

**Corporation for National Service**  
National Service Fellowship Program



**Inspiring Volunteer Development:  
A Resource Book for Training Senior Volunteers in Intergenerational Programs**

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National Service Fellow  
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## ABSTRACT

### **Inspiring Volunteer Development: A Resource Book for Training Senior Volunteers in Intergenerational Programs**

#### *Goals of the Study*

Caroline Crocoll's National Service Fellowship research focused on the development of a theoretical framework for training senior volunteers in intergenerational programs. The study sought to outline a comprehensive in-service model for training senior volunteers that met a stated objective of Senior Corps programs: *to build on and enhance existing skills and provide the volunteers with new information relative to their assignments and personal welfare*. Crocoll conducted an extensive literature review on training and the senior volunteer, interviewed senior volunteer project directors and project volunteers, and developed the *Survey of Senior Volunteer Training Needs* to gather data from volunteer station staff and supervisors. Five Foster Grandparent projects participated in this study. Additional information was gathered from artifact and historical data to include program operations handbooks and project in-service training agendas.

#### *Results of the Study*

Through the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data gathered for her fellowship research, Ms. Crocoll has developed the seven-category **Agelong Learning Model**<sup>®</sup> which incorporates on-going skill enhancement, and provides information and resources to support the senior volunteer's ability to work with children and youth. The seven-category model proposes in-service training in the following areas:

- Assignment-Related Knowledge and Skills
- Policies and Regulations
- Social Interaction
- Personal Development
- Resource Information
- Program Support
- Civic Identity

The results of this study underscore the fact that senior volunteer program directors work selflessly as they continuously try to adapt their programs to the challenges of our dynamic society. Almost daily project directors are faced with the fact that senior volunteer knowledge and skills must be updated. In such a world, it is easy for people to believe the old stereotypes about our seniors, that they are less than up-to-date, that they have obsolete skills, and inadequate strength and endurance to contribute productively to society. Those who work with senior volunteers understand the fallacy of these beliefs and the potential of our seniors. The question is how do we help our senior volunteers project this truth to the rest of the world?

One way is to enhance the effectiveness of senior volunteer service by reinforcing the quality of the in-service training they receive. Various schools of thought exist on developing in-service training for senior volunteers. However, there is little consistency or research-based information available on the most effective way to tap into community resources and design in-service training to support senior volunteers. Ms. Crocoll's Agelong Learning Model for senior volunteer training and development provides project directors with a research-based, coordinated, and integrated approach to in-service training. The model, along with community resource information to support in-service training, are outlined in the training resource book section of this report.

### *What It Means To You*

The main objectives of Crocoll's study were to enlighten the discussion on senior volunteer roles and in-service training needs, to improve training by getting to know the audience through involving stakeholders in the processes of in-service training, and to build an effective framework to enhance training for senior volunteers. The findings and subsequent training resource book provide senior volunteer project directors with valuable resources and information, identified by stakeholders, to build a new framework for the continuous improvement of senior volunteers.

The training resource book outlines important principles in adult education; cognitive and sensory changes that may effect learning and training design; the Agelong Learning Model, ideas for designing effective in-service training; and resources for collaboration and training support.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### *Introduction*

Thomas Jefferson once said, “May I never be too busy in my own affairs that I fail to respond to the needs of others with kindness and compassion.” These words, spoken more than two centuries ago, still echo throughout the United States today. The spirit of kindness and compassion is evidenced in the work of millions of volunteers who give their time in service to others each year. Volunteerism has become an integral part of American society.

Government officials, religious leaders, political activists, and health professionals hail volunteering as an activity that is important for individuals, families, communities, and the country (Moberly, 1998). According to the “Giving and Volunteering in the United States Biennial Study” (Independent Sector, 1999), 56% of adults volunteered a total of 19.9 billion hours in 1998. This documents a 13.7% increase from the 1996 study and is the highest ever percentage of Americans volunteering their time to the service of others.

Nowhere is America’s volunteer energy more needed than in caring for, guiding, and educating our children. Today, young people are exposed to risks that were unknown to our parents and grandparents (Wofford, 1998). Among the myriad risks children face are crime, poverty, neglect, and physical abuse. Many volunteer programs have been developed to address these issues and a growing number of older adults actively serve in various roles in programs for children with special needs.

Determining roles, training priorities, and available resources for training older volunteers can be problematic in organizations without well-defined training guidelines. Although volunteer organizations around the country are dedicated to providing quality service, many struggle to adequately meet volunteer training needs. This is often due to ambiguous training guidelines and limited support resources. Moreover, the problem is growing. The need for well-trained volunteers has never been greater. In response to the increased need for volunteers, older adults are actively sought to serve in a variety of volunteer programs. Goss (1999) suggests that the segment of the population that is sixty or more years of age accounts for most of the increase in volunteer effort over the past decade.

A vast majority of volunteer opportunities for older adults are intergenerational in nature. According to Newman & Smith (1997), the term “intergenerational” is used to describe a social phenomenon that brings together the nations’ oldest and youngest generations. Intergenerational programs offer methods for confronting social problems, such as isolation, inadequate support systems, and the disconnectedness of both generations from each other and from their communities. These programs also attempt to address economic and political problems, such as the competition for shrinking human services.



Through intergenerational programs, senior volunteers help to provide an environment that fosters healthy development and emotional well-being in children. Often, the target population served by senior volunteers is comprised of children below the age of eighteen. A challenging aspect for these programs is the appropriate use of in-service training to help senior volunteers work effectively with children with special needs.

### *The Research Problem*

Ideally, a comprehensive volunteer training program should incorporate a broad array of skills and information necessary to support senior volunteers in all aspects of their assigned roles and responsibilities. From this perspective, volunteer in-service training should provide sufficient information on policies, regulations, and social/personal development, while focusing on the more important aspects of developing assignment-related knowledge and skills. However, this is not always the case. In a study on motivation and incentives of senior volunteers, Rouse and Clawson (1992) found that although senior volunteers in intergenerational programs considered youth development training desirable, many respondents felt that they were not receiving adequate training.

The impact of the intergenerational relationship on children cannot be overemphasized. In a longitudinal study that traced the developmental paths of a multiracial cohort of children who had been exposed to perinatal stress, chronic poverty, and a family environment troubled by chronic discord and parental psychopathology, Werner (1993) concluded that the resilient children in the study all had at least one person in their lives who accepted them unconditionally, regardless of temperamental idiosyncrasies, physical attractiveness, or intelligence. In intergenerational programs, it is often, is the senior volunteer who fulfills this role of unconditional caregiver.

Effective training practices, accompanied by ongoing community support and attention to personal welfare, can enhance the senior volunteers' ability to provide children with special needs with an environment of unconditional care. Milano (1998) describes effective training as accomplishing its objectives and the objectives relevant to a training participant's needs. Milano states that effective training provides a foundation that enables participants to perform behaviors described in the objectives for the training, which in turn should relate directly to desired performance on the job or in life. If senior volunteer training is not designed to meet objectives, or if personal support is limited, volunteers may feel that they are not competent to perform their duties. Additionally, senior volunteers may be viewed by volunteer supervisors as incapable of undertaking assigned roles and responsibilities.

Research by VanderVen (1989) suggests that to enhance their legitimacy, intergenerational programs must move to develop competency or objectives-based training by observing and analyzing what volunteers are actually doing in intergenerational activities. Yet, even with recommendations to enhance training, recent research on volunteerism has focused mainly on who volunteers, how often people volunteer, what motivates volunteers, and the relationship between volunteerism and quality of life.

In a comprehensive synthesis of research on senior volunteers, Fischer and Schaffer (1993) stated that although numerous handbooks and manuals on volunteering are available, these are almost never based on research. To address the lack of research on training senior volunteers, the 1995 White House Conference on Aging passed a resolution on expanding and enhancing volunteer opportunities for older adults. A critical strategy of the resolution called for encouraging research to identify and fill gaps between volunteer participation and the productive potential of older persons. However, research on identifying gaps in the training of senior volunteers continues to be limited.

The few studies that have focused on training senior volunteers have shown that training often falls short of its desired effectiveness. A review of the Foster Grandparent Program (ACTION, 1994) sought to assess program effectiveness and recommended that a comprehensive training program more fully address the needs of senior volunteers. However, the study did not outline what a comprehensive training program might include, nor did the study outline the specific training needs of senior volunteers as identified by program stakeholders.

With these studies in mind, fundamental questions began to emerge: Are senior volunteers sufficiently trained to meet the diverse problems confronting today's children with special needs? Are the personal welfare needs of the senior volunteer being addressed in training events? And if not, why not? What types of in-service training are senior volunteers currently receiving and what should they receive to become more effective in their service? How should an ideal in-service training program be developed and what should it include to ensure that senior volunteers are sufficiently trained to meet the demands of the volunteer environment?

Implicit in intergenerational programs is the notion that senior volunteers will have clearly defined roles and will receive effective training and on-going support from the sponsoring organization. Sponsoring organizations that employ effective training practices can help to build greater competence in their senior volunteers. By doing so, organizations assist senior volunteers in meeting the challenges of their assignment-related roles and responsibilities. Without effective training and support, gaps in assignment-related skills and knowledge may be viewed by some as a lack of competence.

Lawton's (1986) model of competence based on person-environment fit provides a unique framework for understanding the link between training and volunteer competence. According to Lawton, the person-environment fit model suggests that a balance between environmental demands and personal skills is necessary for one to feel competent and be judged as competent by others. If senior volunteers are to be perceived as competent to work with children with special needs, there must be congruence between volunteer abilities and the demands of the volunteer environment.

