

**SECTION I:  
METHODS FOR ENHANCING COMMUNITY  
HEALTH WORKER TRAINING**

## Facilitation Guidelines

As a trainer, your goal is to help participants learn information and build skills. You can help people learn best by using facilitation techniques that acknowledge and build on the knowledge, skills, and experience they already have.

Research shows that adult learning occurs best when it is self-directed, fills an immediate need, involves the learner, is reflective, provides feedback, shows respect for the learner, draws on the learner's own experience, and occurs in a comfortable environment. Paulo Freire, the founder of popular education, developed the empowerment approach to education, which offers a useful framework for training adults. His basic tenet is that the teacher (in this case, the trainer) learns from the group and that the learners in the group are also teachers—everyone learns from each other. Therefore, effective facilitators talk with—not at—participants as a way of setting a climate of mutual respect. Many facilitation techniques can be used to maximize group participation, keep participants engaged, and help them learn from each other. Several of these techniques are described below.

### Encouraging Group Participation

When participants take an active role in their learning, they are more likely to “own” the information and skills covered in the training. In addition, they are more likely to participate *actively* in the training if you do the following:

- Maintain relaxed body language.
- Use an icebreaker to help them relax, get to know each other, and get ready to learn.
- Set group norms (sometimes called ground rules) to help make the training a safe, comfortable, and productive learning environment. Examples of norms include “One person talks at a time,” “Respect others’ confidentiality,” “Help each other learn,” “Help the training stay on track by returning on time from breaks and lunch,” and “All feedback is to be given in a supportive manner, with the goal of helping others improve their skills.” These norms can be added to the list if they are not offered by participants.
- Move around. If you stand behind a podium, you are likely to appear distant or inaccessible to participants.

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- Ask the group for examples to illustrate a point. This ensures that examples are relevant to them.
- “Bounce back” to the group questions you receive from participants, as appropriate. “What do other people think about this?” and “What other ideas do you have?” are ways to show participants that you recognize their expertise.
- Show participants that you appreciate their contributions by saying things such as “That’s a good point,” “Thank you for bringing that up,” or “Many people have that same question/concern.”

More specific ways to maximize group participation are included in the Open-Ended Questions and Active Listening sections below.

**Open-Ended Questions.** Whenever possible, ask questions instead of talking at participants; find opportunities to help participants share their ideas. Do this by asking open-ended questions—questions that cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.” Open-ended questions are a simple way for trainers to acknowledge that participants have valuable information and experience to share. However, using open-ended questions often takes longer than lecturing. If time is running out in a session, responses from participants may need to be limited (e.g., “We have time for two more comments”).

Open-ended questions can be used early in a training or meeting to get a sense of where participants are coming from—their expectations and baseline knowledge levels. Open-ended questions used early in a training or meeting send the message that participants’ input is welcome. For example, you may wish to ask the following questions:

- “What are your expectations for this training?”
- “What norms would you like to add to this list?”
- “Why do you think community health workers (CHWs) are important for BCCEDPs?”

Open-ended questions can be used to review information already covered. For example, participants can review or summarize parts of the training or meeting when asked the following questions:

- “What new information have you learned in this morning’s session?”
- “What will you take away with you from this training?”
- “What are the three most important issues to consider when recruiting community health workers?”

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In addition, open-ended questions can be used to help participants share ideas, experiences, barriers, and solutions when you process activities or discuss content. Examples of these types of questions include the following:

- How can a thorough community assessment benefit a developing or expanding community health worker program?
- “What are some of the barriers you may face from staff when planning a community health worker program?”
- “How can you overcome these barriers you identified?”

**Active Listening.** Your active listening skills can help participants feel like their ideas are truly an important part of the training or meeting experience. In addition, active listening helps you understand participants’ concerns; this greater understanding helps you tailor the training to better meet their needs. An effective active listener uses both verbal and nonverbal skills to acknowledge participation, clarify information, and encourage dialog.

