

Module Nine: Training Techniques (30 minutes)

Module at a Glance



Module 9 provides participants with a general overview of adult learning theory. Trainers will prioritize the characteristics of effective facilitation, and will identify ways to meet the needs of adult learners during training. They will also explore the resource websites available for SASIT trainers, and will locate and save relevant resources for their own trainings.

Objectives:

SASITs will:

- Identify ways to address the needs of all learners.
- Develop deeper understanding of instructional techniques for working with adult learners.

Train-the-Trainer Agenda

	Training Techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity: Addressing the Needs of Adult Learners 	25 minutes
	Lingering Questions	5 minutes

Icon Legend



Group Activity



Presentation



Teacher Tools



Demonstration and Practice Using the SAS Portal



Action Planning Activity



SAS 101 Training Materials

Module 9 Materials Checklist

SASIT Instructor

- SASIT PowerPoint
- SASIT Training Manual
- SASIT Parking Lot posters
- Copies of *Drawings #1, #2, and #3*
- Laptop or computer with hardwired Internet connection

Participants

- Name Tents
- SASIT Training Manual
- Laptop or computer with hardwired Internet connection
- Markers (variety of colors; 4-5 markers per table)
- Post-it Notes

Equipment and Site Requirements

- Multimedia projector
- Screen
- Chart paper
- Availability of loaner laptops or additional computer access



Training Techniques

(40 minutes)

Overview of Adult Learning Theory:

Overview of Adult Learning Theory... (pp. 161 - 167) provides a general overview of adult learning theory, facilitation and questioning techniques. Direct participants to read the pages, and then to begin the activity on p. 158.



Activity: Addressing the Needs of Adult Learners (25 minutes)

Instructions for Steps One and Two: Participants complete Steps One and Two of the activity on their own, or with their table group.

Instructions for Step Three:

Drawing 1: Ask for a volunteer, or select a suitable person from the group. Give Drawing 1 to the volunteer. No one else should see this drawing. Have the volunteer to stand up in a corner of the training room facing all others and describe the drawing to them.

- **RULE:** Participants are **not allowed** to ask questions from the volunteer.
 - Once participants have heard the description, they should attempt to draw it as closely as they can to what the volunteer has described.
 - Get everyone to compare their images with each other and also to the source drawing (**SASIT PowerPoint – Slide #16**).



Drawing 2: Ask for a new volunteer and give him/her Drawing 2. The volunteer should describe the drawing to everyone else as before.

- **RULE:** This time the group can only ask **Open Questions**. The facilitator is the referee and should indicate if any question is closed and hence not allowed.
 - The group should draw what they think is in Drawing 2 as closely as they can based on the descriptions and the open questions asked.
 - Get everyone to compare their images with each other and the source drawing (**SASIT PowerPoint – Slide #17**).



Drawing 3: Ask for another volunteer and give him/her Drawing 3. The volunteer should describe the drawing to everyone else.

- **RULE:** Others can only ask **Closed Questions**. The tutor is the referee and must make sure only closed questions are asked. Closed questions should invariably get a yes/no or facts as answers.

- The group should draw what they think is in Drawing 3 as closely as they can based on descriptions and the closed questions asked.
- Get everyone to compare their images with each other and the source drawing (**SASIT PowerPoint – Slide #18**).



Debrief: (SASIT PowerPoint – Slides #16-18)

After the drawing exercise, have the participants discuss how they felt and thought of the activity. At each stage emphasize the importance of the concept explored.

- ***Drawing 1:*** It is important to get feedback and have a two-way communication so that misunderstandings are avoided.
- ***Drawing 2:*** Open questions generate a lot of information and force the person to come up with many unanticipated answers that you can use to draw new conclusions. This is a critical aspect of open questioning and it's why open questioning is more encouraged.
- ***Drawing 3:*** Closed questions are perfect when you want specific details. They are quick and efficient and to the point. All you want is a yes/no answer. They are not particularly good if the person hesitates in giving information away which is quite likely when dealing with clients, customers and in particular competitors.



Addressing the Needs of Adult Learners

Step One: Adult Learning Strategies

Provide insight as to how you can address each of the adult learning strategies (listed below and on pp. 161-162) when you provide training at your district/organization.

Strategy	How I will address needs:
1. Value an adult's experience in the classroom	
2. Create an environment of respect	
3. Convey the benefits of training	
4. Actively involve participants	
5. Address different styles of learning	

Step Two: *Using Technology*

Reflection (Individual)

Think of a time when you were in a training session where achieving the key objectives relied on the facilitator demonstrating components of a website, portal or other technologies.