While it is clear that research has indicated a need to strengthen and enhance training for senior volunteers, what has yet to be identified is a sound framework from which to build effective in-service training programs. Certainly in-service training for senior volunteers must incorporate an assessment of the specific gaps between volunteer abilities and assignment-related roles and responsibilities, a means of prioritizing training, and an identification of the community resources that are available to support training senior volunteers. Training must also incorporate both social and personal development to assist the senior volunteer in remaining viable in a broader societal context. Additionally, research on training senior volunteers must go beyond simply assessing training needs. Research must provide a means of advancing the field of volunteerism through a grounded theory of training for senior volunteers.

### *Research Questions*

This study sought to provide an in-depth examination of the in-service training needs of senior volunteers by exploring the potential gaps between volunteer abilities and needs and assignment-related roles and responsibilities. The study also explored how volunteer in-service training needs are prioritized and the community resources that are available to support training senior volunteers. The aim of this study was to improve volunteer training practice by building a sound theoretical framework for training senior volunteers. The Foster Grandparent Program was used as the representative senior volunteer program for this study.

Since 1965, the Foster Grandparent Program has provided valuable aid to children with special needs. Foster Grandparents serve twenty hours per week and receive stipends set at \$2.55 an hour. Foster Grandparents must be age sixty or above and in the low-income eligibility category. In addition to the stipend, Foster Grandparent Volunteers receive accident, liability, and automobile insurance, if needed, as coverage during their assignments. According to the Corporation for National Service (1999), in fiscal 1996, appropriations for the Foster Grandparent Program totaled \$61.9 million and there were more than 21,400 Foster Grandparents serving in 279 projects. These participants provided service to almost 90,000 special needs children. Foster Grandparents serve in schools, hospitals, drug treatment centers, correctional institutions, Head Start, and day care centers. The volunteers help children who have been abused or neglected, mentor troubled teenagers and young mothers, and care for premature infants and children with physical disabilities.

The following research questions served to provide the focus of this study:

1. What is the role of the senior volunteer as perceived by the stakeholders in the program?
2. What is the purpose of the in-service training of senior volunteers as perceived by stakeholders in the program?
3. What are the stakeholder perceptions of the in-service training needs of the senior volunteer?
4. What are the current training practices for preparing senior volunteers for assignment-related roles and responsibilities?
5. What are the sources of training ideas for the in-service training of senior volunteers?
6. How are training ideas prioritized and who determines training priorities?
7. What community resources are available to support the in-service training of senior volunteers?

### *Methodology*

The methodological design of this study drew from both naturalistic inquiry and positivistic or empirical traditions. From a naturalistic inquiry approach, the research questions were exploratory in nature and required non-interfering data collection strategies to study participants' perspectives and actions in natural situations (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997). However, from a positivistic perspective, certain data were collected through a survey questionnaire and analyzed quantitatively to provide enhanced rigor and triangulation for the study.

A comprehensive sample of Foster Grandparent project sites in the Commonwealth of Virginia was selected for this study. The Virginia sample represented an extremely heterogeneous group of volunteers working in public and private agencies including healthcare, education, and welfare, or related settings such as homes, hospitals, and homes for dependent and neglected children. The sample represented rural, urban, and suburban regions. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the Foster Grandparent volunteers in the sample were African American, 25% Caucasian, and 3% Hispanic. Males comprised 5% of the volunteer sample, while females comprised 95% of the sample. Study participants from Virginia included 5 Foster Grandparent project directors, approximately 100 volunteer station supervisors, and 150 Foster Grandparents. Statistics on ethnicity and gender were not collected on project directors or volunteer station supervisors participating in this study

Five data collection strategies were used for this study: Key-informant structured interviews, developed by the researcher, were used to interview Foster Grandparent project directors. Additionally, an interview protocol was developed for focus group sessions with all Foster Grandparent Volunteers willing to share their perspective on the training needs of senior volunteers. All interviews were audio taped and researcher field notes were used to document the interview process. Because of the geographical dispersion of the Volunteer Station Supervisors, surveys were distributed to gather data from this group. Artifact data were gathered, including demographic information about Foster Grandparent Volunteers, past in-service training agendas from all 5 project sites, and any documents related to the operation of the Foster Grandparent Program. The following chart provides a data collection matrix by question and method:

	<b>Key Informant</b>	<b>Focus Group</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Artifact Data</b>
<b>Role of the Volunteer</b>	Project Directors	Volunteers	On-Site Supervisors & Staff	Guidelines & Policies
<b>Purpose of Training</b>	Project Directors	Volunteers	On-Site Supervisors & Staff	Guidelines & Policies
<b>Perception of Training Needs</b>	Project Directors	Volunteers	On-Site Supervisors & Staff	Guidelines & Policies
<b>Current Training Practices</b>	Project Directors		On-Site Supervisors & Staff	Guidelines & Policies
<b>Sources of Training Ideas</b>	Project Directors		On-Site Supervisors & Staff	Guidelines & Policies
<b>Training Priorities</b>	Project Directors		On-Site Supervisors & Staff	Guidelines & Policies
<b>Community Resources</b>	Project Directors	Volunteers	On-Site Supervisors & Staff	Guidelines & Policies

Data analysis was an ongoing inductive process and results were continually integrated throughout the study (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997). Inductive analysis occurs when patterns, themes, and categories emerge from the data rather than being imposed upon the data before data collection and analysis. The researcher employed HyperRESEARCH 2.0 data system to allow for coding of patterns, categories, and themes as they emerged. These data were analyzed inductively using the constant comparative method. Additionally an artifact data analysis was conducted for data triangulation. According to McMillan and Schumacher, triangulation provides cross-validation among multiple data sources, data collection strategies, time periods, and theoretical schemes. Survey data was analyzed descriptively using the software package SPSS 10.0. All data were triangulated and used in the development of a theoretical framework for training senior volunteers.

### *Discussion of Findings and Implications*

Analysis of the data for this study resulted in the formation of three domains. Data from each of the three domains were incorporated into the development of the Agelong Learning Model for senior volunteer in-service training. The first domain focuses on the role of senior volunteers.

The second domain encompasses key factors that determine the training framework and includes stakeholder perceptions of:

- The Purpose of In-Service Training
- In-Service Training Needs
- Current In-Service Training Practices
- Sources of In-Service Training Ideas
- In-Service Training Prioritization

The third domain centers on the availability and capacity of community resources to support in-service training for senior volunteers.

#### **The Role of the Senior Volunteer**

Stakeholder perceptions of the role of the senior volunteer in the Foster Grandparent Program were fairly universal. Project directors, volunteers, and volunteer station staff expressed that the role of the senior volunteer was to provide stability in the lives of the children they served. However, perceptions of how the provision of stability was defined ran along cohort lines. For example, project directors felt that the role of the senior volunteer was *to establish a sense of trust, followed by the delivery of a learning experience*. They felt that the volunteer should *encourage self-worth and self-esteem by acting as a mentor or grandparent*.

Foster Grandparent Volunteers felt that their role was to *love the children* and to *show them that someone cared about them*. The volunteers stated that they taught children about the skills that would help them in life, *like a grandparent might do*. When asked for words that described their roles, the volunteers stated that they were:

- *Mentors*
- *Counselors*
- *Grandparent/Parents*
- *Protectors*
- *Teachers*
- *Social Service Purveyors*
- *A Connection With History*
- *A Stabilizing Force*
- *A Motivator*

Volunteer station staff overwhelmingly expressed that the role of the senior volunteer was to *act as a mentor and an assistant*. Many believed that the *volunteers should act in a positive manner and encourage children to develop skills that are socially, emotionally, and developmentally appropriate*.

### **A Framework For Training**

Perceptions of stakeholders on the purpose of in-service training, volunteer training needs, current training practices, sources of training ideas, and the prioritization of training activities, were analyzed descriptively and inductively to form the basis of a coordinated and integrated training model. The Agelong Learning Model contains seven key categories that stakeholders believe are important to senior volunteer development. These training categories include:

- Assignment-Related Knowledge and Skills
- Policies and Regulations
- Social Interaction
- Personal Development
- Resource Information
- Program Support
- Civic Identity

The first three categories were considered by stakeholders to be critical for program outcomes. Project directors, volunteers and volunteer station staff expressed *the importance of on-going training in the knowledge and skills associated with the volunteer assignment*. They also expressed that information on policies and regulations *be incorporated into in-service training so that volunteers are continually updated on changes at all relevant levels*.

Social Interaction was, by far, the most important category for the senior volunteer and was recognized by project directors and volunteer station staff as critical to volunteer satisfaction. Volunteers expressed the importance of *being able to share their experiences and reflections with their peers*. They also stated a need to *celebrate and be recognized for their accomplishments and contributions*. The social aspects of in-service training provide senior volunteers with a forum for sharing and creating a peer-learning environment. These factors enhance the quality of training through an informal service-learning process.

The remaining four categories of in-service training emerged as a means of strengthening the senior volunteer's feelings of competence and identity and thus their ability to be more effective in the field. Undue concern in any of the training areas was perceived to negatively impact volunteer interactions with the audiences they serve. For example, a Foster Grandparent volunteer expressed appreciation for information she received at an in-service training on the processes of grief.

