

# Training Other Volunteers

## Developing Your Own Skills as a Trainer

Before the word **training** conjures visions of identically-prepared volunteers doing exactly the same tasks in exactly the same ways, re-think the term! Instead, imagine the process of helping volunteers in their own process of learning, stretching, becoming.

Since learning is something an individual does for himself, your training task is to help volunteers want to learn, and to create settings where they can interact with information which will move them toward needed capabilities.

There are several layers of learning through which you'll want to help your volunteer's progress: unawareness, awareness, interest, acceptance, conviction, and finally, commitment. Orientation, basic training, continued training, periodic review with feedback, and transitional training for changing roles are planned opportunities to help volunteers move toward commitment.

For training to be effective, the support system should: develop training for basic role duties and skills; create an annual training calendar; plan training so it precedes the time it will be applied; provide a means for individualized instruction at any time; involve knowledgeable volunteers as trainers; and maintain accurate and up-to-date records on volunteer participation in training.

## Ideas for Training Volunteers

How do you get volunteers to participate in training? The following ideas were generated by 4-H staff in response to the question: "How can we get information and necessary training to volunteers who won't attend training meetings?" Add your own ideas to those listed.

### GETTING THEM TO MEETINGS:

Many people suggested ways to get volunteers to attend meetings. These suggestions included:

- Provide free meal, refreshments
- Hold the meeting in three or four locations around the county or community
- Offer the meeting at different times – day, night, etc.
- Involve the volunteers in teaching, and sharing successful ideas
- Improve the promotion and marketing of the meeting
- Use a well-planned two-hour time frame for training during the meeting
- Set up a certification system, with a series of classes that volunteers must complete
- Offer exciting new program ideas
- Contact employers and arrange for release time for volunteers to attend training
- Involve the volunteers in planning the program
- Require pre-registration
- Be sure meetings are fun and involvement-centered
- Ask each group to send a percentage of their leaders based on group enrollment (quota system)
- Bring in an outside expert for teaching
- Offer CEU's (Continuing Education Units)
- Offer drawings and prizes for attendance
- Offer training on several subjects on a continuing basis – you have to attend to get it all



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- Have special recreational or social meetings and offer training during that time
- Offer mini-workshops during events when lots of adults are standing around
- Ask experienced volunteers to bring new leaders
- Involve experienced volunteers in teaching and ask them to promote the training
- Send out a survey to find out what volunteers want assistance with
- Use special invitations that sound exciting
- Make training mandatory, but offer flexible schedule
- Include an activity that gives volunteers something to take home
- Make attending an incentive; in other words, when a volunteer attends a county workshop, they become eligible to attend the state leader forum
- Give special recognition to those who attend training at area events
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### **TAKING TRAINING TO VOLUNTEERS**

Another suggestion dealt with taking the training to the volunteers, rather than asking them to attend a county-wide session. Suggestions included:

- Tape basic orientation information on audio or video and allow new volunteers to listen to it at their convenience. Follow up with one of the following ideas.
- Kitchen conferences, meet with a small group of volunteers in a home.
- Meet with volunteers at meetings, before or after
- One on one contact at their convenience
- Provide some information and training at other events
- Make personal visits
- Hold an adult retreat or camp with fun activities as well as training
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### **INVOLVING OTHERS IN THE TRAINING**

Many suggestions related to sharing the load with others, possibly a “train the trainer” model.

- Use the committee who plans and conducts training
- Train the volunteers to train
- Train 2-3 volunteers to provide training at local level
- Ask experienced volunteers to serve as mentors
- Develop a corp of volunteers who are assigned to teach other volunteers
- Share lessons from **T<sup>3</sup> Training Trainers to Teach**
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### **USING MEDIA**

Many suggestions related to the use of newsletters, mailings, and audio-visual media.

- Develop a video-tape, CD, or DVD series for check out and study.
- Develop lessons for access via the computer or telephone



- Coordinate a mailing and telephone follow-up to new volunteers on basics.
- Set up teleconferences with leaders
- Develop “teeline” topics that volunteers could call and listen to.
- Call to remind them of meetings and follow up with phone calls after the meeting
- Develop and mail a monthly or bi-monthly lesson with a quiz after each lesson
- Offer a correspondence course with a certificate of recognition when the course is completed
- Include an information or training section in regular monthly newsletter
- Develop a special newsletter for volunteers
- Provide information through your county 4-H web site
- Hold a tour and train as a part of that tour
- Provide a handbook on their duties
- Work through the members to train the volunteers
- Set up an educational resource library in the Extension office and encourage volunteers to check out materials
- Write a newspaper article or column on a weekly basis with ideas for volunteers
- \_\_\_\_\_

Your goal as a trainer will be to close the gap between the **actual** performance levels and **optimal** performance levels.

