

Introduction

Design of the manual

20 Training Workshops for Listening Skills is presented in three main parts:

- Part 1—What is listening?
- Part 2—Listening and the organization
- Part 3—Listening for learning

Part 1 examines how the individual copes with listening. Personal involvement in listening to others and the difficulties inherent in the skill are explored and suggestions and solutions proposed. This group of workshops sets the scene for the sessions to come.

Part 2 demonstrates the importance of listening skills within the organization. In recognizing and dealing with practical day-to-day problems concerning staff, customers and colleagues, listening is an essential skill. Specific aspects of management are illustrated and examined.

Those who cannot listen cannot learn. In Part 3 different learning skills are defined. The exercises enable participants to practice and improve. The skills identified here can be used in formal learning (lectures, professional training) and informal learning (notetaking on site, meetings).

The manual has been designed as a flexible resource. This flexibility is enhanced by the loose-leaf format and you may copy material as often as you wish. The separate workshops can be combined to

- provide a complete training course in listening
- fit into existing training courses
- satisfy specific needs by choosing and using particular resources from the workshops.

Who should use the workshops?

The manual is primarily for trainers, but managers will also find it helpful for on-the-job training with small groups of staff. The workshops are suitable for managers at all levels but will be particularly useful to those who have recently assumed a managerial role. Part 3 will be most valuable for managers undertaking a course of study. Workshops could also be used with groups of staff seeking to improve their interpersonal skills.

Design of the workshops

Each workshop follows the same outline:

- Objectives
- Duration
- Materials
- Workshop Plan
- Workshop Notes
- Resources

Objectives

Objectives are

- shown at the beginning of each workshop
- listed on the first overhead transparency (OHT).

Both trainer and participants should be fully aware of the objectives of individual workshops so that they can evaluate the effectiveness of the completed workshop.

Duration

Time allocations are provided to help the trainer plan events and courses more precisely. You should, of course, take into account the attitudes, previous knowledge and experience of the group. The time allotted is based on the premise that a workshop will have twelve participants and should be adjusted if there are fewer people than the recommended maximum of twelve.

Materials

The list of materials to conduct each workshop details:

- room requirements
- essential equipment
- workshop notes
- master copies for overhead transparencies
- assignments
- handouts

Workshop plan

A step-by-step guide to conducting each workshop is provided. Ensure familiarity with the plan by reading it in detail before the session. When material is to be used in related events, knowing how the resources and background notes have been designed to work together is fundamental, if integration into the trainer's own program is to be effective.

Workshop notes

Workshop notes are the backbone of each workshop and the basis of the training event. Information is supplemented by the resource material (transparencies, exercises, handouts). Illustrations drawn directly from the trainer's own experience of the organization should be used. Use the notes as a guide rather than repeating them verbatim.

Resources

The resources provided are:

- Master copies for overhead transparencies (OHT)
- Exercises
- Handouts

Designed to fit into the plan of the workshop, they illustrate points brought out in the workshop notes and the trainer's own examples. These resources are easily identified by their symbols, shown on the following page. If used as part of another course or as individual examples to highlight particular points, the trainer may need to adapt the wording to suit the occasion. The exercises are group or individual exercises used to enhance learning.

Planning a workshop

A systematic approach to planning the workshops ensures success. Potential problems can often be identified in advance. These guidelines will help you plan and prepare effective workshops

1. Establish the
 - purpose and scope of the workshop
 - numbers of participants and their experience
 - dates and times of the sessions.
2. Select the appropriate workshop for your objectives.
3. Check the duration of the workshop.
4. Read through the plan for the workshop and make certain you are familiar with the program.
5. Read the workshop notes to make certain you understand and can use them properly.
6. Remove master copies of all
 - transparencies
 - exercises
 - handouts.
7. Prepare the transparencies that are needed.
8. Reproduce sufficient copies of exercises and handouts. Make certain you have some extras.

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9. Reserve rooms and equipment in advance.
10. Make sure that the room or rooms you intend to use will comfortably accommodate the group. Check the seating plan to make certain there is adequate space for group work.
11. Produce an outline program for the workshop for circulation. Include the following:
 - date and location of the workshop
 - title of the workshop
 - objectives
 - session summary
 - time of the workshop
 - the names of participants
 - other administrative details (car parking, lunch and so on).
12. Immediately before the workshop check the rooms and equipment.