She stated, *I had lost my husband and even after a year, I would cry at the school. The little ones didn't know why I was so sad, but I couldn't help myself. Now I understand that I was depressed and I could find help.* If we consider Senior Corps' goal of not only enhancing the senior volunteers' skills, but also providing new information relative to the volunteer's personal welfare, the categories of Personal Development, Resource Information, Program Support, and Civic Identity become critical to maximizing volunteer potential.

The Agelong Learning Model takes the concept of lifelong learning to another level. Lifelong learning allows for growth and development of the individual throughout the life course without regard to how that development may affect the future. In that vein, the model supports new learning for the senior volunteer, incorporating on-going skill enhancement, information and resources into in-service training. The idea of Agelong learning is to support the senior volunteer's ability to enhance the lives of future generations through a greater sense of competence and identity. It is not just about improvement or fulfillment of the senior volunteer, but how that improvement provides future generations with enduring ideas from which to learn and grow. The model has many potential benefits including:

- Increasing volunteer satisfaction
- Increasing the efficiency/potential of the volunteer
- Increasing the volunteers capacity to adopt new ideas
- Aiding recruitment and retention
- Enhancing the program image through the quality of volunteer work
- Lowering the risk of problems associated with lack of knowledge or skills
- Decreasing the distractions that keep volunteers from full participation
- Increasing volunteer motivation and commitment
- Enhancing the competence of the volunteer in their interactions with children and youth

Each training category in the Agelong Learning Model will carry a different weight according to training needs. The model is designed to be adapted to the needs of the individual, the program, and the community served.

### **Sources of Community Support**

During the course of this study, many community support resources were identified to support senior volunteer in-service training at no or low cost. These resources and ideas for networking and collaboration will be outlined in the training resource book section of this report.



## *Conclusion*

In-service training is a special occasion for our senior volunteers. At any given training, you will see seniors “dressed to the nines” and ready to learn. Our senior volunteers need to be involved in the process of designing their learning experiences, as do all stakeholders involved in the program. The stakeholders who participated in this study spent many hours sharing what they require from in-service training to support a successful experience and to provide children with the most effective support and guidance.

Given the responses of the participants in this study, it is clear that in-service training needs to be designed to include a multitude of factors. First, when considering perceptions of the role of the senior volunteer, project directors might consider the importance of continuously and concisely defining roles so that in-service training can be adapted to support the senior volunteer in the volunteer environment. Through clearly defined roles, a comprehensive training agenda can be outlined to specifically address the needs of the individual, the program, and the community.

Secondly, although perceptions of in-service training vary slightly by cohort, it is evident that each training category emerging from the data in this study reinforces the volunteer’s ability to provide high quality service. These categories might be considered by senior volunteer project directors when assessing in-service training needs. Thirdly, community support for in-service training can greatly enhance training delivery and provides project directors with high quality resources for their program delivery system.

## TRAINING RESOURCE BOOK

### *Preface*

The intent of this resource book is to provide senior volunteer project directors, staff and other trainers with the tools, ideas, and effective practices necessary to enhance the quality of their in-service efforts. This book is not intended to be a prescriptive process, but rather to support the handbooks and guidelines developed by the Corporation for National Service and the National Senior Service Corps for senior volunteer programs.

- ❖ Although research for the development of this book was conducted with intergenerational programs, there are many valuable suggestions that may benefit other senior volunteer programs as well.

The Agelong Learning Model outlined in this resource provides information on how individuals and groups who develop in-service training for senior volunteers can benefit from some very basic ideas about adult education and adult learning theory.

- ❖ Because the target audience for training is comprised mainly of adults over the age of sixty, trainers can also benefit from an understanding of the cognitive and sensory changes that occur during the aging process. These changes can greatly affect how training is delivered and how senior volunteers process information, and should be considered in developing training programs.

The training resource book contains information and effective practices from leaders in the field of adult education, gerontology, program development and evaluation, along with ideas for collaboration and networkings. The book also outlines the Agelong Learning Model for training senior volunteers and provides a compendium of community and web resources to support training.

- ❖ To further enhance the quality of in-service training, senior volunteer project directors, staff and other trainers are encouraged to share their insights, ideas, and suggestions on senior volunteer training with their peers, the Corporation for National Service, and author of this resource book.

## ***Adult Education Principles***

When we consider the fundamental processes of conducting in-service training events for senior volunteers, it is important to understand that what we are doing is educating adults. The design of adult education is very different from the educational experiences we design for children and youth. The list of principles below was developed by Susan Imel (1998) and synthesizes information from her extensive research and from the works of leaders in adult education, such as Knowles, Brookfield and Draves. Awareness of these principles will assist trainers of senior volunteers in developing more effective in-service programs. According to Imel, no definitive list of adult education principles exists in the literature, but there is a great deal of agreement about what constitutes good practice in adult education. These ideas include:

✓ **Involving learners in planning and implementing learning activities-**

Including senior volunteers in the planning and implementing of their learning activities is considered to be a hallmark of adult education. Their participation can begin with the needs assessment process where members of the target population help establish the program goals and objectives, and continues throughout the learning activity to the evaluation phase.

✓ **Drawing upon the learners' experiences as a resource-**

Another often-cited principle of adult education revolves around the idea of using the experiences of participants as a learning resource. Not only do senior volunteers have experiences that can be used as a foundation for learning new things but also, in adulthood, readiness to learn frequently stems from life tasks and problems.

✓ **Cultivating self-direction in learners-**

Self-direction is considered by some to be a characteristic of adulthood but not all adults possess this attribute in equal measure. In addition, if adults have been accustomed to teacher-directed learning environments, they may not display self-directedness in adult learning settings. In-service training should be structured to nurture the development of self-directed, empowered senior volunteers.

✓ **Creating a climate that encourages and supports learning-**

The in-service training environment should be characterized by trust and mutual respect among trainers and learners. It should enhance learner self-esteem. Supporting and encouraging learning does not mean that the environment is free of conflict. It does mean that when conflict occurs, it is handled in a way that challenges learners to acquire new perspectives and supports them in their efforts to do so.

✓ **Fostering a spirit of collaboration in the learning setting-**

Collaboration in the training environment is frequently founded on the idea that the roles of trainers and learners can be interchangeable. Adult learning is a cooperative enterprise that respects and draws upon the knowledge that each person brings to the learning setting.

✓ **Using small groups-**

The use of groups has deep historical roots in adult education, and adults learning in groups has become embedded in adult education practice. Groups promote teamwork and encourage cooperation and collaboration. Structured appropriately, they emphasize the importance of learning from peers, and they allow all participants to be involved in discussions and to assume a variety of roles.

**The Adult Learner**

One of the most influential researchers on the needs of the adult learner was Malcolm Knowles who coined the term “andragogy” for the approach he recommended. Knowles contended that adult learners differ from child learners in several ways:

✓ **Adults must want to learn-**

Adults learn most effectively when they have an inner motivation to develop a new skill or gain new knowledge. They resist learning material if it is forced on them, or if the only reason given is that the material will, in some vague way, be "good for them to know."

✓ **Adults will learn only what they feel they need to learn-**

Adults must feel the material they are learning is relevant, and that it will have an immediate effect. They want to see how the objectives of the learning relate to authentic situations and real solutions to problems.

✓ **Adults learn by comparing past experience with new experience-**

Every adult learner has a lifetime collection of previous knowledge and experience. When learning something new, most adults need to see how it fits in with (or is different from) what they already know.

✓ **Adults need immediate feedback concerning their progress-**

Adults want to know how they are doing all along the way. They are not content to continue plugging away at material without knowing whether they are on the right track. Feedback here is very beneficial, both in recognition for work well done and guidance when improvement is needed.

✓ **Adults want their learning to be practical-**

Adults are willing to learn theories, but only if they can see how those theories apply in real life. Adult interest soars when training is built around a clearly defined challenge or demand, rather than hypothetical problems and solutions.

✓ **Adults try to avoid failure-**

Adults are much less open to the trial-and-error approach than children. Many adult learners will resist trying something new if it involves the risk of making an error and feeling foolish as a result. This is especially true if the person has had problems with learning in the past, or difficulties with the subject area being covered.

## **Learning Styles**

Adults do not all learn the same way. Knowles promoted the idea that by the time people reach adulthood, they have settled into a learning style that has worked well for them in the past. One person may prefer reading, while another does best by trying out a practical exercise. Developers of training need to be conscious of the fact that individuals process, absorb and remember new information in different ways. Many volunteer trainers are now familiar with some of the more common methods for differentiating learning styles. Trainers must recognize that senior volunteers can be visual, auditory or kinesthetic (hands-on) learners. Volunteers may use a global or analytic style of processing information, and they may prefer to work cooperatively or independently.

Genetics, cultural background and personal experience account for some of these differences. We also know that when materials are presented in a way that complements a learner's preferred style, that individual will learn more readily and have a better chance of retaining what is learned.

Trainers should consider looking at how people learn from many different perspectives. Sue Vineyard, author of *The Great Trainer's Guide* suggests that we can begin to understand adult learning styles by examining some of the ways people take in information. The way a person prefers to receive information determines the best and most effective way to get learning points across. It is also important to keep in mind that people filter information in different ways, and this can affect how they interpret their experiences. You can say to one person, "I'm so pleased to see you," and they will smile warmly and say, "Thank you." You can say the exact same thing, in the exact same way to another person and they might reply, "Did you think I wouldn't show up?" This filter system is attached to the ways in which people learn whether it be auditorally, visually, through a "hands on" approach, or a combination of these.