The following list of climate factors, described in *The Trainers Guide to Andragogy* by Dr John Ingalls, needs to be considered when creating teachable moments to close the performance gap. Use them as a thoroughly-plotted checklist for your next season training session.

<b>Physical Surroundings</b>	<b>Interpersonal Relations</b>	<b>Organizational</b>
_____ Space	_____ Welcoming	_____ Policy
_____ Lighting	_____ Comfort Seating	_____ Structure
_____ Acoustics	_____ Informality	_____ Clientele
_____ Décor	_____ Warm-Up Exercises	_____ Policy & Structure Committee
_____ Temperature	_____ Democratic Leadership	_____ Meeting Announcements
_____ Ventilation	_____ Interpersonal Relationships	_____ Informal Literature
_____ Seating Comfort	_____ Handling VIPs	_____ Program Theme
_____ Refreshments	_____ Mutual Planning	_____ Advertising
_____ Writing Materials	_____ Assessing Needs	_____ Posters & Displays
_____ Rest Rooms	_____ Formulating Objectives	_____ Exhibits
_____ Audiovisual Aids	_____ Designing & Implementing Activities	_____ Budget & Finance
_____ Coat Racks	_____ Evaluation	_____ Agenda & Closing Time
_____ Parking	_____ Closing Exercise	_____ Scheduling Frequency
_____ Name Tags		_____ Traffic Directions



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Use the checklist for the large general sessions, conferences, skills workshops, small group discussions, task group sessions, courses, individual studies, meetings, and other efforts to help trainees interact with information.

### Training Worksheet

Use this worksheet when you plan a volunteer training event.

1. Why is this training needed?

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2. How many will be trained? \_\_\_\_\_  
What kind of people will they be? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How long should the training last? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What are the objectives of training?
1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Who will conduct the training? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is the current level of skills or knowledge of these trainees?
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7. What new skills or information will be taught?
- 
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8. How can I best help learners interact with new information? Which of these methods would work best?

- |  |   |                                     |  |   |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer-Assisted Instruction | <input type="checkbox"/> Lecturettes/Lectures |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Role Play                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Groups or Cohorts    |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio Visuals                 |   |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Movies                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Flip Chart           | <input type="checkbox"/> Slides     | <input type="checkbox"/> Posters       | <input type="checkbox"/> Overhead Projector |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charts                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Film Strip           | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphs     | <input type="checkbox"/> Records/Tapes | <input type="checkbox"/> Flannel Board      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cassettes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Chalk Board          | <input type="checkbox"/> Video Tape |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Panel Discussions             | <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrations       |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tours or Trips                | <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits             |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Team Teaching                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming        |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Case Study                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Simulation Games     |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Observation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Dramatization        |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skill Workshops               | <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching             |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Web Sites                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Work       |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence Course         | <input type="checkbox"/> Letters              |                                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Site Visits                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring            |                                     |  |   |

9. What printed resources will be needed?

- publications of organizations  
 other books & pamphlets



- \_\_\_ displays & charts
  - \_\_\_ information brought to class by individuals
  - \_\_\_ training manual
  - \_\_\_ other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_ Flip charts
- \_\_\_ Overhead projector
- \_\_\_ Sound/Slide show
- \_\_\_ Filmstrip
- \_\_\_ Movies
- \_\_\_ Audio tape
- \_\_\_ Video tape
- \_\_\_ Chalk board
- \_\_\_ Preprinted graphs, charts, etc.
- Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
11. What should training date, timing frequency, and session length be?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
12. What should be the content and sequence of sessions?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
13. Do I have a lesson plan? \_\_\_\_\_ **T<sup>3</sup> Training Trainers to Teach Others** has generic lesson plans for teaching skills, knowledge or attitudes.
14. How will participants be selected?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
15. What preparation do participants need?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
16. What will be the cost of the program?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
17. How will the training be measured?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

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