*Verbal* active listening skills include

- Repeating what participants say to emphasize their point;
- Rephrasing participants’ words to see if you understand what they are saying;
- Connecting participants’ points to something covered earlier in the training;
- Asking for clarification if you are not sure what participants mean; and
- Thanking participants for their contribution.

*Nonverbal* active listening skills include

- Maintaining open, receptive body language;
- Making eye contact with the speaker;
- Leaning forward; and
- Nodding when appropriate.

## Giving Feedback

As noted above, it is important to give positive feedback to participants throughout the training. In addition, it may be necessary to give corrective

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feedback at several points in the training, as you help participants build their skills and knowledge. Effective corrective feedback is always given in a supportive manner that helps participants improve. Tips for giving corrective feedback include the following:

- Focus your comments on the participant's behavior rather than on her/him as an individual.
- Always point out something the participant did well.
- Point out something *specific* the participant could improve on.

## Time Management

Time management can be one of the most challenging aspects of conducting a training. It takes a skilled facilitator to cover training content in a way that involves and engages participants in a limited timeframe. Some ways to manage time effectively are to

- Make clear in setting norms that participants and trainers will be expected to respect starting, ending, and break times.
- Help participants who wander off topic to tie in their comment with the discussion at hand.
- Ask participants' permission to "table" questions, suggestions, or comments because a related topic will be covered later in the training, and write the tabled information on newsprint as a reminder to come back to it.
- Label a sheet of newsprint "parking lot," and invite participants to write comments, questions, and feedback on self-stick notes and "park" the notes there throughout the training.
- Limit comments on any given topic. (Always encourage participants to continue their dialog on breaks or after the training session.)

If a situation occurs where there is not enough time to cover all the topics on the agenda, negotiate with participants about what they most want to cover. By allowing them to identify what is most useful to them, participants make the most of the time remaining and their information needs are met.

## Ensuring Cultural Sensitivity

This section contains some information about cultural issues of which facilitators should be aware. By culture, we mean the learned and shared knowledge, beliefs, and rules that people use to interpret experience and to generate social behavior. Culture is the guiding force behind behaviors and material products associated with a group of people. Culture can influence people's values, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior, and therefore has an impact on how people learn, communicate, make decisions, and interact in groups.

Many people think of culture simply as a person's *race or ethnicity*. However, culture includes many different aspects of people's lives. That is, people's cultural background may be influenced by their

- Race/ethnicity,
- Gender,
- Regional differences,
- Language,
- Sexual orientation,
- Level of formal education,
- Spiritual beliefs and practices,
- Physical ability, and
- Age.

When trainers facilitate multicultural groups, they must be aware that although people from a specific cultural group may share common traits, all members of a cultural group are not alike. Individuals within cultural groups have their own personal experiences, personality traits, values, and belief systems. It is therefore important to respond to a person's needs and not assume that the person will respond in a certain way because she or he belongs to a particular cultural group.

**Self-Awareness.** To fully appreciate cultural differences, trainers must

1. Recognize their own culture's influence on how they think and act;
2. Understand the complexities of cross-cultural interactions and fully appreciate, value, and respect participants' diversity;
3. Be aware of the impact of institutional and societal racism, sexism, ageism, and other such "-isms," and acknowledge how these forms of oppression can influence group dynamics; and

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4. Share appropriate personal experiences from one's "own" culture while not attempting to be an expert on other cultural groups.

**Communication.** To improve cross-cultural communication skills, trainers should

1. *Avoid statements based on stereotypes.* If generalizations are used, they should be clearly labeled as such and modified with terms such as "many" or "some."
2. *Appreciate* the different ways that people from various cultures engage in group discussions. Silence, for example, has a different meaning, depending on personal experience and cultural background.
3. *Use caution* during discussions, always making sure that all participants have an opportunity to express their ideas to the group.
4. *Remember* that participants have different levels of proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding the language used in a training session.
5. *Be aware* that music can deliver a message, set a tone, enhance mood, or entertain with some cultural groups. If you use music, make sure that it reflects the diversity of the group.