### ***Auditory Learners***

The auditory learner learns by hearing the trainer's key points, and reinforces this learning by offering spoken feedback either to the trainer or other learners. They tend to recall best what they have heard.

### ***Visual Learners***

The visual learner learns through seeing key points written down, offered on an overhead projector, or some type of visual communication (films, charts, graphs, etc.). They tend to recall what they have read or seen. They take particular interest in role playing or films of actual work that depict what they will have to do.

### ***Hands-On Learners***

The hands-on learner learns through applying spoken or written theory into actual practice. Since small group discussions often take theoretical learning into the practical state, they respond to such exercises. Like the visual learner, they gain a great deal of insight from viewing role plays or films of actual work experiences and they like to reinforce this learning by experimenting with it first hand. Their best method of learning comes from being trained on the job.

### ***A Mixture of Learning Styles***

In training adults, the most effective method, which actually employs all three learning stances, is to have the trainee walk through the work with their supervisor. It gives them first hand knowledge of the work that needs to be done, offers opportunities to ask questions, and reinforces what they might have read about the work. If project directors are unable to offer this option in training, they can set up practice sessions to allow people to experience a simulation of the skill they are being taught.

Vineyard suggests that as you train, it is highly effective to mix your learning styles and tools between auditory, visual and hands-on experiences in order to capture all of your audience. Be prepared that many in your audience will understand the concept or skill you are teaching when they first hear you explain it. A second group will not “get it” until you add a visual, such as an overhead, a handout, or written information on a flip chart. The third and last group will not really integrate the learning until they get to practice its application, either in the workshop setting or back at the volunteer station.

The idea of incorporating adult education principles and the concept of learning styles into training for adults is not new. In fact, for some trainers, this information will seem very basic. However, these concepts become much more complex when designing training for older persons who may be facing various cognitive and sensory losses associated with the aging process. The next section outlines some things trainers should be aware of when designing in-service training for senior volunteers.

There are many interesting and cost free methods for differentiating learning styles. For example, Martin (1991) offers an online resource for assessing learning styles in **How To Be A Successful Student** (<http://www.marin.cc.ca.us/~don/Study/Hcontents.html>) Project directors might use a learning style assessment, adapted from Martin’s work, to understand how a senior volunteer learns best (**See Appendix A**).

Although many methods for differentiating learning styles are not always supported by research, they may provide insight into the preferred style of learning for senior volunteers. Information on various methods can be found on the **Tufts University Center for Teaching Excellence** website at: [http://ase.tufts.edu/cte/occasional\\_papers/l-style.htm](http://ase.tufts.edu/cte/occasional_papers/l-style.htm)

Information on more sophisticated methods for assessing learning styles is readily available on the web, including:

- Hill's Cognitive Style Mapping
- Kolb's Learning Styles
- Dunn, Dunn and Price's Learning Styles
- Grasha-Riechmann Learning Styles
- Gregorc Learning Styles
- Hermann Brain Dominance Models
- Felder-Silverman Learning Model
- Howard Gardener's Multiple Intelligence Theory
- The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

Of these models, perhaps the most effective for senior volunteers is the **Productivity Environmental Preference Survey** developed by Dunn, Dunn, and Price (1989). The survey is used to determine the learning styles of adults in various aspects, including the environment, emotional, psychological and sociological aspects, and physical preferences. Based on the answers to the survey-questions, a scale is created that determines under what conditions the individual learns most effectively. These conditions include such things as bright or dim light, cool or warm temperatures, and the time of day. Additionally, it provides information on whether the individual learns best alone or with others, whether auditory or visual learning is most effective, and if the individual wants a high or low level of structure.

This information can then be used to introduce into the learning environment those elements that may have been missing before. It can also be used by the trainer to structure in-service activities so that they may be completed successfully. Information on the survey can be found at: <http://www.learningstyle.com> (please note that there is a small cost associated with the administration of this survey).

### *Cognitive and Sensory Aspects of Aging*

Although much still remains to be discovered and proved about the process of adult learning, great strides have already been made. It is widely recognized that adults-within the range of their mental capacities-retain their learning capabilities throughout their lifespan. The argument that you cannot teach “an old dog new tricks” is very much outmoded.

Research indicates that any person who had the basic ability to learn certain varieties of knowledge at the age of 20 will be equally able to acquire knowledge and skills of similar types at age 50, 60 and beyond. They may take longer to do so, but the acquisition hinges not on age, but rather on the pattern of interest, motivation, genetics and the personal values that have become part of their personality over the years.

Consider the following suggestions, adapted from the works of Heimstra (1991), when designing and delivering training for senior volunteers:

For Auditory Learners:

- ❖ Be sensitive to declining hearing and related problems for some older learners.
- ❖ Be prepared to help learners move closer to sound sources.
- ❖ Use extra voice and media amplification.
- ❖ Read material aloud where possible or feasible.

For Visual Learners:

- ❖ Be sensitive to declining vision and related problems for some older learners.
- ❖ Allow adequate time for adjustments when going from a light to dark area or vice versa, such as showing a film.
- ❖ Ensure that lots of light is available.
- ❖ Reduce glare or direct sunlight.
- ❖ Use high contrast on visuals and handout materials.

For Hands-On Learners:

- ❖ Be aware that the senses of touch and smell can decline with age.

For a Mixture of Learning Styles:

- ❖ Use combined auditory, visual and hands-on presentation modes.
- ❖ Carry out diagnostic evaluations of learners' needs, abilities, and limitations.
- ❖ Pay attention to various obstacles that can interfere with learning.



In General:

- ❖ Pay attention to the physical environment.
- ❖ Analyze the environment and ensure that comfortable heating and proper ventilation exist.
- ❖ Reduce distractions.
- ❖ Take appropriate breaks.
- ❖ Provide for those with limited mobility and help learners accommodate for declining energy level or occasional depression.
- ❖ Be sensitive to possible memory losses and the corresponding impact on assimilating new information.
- ❖ Minimize distractions at the time of the learning, including background noise, room conditions, and personal anxiety.
- ❖ Be sensitive to life satisfaction needs.
- ❖ Be sensitive to the manner of the presentation.

### ***A Comprehensive Framework***

The Agelong Learning Model for training senior volunteers provides a fairly comprehensive framework of training categories. The model takes the concept of lifelong learning to another level. Lifelong learning allows for growth and development of the individual throughout the life course, without regard to how that development may affect the future. In that vein, the model supports new learning for the senior volunteer, incorporating on-going skill enhancement, information and resources into in-service training.

The idea of Agelong learning is to support the senior volunteer's ability to enhance the lives of future generations through a greater sense of competence and identity. It is not just about the improvement or fulfillment of the individual, but how that improvement provides future generations with enduring ideas from which to learn and grow. Each category in the model is defined according to senior volunteer program guidelines, study participant perceptions, or a combination of the two. Additionally, each category contains a list of training topics considered to be important in the on-going development of senior volunteers working in intergenerational programs.

Training topics are drawn from study data, participant's perceptions of training needs, and program policies and guidelines. Some topics may be applicable to more than one category, and all topics have the potential to benefit children and youth through the senior volunteer.

Project directors and trainers of senior volunteers are advised that it is important to conduct an initial in-service training needs assessment to determine how to weight each of these categories. For example, one senior volunteer project may need training that is concentrated in the personal development category, while another may require training in several categories. The model can be adapted to the in-service training needs of volunteers, programs and communities.

### **Assignment-Related Knowledge and Skills**

In this category, in-service training for the senior volunteer is focused on the assignment-related knowledge and skills necessary to understand the physical, emotional, and psychological issues faced by children with special needs. Training topics in this area might include:

- ✓ Child Development
- ✓ Developmental Disabilities
- ✓ Juvenile Delinquency Prevention
- ✓ Life Skills
- ✓ Literacy Skills
- ✓ Understanding the Needs of Families
- ✓ Changing Family Trends
- ✓ Child Discipline
- ✓ Psychological Development
- ✓ Human Development
- ✓ CPR and First Aid
- ✓ Child Care
- ✓ Conflict Resolution
- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ Child Abuse and Neglect
- ✓ Stress, Anxiety, and Anger Management
- ✓ Communication Skills
- ✓ Body Language
- ✓ Storytelling
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Cultural Diversity
- ✓ Behavior Disorders

## **Policies and Regulations**

Policies and regulations training for the senior volunteer is focused on the policies and regulations which govern the volunteer program and includes information and training in such topics as:

- ✓ Volunteer program policies and regulations
- ✓ Sponsoring agency policies and regulations
- ✓ Volunteer station policies and regulations
- ✓ Local, state and federal guidelines and procedures
- ✓ Risk management issues
- ✓ Benefits such as stipends, meals, transportation, earned leave, holidays, insurance, and physical examinations

## **Social Interaction**

In-service training in this category incorporates social growth and development and includes opportunities for social activities. Training topics in this category might include:

- ✓ Opportunities for sharing and reflecting on experiences
- ✓ Celebration
- ✓ Recognition & Praise
- ✓ Peer Learning

## **Personal Development**

Personal development in-service training for the senior volunteer incorporates personal growth and development activities and information and includes topics such as:

- ✓ Interpersonal Skills
- ✓ Understanding Grief
- ✓ Understanding Personal Limitations
- ✓ Understanding Culture (ethnic, social, environmental)
- ✓ Contemporary Society/Generational Differences
- ✓ Gender Issues
- ✓ Stress/Anger management
- ✓ Empowerment
- ✓ Self-esteem/Confidence
- ✓ Hygiene
- ✓ Motivation
- ✓ Use of Leisure Time
- ✓ Leadership Skills

