic and problem solving skills
- allows for exploration of solutions for complex issues
- allows student to apply new knowledge and skills

LIMITATIONS:

- people may not see relevance to own situation
- insufficient information can lead to inappropriate results

PREPARATION:

- case must be clearly defined in some cases
- case study must be prepared

Role Playing

STRENGTHS:

- introduces problem situation dramatically
- provides opportunity for people to assume roles of others and thus appreciate another point of view
- allows for exploration of solutions
- provides opportunity to practice skills

LIMITATIONS:

- people may be too self-conscious
- not appropriate for large groups
- people may feel threatened

PREPARATION:

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- trainer has to define problem situation and roles clearly
- trainer must give very clear instructions

Report-Back Sessions

STRENGTHS:

- allows for large group discussion of role plays, case studies, and small group exercise
- gives people a chance to reflect on experience
- each group takes responsibility for its operation

LIMITATIONS:

- can be repetitive if each small group says the same thing

PREPARATION:

- trainer has to prepare questions for groups to discuss

Worksheets/Surveys

STRENGTHS:

- allows people to think for themselves without being influenced by others
- individual thoughts can then be shared in large group

LIMITATIONS:

- can be used only for short period of time

PREPARATION:

- facilitator has to prepare handouts

Index Card Exercise

STRENGTHS:

- opportunity to explore difficult and complex issues

LIMITATIONS:

- people may not do exercise

PREPARATION:

- facilitator must prepare questions

Guest Speaker

STRENGTHS:

- personalizes topic
- breaks down audience's stereotypes

LIMITATIONS:

- may not be a good speaker

PREPARATION:

- contact speakers and coordinate

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Strengths and Limitations of Teaching Methods

- introduce speaker appropriately

Values Clarification Exercise

STRENGTHS:

- opportunity to explore values and beliefs
- allows people to discuss values in a safe environment
- gives structure to discussion

LIMITATION:

- people may not be honest
- people may be too self-conscious

PREPARATION:

- facilitator must carefully prepare exercise
- must give clear instructions
- facilitator must prepare discussion questions