**Body Language and Movements.** Trainers must be aware of the different ways people share information. In addition to talking, people use body language, physical contact, and body movements to express themselves. For example:

1. The amount of *physical space* between persons when speaking may vary, depending on cultural norms, personal experiences, and personal preference.
2. Some participants may not like "hugging" or activities that require physical contact. Whenever possible, avoid such activities or ask the group about their level of comfort.
3. *Physical contact* between men and women is viewed differently by various cultural or gender groups.
4. *Touching* may offend some people unless they have a close relationship with the other person. Do not assume you know the limits of individuals' comfort levels regarding their personal boundaries.

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5. The amount of *eye contact* that people feel comfortable with varies by cultural group. In some cultures, direct eye contact is considered aggressive and rude; looking down or away indicates respect. In other cultures, direct eye contact demonstrates active listening.

**Other Issues.** Trainers must be aware of many other cultural considerations in multicultural groups. Some examples are included for your information:

1. The most important persons in a participant's life may be his or her group and family, along with the possibility of very *strong extended family ties*. This information can be invaluable in planning activities and for providing examples of concepts and strategies in training.
2. The trainer must be especially sensitive to people who are *deaf or hard of hearing*, placing them where they can see the face and body language of the interpreter (if one is requested) and other group members.
3. Be aware that many *sexual minorities* (gay men, lesbians, or people who are bisexual) will not openly disclose themselves in a training with people they do not know or trust.
4. When there are several persons in a room, do not look at or expect a female participant to take the stereotypical role of taking notes, getting the refreshments, or generally taking care of others.
5. Persons who use a *wheelchair* or who are otherwise physically challenged need to be considered in the selection of exercises that require *physical movement* (e.g., jumping up and down, stomping feet, clapping hands, etc.).
6. *Conflict* may be viewed and managed differently from one cultural group to another, so consider flexibility in resolving tension and/or friction.
7. Do not treat the single member of a cultural group who may be present as if he or she answers for all members of that group. For example, "How do you think women would feel or think in this situation?" or "What do you think youth want?"

### **Other Considerations for the Training Team.**

1. Training team *composition* sends a message. Whenever possible, trainers' cultural backgrounds should be representative of participants' backgrounds. Diverse groups of participants will benefit from seeing people from their own communities among the trainers. In addition, a



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multicultural training team models cooperation and sharing among cultures.

2. *Trainer styles differ*, just as learning styles do; therefore, be careful in designing the training on the basis of an individual trainer's preferred style.
3. Acknowledge areas of weakness and expertise. If given a direct question, make an attempt to answer it in an accurate and forthright manner. If you do not know the answer, admit it.
4. Trainers should not assume that to avoid controversy or to minimize friction each activity or lecture has to be *fun* to keep a group's attention or interest. A balance between academic and experiential methods is important.
5. Take special note of *seating arrangements*, including where trainers sit. Avoid having groups congregate at the back of the room or having another group always be in the front of the room.
6. Keep training goals and objectives in mind at all times, but especially when processing. Be aware of participants who might take over or seek to control. If you are uncomfortable with conflict, or uncertain about how to address it, seek training in conflict resolution. Conflict inevitably occurs whenever two or more people come together, so be prepared.
7. Acknowledge the contributions of non-Westerners, when quoting scholars, artists, inventors, scientists, etc.

Finally, even with all cultural considerations in mind, there is no substitute for exercising good common sense and judgment in considering how, what, and when to address various issues in a training. Almost any training activity has the potential to be culturally offensive when facilitated by someone who does not demonstrate respect for participants. Demonstrating respect for participants is crucial and opens the door for mutual growth and learning.