## **Resource Information**

In-service training provides valuable opportunities to share information, community support services and resources with senior volunteers and includes:

- ✓ Financial Management
- ✓ Scams Targeting Older Adults
- ✓ Insurance
- ✓ Medicare/Medicaid
- ✓ Social Security
- ✓ Lifelong Learning Opportunities
- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Healthcare
- ✓ Nutrition
- ✓ Exercise
- ✓ Processes of Aging
- ✓ Crime Prevention
- ✓ Pharmaceutical and Medication Issues
- ✓ Legal Issues

## **Program Support**

Many senior volunteers work with project directors and staff to promote their program. In this category, in-service training develops volunteer skills in the areas of:

- ✓ Fundraising
- ✓ Marketing
- ✓ Recruitment
- ✓ Promoting a Positive Program Image

## **Civic Identity**

In-service training in this category provides the senior volunteer with opportunities and information to assist them in understanding:

- ✓ Civic Issues
- ✓ The Role of the Volunteer in the Larger Community
- ✓ Contemporary Civic Issues in Society
- ✓ Ways to Become Engaged as Citizens
- ✓ Ways to Assist Children in Understanding Civic Issues

## ***Assessing In-Service Training Needs***

Identifying relevant training ideas is one of the major tasks for project directors involved in designing in-service training programs. This is often accomplished by conducting a needs assessment. Although there is no one accepted process for conducting needs assessments, project directors should carefully consider adapting the process to the requirements and resources available to their particular program.

### **What is a Needs Assessment?**

In the development of in-service training, a needs assessment is a systematic set of procedures undertaken for the purpose of setting priorities and making decisions about training improvement and the allocation of resources.

Needs assessments enable the project director to identify and measure gaps between what is and what ought to be, from which in-service training goals and objectives can be identified. Needs assessments ultimately address questions about what needs to be accomplished in the future. Assessment should progress through a defined series of phases that involve preparing for the assessment, implementing the assessment, and then applying the results to improve training.

### **Why Conduct Needs Assessment?**

While we might think we already know what the training needs of senior volunteers are, our knowledge is often based on impressions, or experiences of limited situations.

Needs assessments can assist project directors and trainers in identifying categories and topics in the Agelong Learning Model that will most benefit the development of senior volunteers. Needs assessments enable project directors and trainers to develop effective in-service training by:

- ✓ Identifying both strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ Providing a baseline against which to compare future changes in the in-service training status.
- ✓ Facilitating the project director's ability to plan, make better informed decisions, and set priorities about in-service training needs.
- ✓ Facilitating the project director's ability to more effectively and efficiently allocate and use in-service training resources.
- ✓ Providing important information, even though resources and time may be limited.
- ✓ Adding credibility to in-service training.

## **Who Conducts Needs Assessments?**

Depending on the project director's experience and the complexity of the assessment, they could plan and conduct the assessment on their own. If the director has limited experience in conducting assessments, they might consider utilizing an internal, in-house evaluator, if one is available. If not, the director might consider hiring a contractor to conduct part or all of the needs assessment activities.

## **Needs Assessment Methods**

### ***Surveys***

Surveys are a useful tool for collecting quantitative data (e.g., counts, frequencies) of attitudes, perceptions, opinions, and practices. Surveys are particularly useful for gathering information that describes the nature and extent of a specified issue or problem. Furthermore, this data collection method can be used to establish baselines against which future comparisons can be made and to analyze trends across time.

### ***Interviews***

Interviews represent an effective method for collecting in-depth information about a topic or issue. The interviewer can explain and clarify questions, and probe by asking additional questions, to enhance the likelihood of obtaining useful responses from the interviewee. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face or by telephone. The format of interviews can be either structured or unstructured. If straightforward, factual information is sought, a structured approach is best. Where more complex or elusive questions are being raised, an unstructured approach should be used.

Interviews are a viable alternative to the written survey. Interviews can also be used after data have been analyzed from a survey for the purpose of exploring specific survey results in more detail and in greater depth.

### ***Focus Groups***

Focus groups are a tool for collecting qualitative data from group discussions. A moderator follows a predetermined interview guide to direct a discussion among five to twelve people with the purpose of collecting in-depth qualitative information about a group's perceptions, attitudes, and experiences on a defined topic. A popular format for the focus group interview is a "funnel structure." The beginning section is broad and less structured. The goal is to hear participants' general perspectives. The middle section is more structured, and the goal is to lead into, or begin to cover, the topics of most interest. The ending section is narrow and the most structured. The goal is to obtain answers to specific needs assessment questions. The final question in a focus group often returns to a broader, more general wrap-up.

The moderator should write up summary observations immediately following the session. If these summaries are going to be the primary source of data (i.e., the session is not going to be taped or video recorded), they should be written with a question-by-question format to capture what the group had to say regarding each topic or needs assessment question. Also try to include comparisons to what was said in other groups. Summary observations can be enhanced using field notes taken by an assistant or observer during the focus group session.

One analysis strategy to consider when working with focus group data for a needs assessment is an analysis of the summary observations. This is a common way of reporting focus group data when only a brief report is necessary. After conducting all of the focus groups, use the summary observations to synthesize themes across all groups. If focus groups were the only method used to collect needs assessment data, a single brief report summarizing the themes should be produced. If the needs assessment incorporated focus groups and another method (e.g., surveys), a report will need to integrate findings from the different methods. For more information on needs assessments, see **Appendix B Needs Assessment Worksheet**.

### *Designing In-Service Training Programs*

Numerous models of program planning for adult learners exist. Among the most often discussed and used are the models proposed by Houle (1972), Knowles (1980), Laird (1985), Cervero (1988), Harris (1989), and Tracey (1992). According to Rosemary Caffarella (1994), the commonalities among these frequently used models are the attention paid to the learner and/or the organizational needs as central to the program planning process, the importance of the context in which programs are planned, and the idea that there are identifiable components and tasks that are important to the planning process.

Caffarella drew many ideas from these previously proposed models of program planning to develop her interactive program planning model. Project directors designing in-service training for senior volunteers are encouraged to use the following process, adapted from Caffarella's interactive program planning model, to support their training efforts. A worksheet using this model can be found in **Appendix C**. The adapted model includes information on:

- Identifying In-Service Training Ideas
- Sorting and Prioritizing Training Ideas
- Developing Training Objectives
- Preparing for the Transfer of Learning
- Determining Formats, Schedules, and Staff Needs
- Preparing Budgets and Materials
- Designing Instructional Plans
- Formulating Evaluation Plans

### **Identifying In-Service Training Ideas**

- Decide what sources to use in generating ideas for in-service training programs (for example, former and/or current volunteers, organizational and community leaders, personal issues, regulations and mandates, societal problems).
- Determine the best way or ways to identify these ideas for training (for example, formal needs assessments, observations, interviews, conversations with colleagues, job analysis, review of written materials).

### **Sorting and Prioritizing Training Ideas**

- Determine whether one or more alternative in-service activities is the best way to respond to the ideas generated.
- Develop a process for prioritizing training ideas for which in-service programs should be planned. Become knowledgeable about alternative interventions and create networks of people who will listen and act when these alternative interventions are needed.

### **Developing Training Objectives**

- Write program objectives that reflect both what senior volunteers will learn and the resulting changes from that learning, as well as the operational aspects of the program.
- Check to see that training objectives are written clearly so that they can be understood by all parties involved (for example, participants, sponsoring organizations).

### **Preparing for the Transfer of Learning**

- Decide when the transfer-of-learning strategies should be employed.
- Determine the key players who need to be part of the transfer-of-learning process (for example, volunteers, project staff, instructors, volunteer station supervisors, community leaders).
- Choose transfer strategies that will be the most useful in assisting senior volunteers to apply what they have learned (for example, developing individualized or group learning plans, providing mentors or peer coaches, self-help or support groups).



### **Determining Formats, Schedules, and Staff Needs**

- Choose the most appropriate format or combination of formats for the training activity (for example, individual, small-group, large-group, distance-learning, or community-learning formats).
- Devise a training schedule that best fits the format chosen and the volunteer's needs.
- Identify staff needs (that is, training designers, training coordinators, instructors/facilitators, and evaluators).
- Determine whether staff (paid or volunteer) can plan and conduct the program or whether external resources are needed.

### **Preparing Budgets and Materials**

- Estimate the expenses for the training, including costs for the development, delivery, and evaluation.
- Select and prepare materials to support training and prepare senior volunteers for learning.

### **Designing Instructional Plans**

- Develop clear and understandable learning objectives for each instructional session.
- Select and sequence the content based on the participants' knowledge and experience, the nature of the content itself, and instructor preference.
- Choose training delivery methods that match the focus of the proposed learning outcomes that you are capable of using (for example, lectures, case studies, role playing, story-telling, games, and metaphor analysis). **See Appendix D** for additional information and ideas on training delivery methods.

### **Formulating Evaluation Plans**

- Specify the evaluation approach or approaches that will be used, including the use of informal or unplanned evaluation opportunities (**See Appendix E** for more information on conducting training evaluations)
- Determine how the evaluation data will be collected (for example, through observations, questionnaires, product reviews).
- Think through how the data will be analyzed, including how to integrate data collected through any informal evaluation processes.

- Develop recommendations for current and/or future training directions based on the judgments that were made and suggest ideas for how to address these recommendations, including what resources would be needed.