Upon reflecting back upon this experience, consider the following:

- What went well during the session?

- Where there any parts of the session that were difficult to follow? If so, describe the circumstance?

Aligning to Strategies (Group Discussion)

Review *Tips for Conducting Computer Demos and Walkthroughs* (p. 165).

Based on the experiences identified, discuss the following with your group:

- For those things that went well during the session, did the facilitator use any of the tips provided? If so, which ones? If not, what tips should we recommend to add?

- For those things that did not go so well, which tips could that facilitator have used to make the session go smoother?

Step Three: *Draw Me a Picture*

Whole Group Activity: You will be presented with a series of three pictures. Listen carefully as the images are described to you, and try to recreate them in the spaces provided.

Drawing #1**Drawing #2****Drawing #3**

Overview of Adult Learning Theory

Many of us have years of experience in pedagogy; developing and delivering instruction to children of various ages. However when working with adults, there are a number of specific strategies that have been found to be particularly effective that differ from pedagogy. Adults bring a new set of needs and expectations when they attend training or other professional development experiences. So much so that a field of study that looks at adult learning theory has been developed and is called **Andragogy**.

American educator **Malcolm Knowles** is considered one of the pioneers of adult learning theory and has established six key assumptions related to what motivates adults to learn:

- Adults need to know the reason for learning something (Need to Know).
- Experience (including error) provides the basis for learning activities (Foundation).
- Adults need to be responsible for their decisions on education; involvement in the planning and evaluation of their instruction (Self-concept).
- Adults are most interested in learning subjects having immediate relevance to their work and/or personal lives (Readiness).
- Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented (Orientation).
- Adults respond better to internal versus external motivators (Motivation).

References: Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andragogy>

Adult Learning Strategies

Using Malcolm Knowles as a foundation, provided below are general strategies that are effective for trainers when working with the adult learner:

Strategy #1: *Adults bring relevant experiences with them into the learning environment...*

- As a group, the trainees have more experience than the trainer does. These experiences need to be recognized because to ignore an adult's experience in the classroom is to ignore and invalidate that trainee as a person.
- It is the trainer's responsibility to create a supportive and encouraging learning environment and not one where egos are bruised. By supporting the experiences of trainees, we as trainers, are gaining the benefit of what they already know.

Strategy #2: *Adults are self-directing...*

- Trainers cannot come across as dominant, but rather must be co-learners.
- Trainers should create an environment of respect for the trainees. For example, trainees should be comfortable enough to ask questions.

Strategy #3: *Adults perceive time as very "now-oriented," so be sure adult learners understand the WIIFMs (what's in it for me?)...*

- Training sessions are taking participants away from their work, so explain that time invested now will pay off later.
- Show trainees how the material being presented is immediately applicable or give them a timeframe. Provide direct, concrete experiences in which the learning will be applied back to their current job.
- Frequently discuss the benefits of learning.

Strategy #4: *Adults are problem solvers...*

- Ensure that the trainees are actively, rather than passively, involved in the learning process. This includes encouraging trainees to ask questions.
- Be sure to keep explanations brief so that interest level remains high. Avoid long periods of lecture.

Strategy #5: *Adults thrive on an environment based on learning and trust...*

- Participants need to feel comfortable to participate without fear of repercussions.
- People learn in different ways or sometimes in a combination of styles. They are divided into auditory (hearing), kinesthetic (doing), and visual (seeing) types. Because of these learning preferences, we know that people retain:
 - 10% of what they HEAR
 - 30% of what they SEE
 - 50% of what they SEE and HEAR
 - 70% of what they DO
 - 90% of what they SEE, HEAR and DO

Additional Resources:

Andragogy and Technology: Integrating Adult Learning Theory As We Teach With Technology

<http://frank.mtsu.edu/~itconf/proceed00/fidishun.htm>

Adult Learning Theory

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/technlgy/te10lk12.htm>

How Adults Learn

<http://agelesslearner.com/intros/adultlearning.html>

Principles of Adult Learning

<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/adults-2.htm>

Characteristics of Facilitators

Within a training session, the person leading the session should assume the role of a *facilitator*. Facilitators have the responsibility of creating an environment which is conducive to learning, where everyone brings a contribution to the session. Instead of being a “sage on the stage”, effective trainers are “guides on the side” that orchestrate the learning experience. A few key points regarding effective facilitation are provided below:

The Role of the Facilitator is to...