## Teaching Strategies

This training is based on principles of adult learning and uses several different teaching strategies as a way of keeping participants interested and involved. Many of the teaching strategies used reflect the ideas of cooperative learning, which provide an opportunity for each group member to play a role and make a contribution to the work of the group. Cooperative learning is based on positive interdependence; the idea that the group members need each other to complete the group's work. Without structure, it is far too common that one person ends up doing most of the work, one person dominates, or some people do not participate. Cooperative learning should be considered a norm for running small groups. Strategies used are described below.

**Small-group work** provides an opportunity for participants to work together to accomplish a specific task. It exposes participants to a variety of perspectives and experiences, and emphasizes the importance of teamwork.

**Case studies** provide an opportunity for participants to apply abstract concepts or models to a real-life situation. Through the use of a hypothetical and familiar situation, participants move from knowledge to skill-building.

**Brainstorming** generates a list of ideas, thoughts, or alternative solutions around a particular theme or topic. The purpose of brainstorming is to obtain as many ideas as possible and for participants to stimulate each other's thinking. In this technique, creative thinking is more important than practical thinking. Participants spontaneously present ideas on a given topic. Anything offered is written down. The facilitator should make every effort to write down exactly what participants say and only paraphrase with permission. No idea is dismissed, criticized, or evaluated.

**Role-plays** involve acting out roles, like actors in a play. Role-plays are not planned ahead of time (they are spontaneous). Acted out by participants, role-plays are used to practice skills, develop empathy with another person or group, or take on a different perspective in a safe environment.

**Lectures** are a quick and easy way to convey or cover content that is new or unfamiliar to participants. Trainers deliver lectures by talking to participants about a specific subject, often with the use of transparencies, slides, or other visual aids. Because adults learn most effectively when they participate actively in their learning, lectures are kept to a minimum and are interspersed with other teaching strategies in this training.

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**Skits** are planned ahead of time and are sometimes scripted. Acted out by the facilitators, skits are used to share new information or to spark discussion about a taboo or controversial subject.

## Energizers and Icebreakers

Sometimes participants become overwhelmed with content during a session and need an activity to distract them. An energizer can be used at this time to “pep up” the group and get them moving about. Energizers can also be used at the beginning of a session to establish rapport and prepare the group to learn. Please note that whenever energizers are used that are not “built into” the lesson plans, the trainer(s) must adjust the agenda time.

Icebreakers help participants become acquainted with each other and create a friendly, informal environment for training. These are useful at the beginning of a training as well as at the beginning of breakout sessions.

Following are some energizers/icebreakers that may be incorporated into the training as needed. They can be used with large or small groups of participants. Most of these activities can be done in 5 to 15 minutes. Trainer(s) may adapt or modify these energizers/icebreakers as appropriate for the group size, training situation, and time available.

Many of the energizers and icebreakers in this handout were found in one of the resources listed below.

- *101 Ways to Make Training Active*, by Mel Silberman  
Copyright ©1995 by Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, San Francisco, CA.
- *Games That Teach Experiential Activities for Reinforcing Learning*, by Steve Sugar  
Copyright ©1998 by Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, San Francisco, CA.

Please note that some of these energizers and icebreakers have been adapted to specifically fulfill the needs of this training.

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### Beach Ball Toss

#### Purpose

To review material learned from a previous session or determine what participants would like to learn during the current session.

#### Time

5 to 15 minutes

#### Materials

Choice of using either a beach ball, nerf ball, or koosh ball.

#### Directions

1. Instruct participants to form a circle.
2. Explain that you will throw the ball to someone within the circle. When that person catches the ball, he or she should mention a key message or concept heard during a previous session.\* Once he or she has made a statement, he or she should toss the ball to another person within the circle.
3. Ask participants not to toss the ball to the person on their immediate left or right.
4. Suggest that participants should step out of the circle once they have participated.
5. Continue tossing the ball until all participants have had an opportunity to participate.

**\*Note:** If this is the first session for the training program, ask them to tell you what they expect to learn.

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### Making Rain

#### Purpose

This activity allows participants to move!