### ***Collaboration & Networking***

Networking and collaborating with other organizations to support in-service training for senior volunteers can increase training resources, provide brainstorming opportunities and strengthen community partnerships. Additionally, outside organizations can support the project director's networking and collaboration efforts by providing new resources and leads to support in-service training efforts. Project directors will have unique opportunities to:

- Collaborate on new and innovative ideas to develop and support training.
- Learn about what other organizations are doing.
- Meet with others who understand the issues and challenges of training senior volunteers.
- Conduct quality in-service training at no or low cost.

An excellent web site containing further information about collaboration and networking strategies is hosted by the Chandler Center for Community Leadership. The site can be found at: <http://crs.uvm.edu/ncco/collab/wellness.html>

Additional information on organizations to support senior volunteer in-service training can be found in the *Compendium of Resources* section of this training resource book.

## ***Compendium of Resources***

The compendium of resources is designed to assist project directors and others who train senior volunteers to access low or no cost information to support in-service training. The list is by no means comprehensive, but provide examples of organizations that have supported past in-service efforts. Trainers are encouraged to share and add their own resources to their copy of the training resource book.

### **Community Services**

During the course of data gathering for this study, project directors, senior volunteers, and volunteer station staff shared information on resources in the community that support senior volunteer training. Trainers are encouraged to network and collaborate with these organizations as they develop in-service programs. Community resources include:

- ❖ Area Agencies on Aging
- ❖ Assisted Living Facilities
- ❖ Attorneys
- ❖ Child Protective Services
- ❖ Churches
- ❖ Colleges and Universities (departments, faculty and students)
- ❖ Cooperative Extension Service
- ❖ Corporation for National Service
- ❖ County Extension Agents
- ❖ Fire Departments
- ❖ Health Department
- ❖ Hospitals
- ❖ Legal Aid
- ❖ Local Healthcare Providers
- ❖ Mental Health Agencies
- ❖ Museums
- ❖ Nursing Homes
- ❖ Police Departments
- ❖ Professionals in Various Fields Related to the Training Need
- ❖ Public Libraries
- ❖ Public Schools
- ❖ Sheriff's Departments
- ❖ Small Businesses in the Community
- ❖ Social Service Agencies

## Resources on the Web

The worldwide web offers many wonderful resources to support in-service training. Below is an alphabetical list of web sites where project directors and trainers can find information on a variety of topics that will benefit senior volunteers. Each site contains links to other valuable resources.

AARP Internet Resource Guide

<http://www.aarp.org/cyber/guide1.htm>

Administration for Children and Families. Commissioner's Office of Research and Evaluation (CORE)

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/core/index.html>

Administration on Aging Resource Directory for Older People

<http://www.aoa.gov/directory/default.htm>

Administration on Aging

<http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov>

Age Discrimination

<http://www.AoA.dhhs.gov/factsheets/ageism.html>

Age Net

<http://www.agenet.com/tableofcont.html>

AgeInfo

<http://www.cpa.org.uk/ageinfo/ageinfo.html>

Alzheimer's Association

<http://www.alz.org/>

Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center

<http://www.alzheimers.org>

Alzheimer's Information

<http://www.AoA.dhhs.gov/factsheets/alz.html>

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

<http://www.aafcs.org>

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

<http://www.aarp.org/>

American Cancer Society

<http://www.amhrt.org/>

American Counseling Association

<http://www.counseling.org>

American Psychological Association

<http://www.apa.org>

American Society for Training and Development

<http://www.astd.org>

American Society on Aging (ASA)

<http://www.asaging.org>

AmeriCorps

<http://www.americorps.org>

Anti-Fraud and Abuse Activities

<http://www.AoA.dhhs.gov/ort/default.htm>

AOA Directory of Websites on Aging

<http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/aoa/webres/craig.htm>

Arthritis Foundation

<http://www.arthritis.org/>

Benefits for Seniors

<http://www.seniors.gov/benefits.html>

Child Care Bureau

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/>

Child Development Institute

<http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/research.shtml>

Child Health Toolbox

<http://www.ahrq.gov/chtoolbox>

Clipart for those who work with volunteers

<http://www.avaintl.org/resources/art.html>

<http://www.serviceleader.org/vv/handbook/17clipart.html>

Consumer Information Catalog

<http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov>

Consumer Protection

<http://www.seniors.gov/consumer.html>

Consumer Reports Nursing Home Information

<http://www.ConsumerReports.org/Special/Samples/Reports/0101nrs0.html>

Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service

<http://www.reeusda.gov>

Corporation for National Service

<http://www.nationalservice.org>

CYFERnet-Children, Youth & Families Network

<http://www.cyfernet.org>

Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.os.dhhs.gov/>

Early Head Start National Resource Center (EHS NRC)

<http://www.ehsnrc.org/>

Elder Abuse Prevention and Treatment Resource Page

<http://www.AoA.dhhs.gov/abuse/default.htm>

ElderHostel

<http://www.elderhostel.org>

Elder Page: Information for Older Persons and Families

<http://www.AoA.dhhs.gov/elderpage.html>

Energize

<http://www.energizeinc.com>

EpiCenter Effective Practices

<http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/epicenter>

Family and Youth Services Bureau

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/fysb/>

Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics

<http://www.agingstats.gov/chartbook2000/default.html>

Fifty-Plus.Net

<http://www.fifty-plus.net/>

Generations Together  
<http://www.pitt.edu/~gti>

Generations United  
<http://www.gu.org>

Geriatricnet –entirely in Spanish  
<http://www.geriatricnet.com>

GeroNet  
<http://geronet.ph.ucla.edu/>

Gerontological Nursing Links  
<http://bgrahm.com/nursing/gerontology.html>

Gerontological Society of America  
<http://www.geron.org/>

GeroWeb Virtual Library on Aging  
<http://www.iog.wayne.edu/GeroWebd/GeroWeb.html>

GriefNet  
<http://rivendell.org/>

Head Start Bureau  
<http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb>

Head Start  
<http://www.headstartinfo.org>

Health and Nutrition  
<http://www.seniors.gov/health.html>

Health Care Financing Administration  
<http://www.hcfa.gov/>

HelpAge International  
<http://www.oneworld.org/helpage/>

Illinois Civic Engagement Project  
<http://civic.uis.edu/links.html>

Images of Aging: A Film and Video Resources Guide  
[http://www.gen.umn.edu/faculty\\_staff/yahnke/aging/film\\_age/](http://www.gen.umn.edu/faculty_staff/yahnke/aging/film_age/)

Independent Sector

<http://www.independentsector.org>

InfoQuest Gerontology Resources

<http://www.teleport.com/~tbchad/aging.html>

Internet and E-mail Resources on Aging

<http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/aoa/pages/jpostlst.html>

Learn and Serve America

<http://www.learnandserve.org>

Literacy Volunteers of America

<http://www.literacyvolunteers.org>

National Association of Geriatric Education Centers

<http://www.hcoa.org/nagec/>

National Associations of Area Agencies on Aging

<http://www.n4a.org/>

National Caucus and Center on Black Aged

<http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/aoa/dir/140.html>

National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health (NCEMCH)

<http://www.ncemch.org/about/default.html>

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd>

National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC)

<http://www.nccic.org>

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect

<http://www.calib.com/nccanch/>

National Council of Senior Citizens

<http://www.ncscinc.org/>

National Council on Aging

<http://www.noca.org>

National Council on Family Relations

<http://www.ncfr.org>



National Endowment for the Humanities

<http://www.neh.fed.us>

National Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Resource Center (NRC)

<http://www.hsnrc.org>

National Institute on Aging

<http://www.nih.gov/nia>

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

<http://www.nih.gov/>

National Maternal and Child Health Clearinghouse

<http://www.nmchc.org>

National Network for Child Care Child Development Link

<http://www.nncc.org/Child.Dev/cdlinks.html>

National Service Resource Center

<http://www.etr.org/nsrc>

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org>

Points of Light Foundation

<http://www.pointsoflight.org>

Retirement and Financial Planning

<http://www.AoA.dhhs.gov/retirement/default.htm>

Senate Special Committee on Aging

<http://www.senate.gov/comm/aging/general/>

Senior Corps

<http://www.seniorcorps.org>

SeniorNavigator.com

<http://www.SeniorNavigator.com>

Sites specifically designed for seniors

<http://www.seniors.gov>

<http://www.seniors-on-line.com>

<http://www.freeskills.com>

<http://www.eldernet.com>

65+ in the United States  
[www.census.gov/prod/1/pop/p23-190/p23-190.html](http://www.census.gov/prod/1/pop/p23-190/p23-190.html)

Social Security Administration  
<http://www.ssa.gov/>

The National Mentoring Partnership  
<http://www.mentoring.org>

The White House  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

U.S. Census Bureau  
<http://www.census.gov/>

U.S. Department of Education  
<http://www.ed.gov>

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
<http://www.va.gov/>

U.S. House of Representatives  
<http://www.house.gov>

United Way of America  
<http://www.unitedway.org>

USC Gerontology Links  
<http://www.usc.edu/isd/locations/science/gerontology/web>

USC list of Associations and Organizations  
<http://www.usc.edu/isd/locations/science/gerontology/orgsourc.htm>

Volunteers of America  
<http://www.voa.org>

## ***Appendices***

### ***Appendix A Assessing Learning Styles***

People learn differently. Some prefer using pictures. Others like working in groups. How do you learn best? Here are the three major factors making up your learning style.