- Guide activities and conversations, while providing clear and concise directions.
- Recognize and foster the sharing of knowledge and honor the experience of all participants.
- Model 21st century teaching and learning; be explicit when using it, and articulate what you have done. For example, incorporate formative assessment strategies and instructional strategies like cooperative learning, scaffolding, meta-cognitive strategies and indirect instruction.

Facilitators Need to Effectively Utilize Course Materials...

In order to take into account learning types, preferences, and styles to train adult learners, facilitators need to “translate” the material created by the course developers such that the training experience is engaging. A few ideas are listed below:

<i>Course Developers</i>	<i>Trainers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine goals and set objectives to meet them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivate toward those goals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize training materials in a logical sequence, while reinforcing key items needed for required skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Here is what comes next.” • “Here is why you should be interested” • “Here is where you can use it” • "Is there anything I can review or clarify?"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop demonstrations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Let me show you how"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design training exercises to practice new skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Try it for yourself" or “You Show Me”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create knowledge checks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participation and check for understanding.

When Working on a Facilitator Team...

- Usually one person will take the lead for a section within the session. Other team members should be circulating and checking that people understand the directions and answering questions at individual tables.
- At times, there could be two lead facilitators, one to give directions, the other to explain the technology being used.
- One of the facilitators should take the role of timekeeper and inform other facilitators and the group about time limits.

Additional Facilitation Techniques...

1. Hand out or show in the front of the room a preprinted response sheet that they can complete throughout the lesson (e.g., a flowchart, checklist, schematic diagram, list of advantages and disadvantages, etc).
2. Distribute a self-assessment: a self-scoring, quickly administered exercise that lets you and the learner know where they stand. This can be used to tap knowledge, attitude, or skills.
3. Ask for a show of hands. This is especially useful when you want to polarize the group on a dichotomous issue. An alternative to this would be to ask participants to stand on one side of the room or the other, depending upon their response. This alternate approach helps to vary the activity and to “get people moving”. In either case, the facilitator leads the discussion from there.
4. Think-Pair-Share → In asking thought-provoking questions, have participants write down the answer on a piece of paper. After a few minutes of thought, have participants discuss with a neighbor. Finally facilitate a sharing out process to the whole group.
5. After every new topic (lesson, module, sequence), have participants complete an Action Plan sheet and write down what they plan to do back on the job to apply the topic just discussed.
6. Allow time for silent decisions or reflections on questions that do not require an overt response because you know that participants will answer to themselves (e.g., When did you last write a note commending one of your workers for a job well done?) Then discuss feelings or perceptions.
7. When responses are confidential or sensitive in nature (e.g., how you scored on the management style assessment), have the participants make the responses on a piece of scrap paper and fold it. Then collect these in a box, shake them up, then draw them out for posting on a flip chart or whiteboard, where you can then discuss and process data.

Tips for Conducting Computer Demos and Walkthroughs

Although demonstrations/walkthroughs are very effective techniques, they can be tricky to pull off. Trainees mentally process material at different speeds. Here are some guidelines for presenting effective computer walkthroughs and demonstrations.

- **Getting trainee attention for a demonstration:**

If you want to get everyone's attention during a demonstration, you may ask them to make a fist and put it in front of their keyboard and lower their screens on top of their fist so the computer does not go to sleep or shut down.

- **Move slowly and break down demonstrations:**

During a demonstration, remember that you know the system a lot better than the trainees do. This may cause a tendency to move more quickly through the screens, resulting in some trainees not keeping up with you. Also the more you can break down key functions within the system, the better. Try not to overwhelm trainees with too long of a demonstration or use demonstrations that cover all system features/capabilities which are not linked to the training objectives to be covered.

- **Clearly announce each keystroke/mouse click and point out locations on the screen:**

An example would be "Move your cursor to the address field" or "Now press the Enter key." This helps to address both the audio and visual learner. In addition to announcing that you are going to click, describe where it is. For example, "Click on the Execute icon which is the green checkmark at the top of the screen." Also physically point out its location by walking to the screen and pointing it out, using a pointer, or by moving the mouse icon on the screen.

- **Follow the Trainer's Guide:**

Note that many participants may be using the training materials provided to them to follow along. So it is important to remain consistent. Also try not to ad lib, attempting what you have not tested out previously. This often leads to problems and drags down the class.

- **Constantly look for student feedback and avoid too much "point and click" training:**

If a trainee looks confused, stop and ask if there is anything you can clarify. If possible, quickly walk around the room to ensure everybody is in sync. Also, remember that immediate feedback is more constructive than withholding feedback until later.