#### Time

5 minutes

#### Materials

None

#### Directions

1. Ask participants to form circle.
2. Tell participants to follow the motions\* performed by the trainer. Tell them that each person will follow that motion as you go around a circle clockwise.
3. Remind participants to begin the new motion after the person to their right has begun. For example, the pattern should be like the “wave” at a baseball game.
4. The trainer should continue the motion until every person in the circle is doing it. Once this happens, the trainer should initiate the next motion. Continuous motion will produce a sound like a thunderstorm.
5. Repeat the cycle a few times to produce the sound.
6. Once the trainer has decided the energizer should end, she should just place her hands at her sides. This motion should travel around the circle, just as the other motions did and allow the “thunderstorm” to fade away.

\* The motions are

- Put palms together and rub hands together back and forth
- Click fingers
- Use hands to slap the top of thighs
- Stomp feet

## The Great Wind Blows

### Purpose

This is a fast-paced activity that gets participants moving and laughing. It is a good team builder while allowing participants to get to know one another better.

### Time

5 to 15 minutes

### Materials

None

### Directions

1. Ask participants to stand in a circle.
2. Tell the participants that if they agree with the next statement, they should move to another space in the circle. They cannot move directly to their left or their right.
3. Stand in the center of the circle and say “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and the great wind blows for everybody who...” Choose an ending that would likely apply to nearly everyone in the session, such as “likes ice cream.”
4. At this point, everyone who likes ice cream runs to an empty spot in the circle. As the participants move, make sure the person in the center occupies one of the empty spaces. When this happens, one participant will have no space to occupy and will replace the person who was in the center.
5. Have the next person in the center finish the same incomplete sentence, “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and the great wind blows for everybody who...,” with a new ending. It can be humorous, e.g., “sleeps with a night light” or serious “is worried about the Federal deficit.”
6. Play the game as often as it seems appropriate to get everyone feeling comfortable with the group.

### Variations

- Provide an extensive list of endings that the participants can use. Include material relevant to the subject matter of the session or to the job or life experience of the participants.
- Have pairs of participants in the center instead of just one. Invite them to jointly select an appropriate ending for the sentence.

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### That's Me

#### Purpose

This activity gets participants moving, i.e., standing up and down. It also allows them to get acquainted.

#### Time

5 to 15 minutes

#### Materials

None

#### Directions

1. Give the following directions:
  - You will ask a question, such as “Who has grandchildren?”
  - If that characteristic “fits,” participants will stand up, raise both arms outstretched over their head, and shout, “That’s Me!”
2. Ask the group to practice standing up and shouting “That’s Me!” when you count to three.
3. Ask the group as many of the following questions (or questions of your choice) as time allows:
  - Who lives in (this state)?
  - Who lives outside the continental United States?
  - Who traveled more than 4 hours to get here?
  - Who has grandchildren?
  - Who took a vacation last summer?
  - Who exercised this morning?
  - Who ate at least one serving of fruit this morning?
  - Who had a clinical breast exam within the last year?
  - Who watched at least one movie or videotape in the last month?



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- Who has visited the shopping mall here in (this city) already?
- Who plans to shop while in (this city)?
- Who has snow skied before?
- Who has been supported by CDC for the breast and cervical cancer program for more than 4 years?
- Who has a pet?
- Who has children?
- Who has been supported by CDC cancer program less than 1 year?
- Who is excited to network with other BCCEDPs?

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### **Stranded**

#### **Purpose**

To have fun.

#### **Time**

10 to 15 minutes

#### **Materials**

Magic wand (optional)

#### **Directions**

1. Invite participants to imagine they are stranded on an exotic island somewhere in the South Pacific and a fairy comes to grant them any three wishes they desire (except getting off the island).
2. Suggest participants consider the following questions:
  - Who would you want to be stranded with?
  - What items do you wish you had with you?
3. Ask each participant to share their wishes as they pass the magic wand.

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### Sweets Say It All

#### Purpose

To help participants to get to know each other better.