- The three senses-auditory, visual and kinesthetics
- The two reasoning types- deductive and inductive
- The two environments-intrapersonal and interpersonal

Check these factors to discover your learning preferences.

#### **The Three Senses**

*Auditory* - listening

- ( ) - I prefer to follow verbal instructions rather than written ones.
- ( ) - I find it comfortable to add spoken numbers mentally.

*Visual* - seeing, reading and visualizing

- ( ) - I do well in trainings that depend on reading comprehension.
- ( ) - I can read complex things and understand them.
- ( ) - I prefer maps to verbal directions when I am trying to find a place.

*Kinesthetics* - moving, touching, writing and doing.

- ( ) - When I write things down, it clarifies my thoughts.
- ( ) - I like to draw pictures.
- ( ) - I am good at using my hands.

#### **The Two Reasoning Types**

*Deductive Reasoning*

- ( ) - I like to look at the big picture first, then get the details.
- ( ) - When learning a new game, I like to know all the rules before playing.
- ( ) - In an argument, I state my ideas first, then draw conclusions.

*Inductive Reasoning*

- ( ) - I like to see some examples when first learning a new subject.
- ( ) - I prefer to learn the rules of a new game "as we go along".

#### **The Two Learning Environments**

*Intrapersonal* - working alone.

- ( ) - When solving word problems, I have to figure it out for myself.
- ( ) - Doing work with a group often wastes a lot of time.

*Interpersonal* - working with others.

- ( ) - Before making a decision, I usually discuss it with my family or friends.
- ( ) - I like to work with others.

#### **What Are You Best At?**

Ideally, we are good with each learning style. However, what we do best can depend on our mood, the subject matter, our relationships and the person who is teaching or training. We need to monitor our learning effectiveness and to adjust training styles for maximum advantage.

**Adapted from D. Martin (1991) How to be a Successful Student**

**Appendix B Needs Assessment Worksheet**

	<b>Steps to Take</b>	<b>Issues and Guiding Questions</b>	<b>Check When Completed</b>
<b>PREPARATION</b>	Identify purpose of the assessment.	How will a needs assessment help me in planning and conducting in-service trainings?	
	Define or identify audiences for the needs assessment.	What key group or individuals will benefit from knowing about training needs?	
	Secure resources (funds, program staff, in-house or external evaluation experts).	How much will it cost? How much of my time can I devote to this? How much time can other program staff devote? Are there in-house evaluation personnel that would provide in-kind assistance?	
	Identify needs assessment study questions.	What are the overarching questions I need to have answered to improve training? Link each study question to an information source and a data collection method.	
	Develop management plan.	What tasks need to be accomplished? By when? Who will be responsible for the different tasks?	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	Develop/select instruments.	Survey, observation, interviews, focus groups, etc.	
	Collect data.	Work with an evaluator, if necessary, for specification of protocols and procedures. May need to conduct follow-ups.	
	Conduct data entry.	Quantitative data (e.g., closed-ended survey items) should be entered into a database. Qualitative data (e.g., focus group responses) can be entered into a software program, or hand-coded.	
	Summarize/analyze data.	Descriptive summaries (e.g., percents, frequencies) of quantitative data should be conducted. If evaluator involved, consider more sophisticated analyses. Main themes, categories, relationships among issues should be identified in qualitative analyses.	
<b>APPLICATION</b>	Set priorities on need identified.	Rate priorities on "influencing" factors (e.g., importance, costs to address, political), placing them in order.	
	Develop action steps.	What tasks need to be accomplished? By when? Who will be responsible for the different tasks?	
	Communicate the results.	What are the most effective ways to share results and planned training changes with audiences?	

### ***Appendix C Training Design Worksheet***

1. From the results of the needs assessment, what are the topics selected for in-service training?
2. What are the goals and objectives for the topic(s) selected for training?
3. Who is the target audience for the training?
4. What are the previous levels of target audience involvement with this topic, or with the requirements of their volunteer position?
5. What information, experience, or attitudes do we wish the target audience to have at the end of the training?

*Information:*

*Experience:*

*Attitudes:*

6. In what order does the material need to be presented in order to be useful and understandable?
7. What are the available formats for delivery of the training? (**See Appendix D** for ideas)
8. What format best matches the training needs identified?
9. What community or program resources are available to support this training?
10. Who should be involved in designing and delivering each component of the training?
11. Who else needs to be involved or informed to make this training relevant to the target audience?
12. What approach, if any, will be used to evaluate the training?
13. How and to whom will the results of the training evaluation be communicated?

**Adapted from Caffarella (1994)-Program Planning for Adult Learners and McCurley and Lynch (1996)-Volunteer Management.**

## ***Appendix D Training Delivery Methods***

Training delivery methods are divided into four categories:

- Experiential
- Reinforcement
- Integrative
- Other Methods

According to Cooperative Extension Specialists Richardson, Jenkins, and Crickenberger (1996), the three initial categories indicate the stage at which the various delivery methods can be used most effectively in a training delivery system. The other category lists those methods that are applicable in a wide variety of systems, or that can be used for limited, or special situations. Many of the methods listed can fit under more than one category. Ultimately, project directors or trainers should select methods that seem most appropriate and logical for meeting in-service training needs, and should make adjustments as needed based on training evaluations. Some methods may not be feasible, or may have costs associated with them

### **Experiential Methods**

Experiential methods help the learner to derive or learn information or skills through simulated or real life experiences. Examples of experiential methods include:

*Audiocassette* -recorded audio messages that can be listened to at the convenience of the learner.

*Videocassette* -A recording on videotape that can provide both visual and audio information.

*Method Demonstration* -An explanation of how to implement a practice or accomplish a task by showing a practical application or guiding the learner in carrying out the task.

*Result demonstration* -A presentation that shows the effects of a practice or task by means of practical application, using visual, experiential, or oral methods; it usually involves a before-and-after comparison.

*Tour* -Travel by a group of learners to places of defined interest to study innovations, systems, objects, demonstrations, applied creative programs, or other items that may be unfamiliar to participants.

*Field day* -A planned activity of one-day duration in an outdoor setting for demonstrations; observation of programs, practices, activities, or objects; presentations; or practical experiences.

*Workshop* -A meeting in which a small group of people with common interests meet to study or research a specific topic or to practice a specific skill to enhance their individual knowledge and proficiency.

*Analysis of data or results* -Evaluation, use, or presentation of new or existing data to explain or predict the impact of a practice, innovation, input change, or changing conditions and circumstances.

*Game* -A simulation or fantasy in which learners explore or experience a subject, opportunities, or implications.

*Skit* -A short, planned, rehearsed, dramatic presentation involving two or more persons designed to present information or illustrate a situation.

*Networking* -The sharing or exchanging of information through deliberate action on the part of one or more individuals by means of collaborative linkages with other individuals, groups, or organizations.

*Role play* - An exercise in which selected members of a group are assigned to play specific roles in a hypothetical or simulated situation followed by discussion among all group members.

*Case study*-A specific and detailed description of an event, situation, or circumstance that is presented to an audience for study and analysis.

### **Reinforcement Methods**

*Fact sheet* - A publication of six pages or fewer focused on a single subject or a component of a broader topic that presents instructions, guidelines, or other specific information.

*Notebook* -A compilation of fact sheets or other printed information pertaining to a specific topic.

*Leaflet or flier* - Brief, concise printed information focused on a specific program, objective, current event, or other activity and designed to create or enhance awareness.

*Pamphlet or booklet* -A printed publication that provides more comprehensive information on a subject than a fact sheet, leaflet, or flier.

*Magazine article* -A means of presenting information to selected audiences via a printed mass medium. Designed to improve understanding of a subject; often accompanied by pictures, graphs, and charts for clarity.

*Journal article* -A means of presenting scientific, theoretical, or philosophical information in a professional journal.

*Specialty publication article* - The presentation of information in a periodical that focuses on a specific discipline, commodity, audience, or subject matter.

*Poster* - A large, printed sheet intended for display and containing words, illustrations, or both to provide general or specific information for broad or targeted audiences.

*Book* - A comprehensive, bound publication that usually provides thorough treatment of a subject or presentation of a story.

*Fax message* -Printed information electronically transmitted between two or more points by means of a facsimile machine.

*Computer software* - A set of instructions, or program, that enables a computer to be used to provide educational information, to transmit communications, or to aid in decision making.

*Newsletter* - A printed instrument developed for a targeted audience that is intended to provide timely information of current potential interest to the readers.

*Letter* -A written message intended for a single individual, usually transmitted in person or by a delivery service such as the U.S. Postal Service or an electronic mail system.

*Home study kit* - A collection of educational materials created or assembled for independent study on a specific subject.

### **Integrative Methods**

*Conference* -A meeting of a large or small group of people having similar interests for formal presentations to the entire group and for smaller group sessions that focus on specific components of the general topic.

*Convention* - An assembly of a large number of people who have similar interests and who represent subsets of a larger organization. Multiple planned meetings of subgroups occur simultaneously at least part of the time during the event.

*Seminar* - A meeting in which a group of people who are studying a specific subject engage in discussions led by a recognized authority.

*Panel* -A discussion among a small group of people who are knowledgeable about a subject conducted in front of an audience. Panel members make no formal presentation; they exchange ideas through conversation.



*Forum* - A form of group discussion that allows audience members to participate. The discussion period may be completely open or restricted to a specific part of the program.

*Meeting* - An assembly of people at which information on a topic of common interest is presented.