Also it is important to ensure that participants do not "zone out" through an excessive amount of point and click training. It is very easy for participants to miss key design principles of a portal/website when they are busy focusing solely on navigation. Be sure to ask a number of "why", "when", and "how" questions during the training to test for understanding of the underlying system framework you are demonstrating.

- **Give timely and relevant feedback:**

When giving feedback, do NOT focus on the individual. For example if a few class participants continue to have difficulty completing a guided practice due to an uncomfortable level with their computer skills, emphasize the key is the understanding of the underlying principles. Perhaps a neighbor could assist with the navigation portion of the website?

Questioning Techniques

Your success as a facilitator is in large part dependent upon your ability to actively involve the class in the learning process through thoughtful, provocative, and stimulating questions. Learning, to be interesting, useful, and fun must always be interactive.

Adults learn not by being told, but by experiencing the consequences of their actions. Putting it another way, it is the learner's response and not just the instructor's stimulus that determines how successful the learning will be. Questioning plays a key role in how much participants learn (and you learn), and how rewarded everyone feels after the learning experience is over. Unless you plan on giving a speech, sermon, or lecture, the use of questions, active learning, and responding to questions are musts for a successful class. Classroom communication is nothing if not an active, unpredictable process of dialogue.

Provide below are five main reasons to use questioning:

1. Arouse interest and curiosity and keep the group engaged and involved.
2. Promote self discovery and self assessment.
3. Help learners make connections between what they know and the new/re-framed information being presented.
4. Determine how well the group understands the information that has been presented.
5. Use the group as a resource (get realistic and practical experiences and ideas).

Also the way questions are structured is key to how conducive an environment is to learning. Asking closed-ended questions that require a "yes-no" or "short, direct answer" cause the adult learner to become disengaged. Open-ended questions that promote critical thinking and exploration is where the emphasis should be.

Types of open-ended questions are provided below:

- **Probing** → "How you are using SAS with your middle school teachers?"
- **Focus Setting** → "Now that we reviewed the various tabs for Clear Standards, how do these various options help the users of SAS?"
- **Clarifying** → "To help me understand, did you mean that SAS has become a resource for all your school principals? If so, how?"
- **Redirecting** → "Tom has provided us a few ideas on how best to deliver SAS training, what do the rest of you think?"

Questioning “Dos” and “Don’ts”...

Here are some techniques for eliciting relevant responses and maximizing engagement.

<i>Questioning “Dos”</i>	<i>Questioning “Don’ts”</i>
<p><u>Ask open-ended questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What, Why, When, Where, Who and How are the key words that will secure facts and information. • Open-ended questions enhance conceptualization, application, examples, connections, etc. 	<p><u>Excessive Closed Ended Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note that questions that begin with Did, Do, Would, or Will elicit yes or no responses and are rhetorical. Such “closed end” questions should be used sparingly. • Watch out for questions that are too non-directive. Examples of these types of questions include “How do you feel?”. In other words they leave the participant grasping for what you really are looking for.
<p><u>Use Pauses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure to pause for a few seconds before selecting a respondent. Look around the group. Restate the question. Give everyone time to formulate a response in their heads. Then select a respondent. 	<p><u>Calling on others “cold”</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some that are not comfortable with silence after asking a question feel the need to call on participants to break this silence. By doing this, it can cause uneasiness among the participants.
<p><u>Follow-up Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask follow-up questions that make participants go deeper. Ask for evidence, examples, or explanations to discover reasons behind thinking. • In cases where participants provide a response that may be in a different direction than you are heading, ask them to clarify and redirect the conversations in a positive direction. To help in a redirect, throw the issue back to the group as an opportunity for discussion. 	<p><u>Tell participants they are “wrong”</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid creating situations where there is a “right” and a “wrong” response to a question. Such an environment can destroy trust. • Avoid using questions which require the participants to parrot back information just presented by the instructor. Participants view these as patronizing and condescending.
<p><u>Ask “Suppose” Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a new idea, break a deadlock, or bring up an overlooked point with “Suppose we...” • From time-to-time, ask your participants to take a guess on something prior to teaching the point (e.g., What percentage of the time does the average manager communicate?) 	<p><u>Patronizing or presenting an opinion as “fact”</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators have the responsibility to remain neutral and establish an environment where all opinions are valued. • If trust is not established, participants can become argumentative.



Lingering Questions (5 minutes)

Participants will identify Lingering Questions and will discuss them with their table group.

- Participants will affix any remaining questions (written on a Post-It note) to the Training Techniques Parking Lot.

The instructor(s) will remove the Post-Its, and will address the remaining questions or concerns with the whole group.

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