#### Time

10 to 15 minutes

#### Materials

- Candies, e.g., miniature Snickers, M&M's, Hershey's miniatures, lemon drops, Gummi bears
- Container to hold the candies

#### Directions

1. Have participants sit in a circle.
2. Pass the basket and instruct participants to take as many candies as they would like. Ask them not to eat the candies at this point.
3. After everyone has some candy, request participants to state a fact about themselves for each piece of candy they have in their hand.

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### Summer Postcard

#### Purpose

To help participants get to know each other better.

#### Time

10 to 15 minutes

#### Materials

- One piece of newsprint for each participant
- One marker (have a box of colored markers) for each participant
- Tape

#### Directions

1. Give each participant one piece of newsprint and one marker.
2. Invite them to imagine they are sending a postcard to a friend from a vacation spot they have been to or wish to visit. Ask them to create their postcard.
3. Allow 3 to 5 minutes for drawing. Assure them that they do not need to be an “artist” to do this. They can make whatever design they want including using stick figures.
4. Give participants tape and ask them to display their postcards on the wall. Invite each participant to briefly share and describe his or her postcard.

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### Up, Up and Away

#### Purpose

To get to know each other better and to have fun.

#### Time

10 to 15 minutes

#### Materials

- One balloon per participant
- A small slip of paper for each participant (prepared in advance by the trainer)
- Pens

#### Directions

1. Instruct participants to write down one physical characteristic that makes them stand out in a crowd. For example, I have on huge parrot earrings.
2. Ask them to fold the paper and stuff it in the balloon. Ask them to blow up and tie the balloon, and then release it into the air.
3. Invite participants to really toss around the balloons. They should try to stop them from touching the ground. Inform them that when the trainer says to stop, they should grab one balloon and pop it.
4. Ask participants to read the characteristic written on the piece of paper inside the balloon they popped and try to find the person who wrote it.
5. Once each participant has found his or her person, instruct them to answer the question, “What is one thing you hope to learn in this training?”

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### Stuck On You

#### Purpose

To design a beautiful sticker with a slogan about community health workers.

#### Time

10 to 15 minutes

#### Materials

- Newsprint
- One large strip of paper for each participant, approximately 5" by 24" (these strips may be cut from the pages of the newsprint)
- Markers (assorted colors)
- Tape
- An overhead transparency or sheet of newsprint of the instructions prepared in advance by the trainer.
- A sheet of paper and a pencil for each participant to sketch their design.

#### Directions

1. Divide the group into teams of two to five participants.
2. Distribute paper, pencils, strips of paper, and markers to each team.
3. Ask participants to take 5 minutes to design a sticker with a slogan that summarizes something about CHWs. Invite them to imagine giving this beautiful sticker to the CHWs with whom they work.
4. Post the instructions for this activity using a sheet of newsprint.
5. After 5 minutes, invite participants to post their stickers on the wall and briefly share them with the group.
6. After participants have shared their stickers, attempt to summarize participants' thoughts and feelings regarding CHWs.

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### A Monumental Task

#### Purpose

To help participants understand the importance of teamwork and ingenuity.

#### Time

15 minutes

#### Materials

- Markers
- Index cards
- Masking tape
- Decorative stickers (optional)

#### Directions

1. Divide participants into teams of three to four people.
2. Ask participants to pretend their small group works at an architectural firm. They have been asked to build a monument in celebration Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Week. Imagine the monument will eventually be displayed at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
3. Provide each team with a stack of index cards, tape, markers, and stickers.
4. Challenge each team to be as effective a group as possible by constructing a “monument” solely from the materials they have been given. While folding and tearing the cards are permitted, no other supplies can be used for the construction. Encourage them to take a little time to plan their monument before they begin to construct it. Invite teams to draw on or decorate the monument as they see fit.
5. Allow at least 10 minutes for the construction.
6. Ask each team to briefly describe the monument they have constructed. Also, ask participants the following:
  - What process did the group go through to build the monument?
  - Did a leader emerge? If so, who and in what way?