*Symposium* -An assembly in which short presentations are made by a small number of speakers who are knowledgeable about a particular subject. These presentations may range from 5 to 20 minutes each.

*Colloquy* -A gathering at which a panel of individuals discuss a subject in front of an audience but interact with audience members only when those members wish to ask a specific question or clarify a point under discussion. When a particular point is resolved, the organized discussion among panel members continues.

*Dialogue* - A discussion between two people conducted in front of an audience.

*Institute* - A planned series of sessions of one or more days each for in-depth presentations and significant study by individuals who hold similar interests.

*Buzz group* - A group of five to eight persons who discuss relevant questions posed by the leader of a larger group assembly.

*Discussion Group* - An informal meeting of people to discuss a topic of mutual concern.

*Brainstorming* - A process in which members of an audience are encouraged to participate by sharing their ideas or suggestions on a subject. No discussion of each point is allowed until all ideas have been expressed.

*Audience reaction team* - Three members of the audience pre-selected to respond to the information presented by offering a brief summary and interpretation. The team provides an opportunity for group reaction or response when the audience is large or time is limited.

*Listening team* -A small group formed from members of an audience before a presentation and asked to listen for different things in the presentation and then to discuss or clarify how the information could be applied.

*Interview* - A face-to-face meeting in which facts and beliefs are elicited or exchanged.

*Teleconferencing* - The process by which three or more individuals at distant locations are connected by two-way audio signals or audio and video signals for the purpose of exchanging information and ideas.

*Telephone conversation* - An electronic means for direct sharing of information between two people at distant locations by voice transmission.

*Computer network* - The linking of three or more computers for the purpose of sharing and exchanging information. The linkage may be restricted to the computers on the local network or may extend to other information sources over a wide area.

*Satellite conferencing* - A teleconferencing method that uses both audio and video signals transmitted via cable or satellite for the purpose of conferring, instructing, and disseminating information among people at distant locations.

*Personal visit* - A face-to-face exchange of information between two or more people, usually at the location of the person or persons receiving the information.

*Office visit* - A face-to-face exchange of information among two or more people, usually at the location of the information provider.

### **Other Methods**

*Broadcast television* - A means of providing audio and visual messages to mass audiences within a broad reception area by means of a central transmitting station and individual receivers at the location of each audience member.

*Cable television* - A system in which television signals are distributed through an electronic cable to those who subscribe to the service, usually restricted to a relatively small geographic area. This feature makes it possible to transmit information selectively to a defined audience.

*Radio* - A means of providing information to mass audiences via sound messages communicated through a central transmitting station and individual receivers at the location of each audience member.

*Newspaper* - A printed periodical publication, usually issued daily or weekly, that provides information directed to a broad audience within a specific geographical region.

*Movie (film)* - The recording of audio and visual images on film in a way that allows information to be presented in real-life-paced motion.

*Film strip* - A system for presenting a series of images structured in a specific order on 35-millimeter film to be projected for viewing by a group.

*Slide-tape presentation* - A system in which 35-millimeter slides are projected in synchronization with an audio tape to provide simultaneous audio and visual information.

*Photograph* - A print image used to provide visual information.

*Bulletin board* -A physical medium to which messages can be attached to provide information to anyone who notices.

*Show* - An event in which experiences or information is transferred to specific audiences or to the general public via exhibits, competitions, demonstrations, or other items or activities.

*Fair* - A planned event for a large audience for the purpose of exhibiting, observing, buying, selling, entertaining, educating, or informing.

*Exhibit* - A display of materials or objects designed to inform.

*Lecture* - An oral presentation, usually formal in nature, to a group by an individual highly knowledgeable about the subject.

*Speech* - A formal presentation of information or opinions by an individual to a group; it does not necessarily involve any further interaction between the speaker and the audience.

*Teletip message* - An informative audio message on a single topic accessed by individuals through the telephone by dialing a toll-free number.

*Church bulletin* - A means for providing brief printed information to limited audiences.

*Puppet* -A means of presenting information via the performance of inanimate fictional characters.

*Comics* - The use of cartoons to attract attention, create interest, or provide information. This method is especially useful for special or handicapped audiences.

*Novelty items* - Presentation of a brief message printed on objects such as key chains, pencils, canes, caps, cups, or other similar items.

### ***Appendix E Evaluating Training Effectiveness Worksheet***

The following information is adapted from *Planning a Program Evaluation* developed by University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Specialists Taylor-Powell, Steele, and Douglass (1996) and provides a good example of points to consider in evaluating in-service training for senior volunteers.

Taylor-Powell et.al state that there is no blueprint or recipe for conducting a good evaluation. Because the term *evaluation* is subject to different interpretations, training can be evaluated in a variety of ways. The resulting information is often very useful and may be all that is needed to keep training relevant and effective. Project directors can enhance the value of information garnered from an evaluation however, if they devote sufficient forethought and planning to the evaluation process.

Evaluation is more than just collecting information. It involves serious reflection on questions such as:

- ✓ What is the purpose of the evaluation?
- ✓ What do I want to know?
- ✓ What do I intend to do with the information?

Answers to these questions are crucial if the evaluation is to produce useful information.

<b>Issues and Guiding Questions</b>	<b>Steps to Take</b>	<b>Check When Completed</b>
What are you going to evaluate?	Define what you intend to evaluate. Briefly describe what you want to evaluate-purpose, expected outcomes, intended beneficiaries and activities.	
What is the purpose of the evaluation?	It is important to clearly articulate the evaluation's purpose. Otherwise, it will lack direction and the resulting information will not be as valuable as it could be.	
Who will use the evaluation?	You People affected in some way by the training County board members, elected officials Community leaders Colleagues, volunteers, collaborators, supporters Media Advisory Councils Grantors Agencies, firms, interest groups	

What questions will the evaluation seek to answer?	<p>Make a list of the questions and topics that you and the individuals or groups you have listed want address.</p> <p>What do people do differently as a result of the training?</p> <p>Who benefits and how?</p> <p>Are participants satisfied with what they gain from the training?</p> <p>Are the training's accomplishments worth the resources invested?</p> <p>What do people learn, gain, accomplish?</p> <p>What are the social, economic, environmental impacts (positive and negative) on people, communities, the environment?</p> <p>What are the strengths and weaknesses of the training?</p> <p>Which activities contribute most? Least?</p> <p>What, if any, are unintended secondary or negative effects?</p> <p>How well does the training respond to the initiating need?</p> <p>How efficiently are clientele and agency resources being used?</p>	
About training implementation-	<p>What does the training consist of-activities, events?</p> <p>What delivery methods are used?</p> <p>Who actually carries out the training and how well do they do so?</p> <p>What resources and inputs are invested?</p> <p>How many volunteers are involved and what roles do they play?</p> <p>Are the financial and staff resources adequate?</p>	
About training context-	<p>How well does the training fit in the local setting?</p> <p>What in the setting are givens and what can be changed?</p> <p>Who else works on similar concerns? Is there duplication?</p>	
About training need-	<p>What are the characteristics of the target population?</p> <p>What are current practices?</p> <p>What changes do people see as possible or important?</p>	
Clarifying the evaluation question(s).	<p>As you think about the questions that evaluation will answer, it may be necessary to break a larger question into its component parts. This will help you fully answer the broader question and begin to identify the information you need to collect.</p>	
Kinds of information: numerical and narrative.	<p>Numerical and narrative data both serve a useful purpose in evaluation. The choice for using one or both types of information depends upon what you want to know about the training and who will receive the information. Ultimately, the value of the information depends upon how it is viewed by your audience. Think about what type of data is most likely to be <i>understood</i> and viewed as <i>credible</i> by those who will receive the evaluation.</p>	
What resources do you need-time, money, people?	<p>The resources you have available may influence your evaluation plan more than any other single factor. Even if you expect to integrate evaluation into the training or if the evaluation will be conducted by volunteers or the participants themselves, you will need to allocate time for planning.</p>	
What sources of information will you use?	<p>Existing information</p> <p>People</p> <p>Observations</p>	

What data collection method(s) will you use? Which method can you afford and handle well?	Survey Interview Test Observation Group techniques Case study Document review and analysis Testimonials Expert or peer review Simulated problem or situation Journal, log, diary	
Recording Information	In most evaluations, there is some sort of form or device for compiling information, such as a video or audiotape. Think about the method you have chosen and decide what is needed to record the information.	
When will the data be collected?	Before and after the training. At one time. At various time during the course of the training. Continuously throughout the training.	
How will the data be analyzed?	Organizing, tabulating and analyzing your data to permit meaningful interpretation takes time and effort-often, more time and effort than you'd expect. Factor this in when you design your evaluation. If resources are limited, you may want to <u>structure your evaluation to be smaller, rather than larger.</u>	
What is the base for interpreting the data?	Consider how you will make sense of the results. To what will the information be compared: findings from other evaluations?	
What are the conclusions and recommendations?	Summarize the three to five main points that you feel are most important from the evaluation-the points you really want to remember and have other people remember. As appropriate, provide recommendations that you feel follow from these findings.	

As you think about the questions you want answered, it may help to review the Bennett hierarchy. First used in the 1970s, it continues to be updated and used in training planning and evaluation. The logic of the hierarchy is that in training we expend:

*Resources* to conduct

*Activities* intended to obtain

*Participation* among targeted audiences.

Participants' *reactions* to training activities affect their

*Learning*-knowledge, opinions, skills and aspirations. Through learning, people take

*Action* which helps achieve

*Impact*-social, economic, environmental change.

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