

Aims:

To acknowledge the ways in which participants may be prevented from participating fully at training events

To devise guidelines for good practice in ensuring equality of access in training

Resources required:

Training room with space for pairs to work together; flipchart and OHP

3.1 'Factors affecting equality of access to training' OHP transparency and handout copies

4.1 'Devising 'good practice' guidelines' exercise participants' instruction sheet and checklist

4.2 'Devising a Training Course Application Form' exercise participants' instruction cards

'Learning log' sheets

1 Background notes

One of the most important responsibilities of a trainer is to ensure that everyone involved in a training event has an equal opportunity to participate fully. Regrettably, the issue of equality of access is one which is often overlooked by trainers. Whether this is an unfortunate oversight or amounts to deliberate discrimination, the consequences are equally disempowering to participants.

Equality of access does not just mean ensuring physical access to the training venue. Accessibility also means creating opportunities for full participation by participants. Factors which can affect the accessibility of a training event include:

1. The date and time of training events. Be aware of religious holidays. Remember that the time, day of the week, or time of the year (particularly school holidays) can have a major effect on whether people with children or other dependent relatives will be able to attend some events.
2. Individuals' communication skills. It is best not to make assumptions about these so:
 - Use a multi-media approach whenever possible (spoken voice, OHP slides and handouts with graphics)
 - Partner people up for exercises whenever possible
 - Arrange seating so that everyone can be seen and heard

- Don't cover your mouth when speaking as many people lip-read or use lip movements as reinforcing clues about what is being said
- Always explain the purpose of an exercise. Do not assume it is self-evident
- Avoid jargon or unnecessarily technical language

3. Self confidence. Not everyone is practised or experienced in expressing their views so:

- Try to use pairs and small groups for exercises whenever possible. These are usually far less threatening and can often encourage participants to join in larger group sessions later
- Take responsibility for creating a positive, friendly and unthreatening atmosphere where participants feel supported in taking risks. Remember that for some people, just expressing their opinion can seem like taking a considerable risk
- Do not allow 'put-downs' to go unchallenged. The damage caused by 'just ignoring' remarks can be considerable not just to the individual who is the subject of the 'put-down' but to the whole group
- Create opportunities and develop strategies for encouraging 'non-contributors' to join in. Be creative in your choice of exercises and sensitive to participants' learning style preferences

4. Discrimination. The behaviour of some participants can actively prevent others from participating in a training event. This may be done accidentally or deliberately. Trainers should be sensitive to any expression or behaviour based on prejudice so:

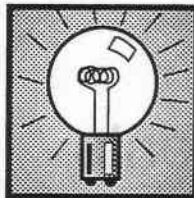
- Never use language which is sexist, racist, homophobic or which reinforces stereotypes
- Challenge, constructively, participants who are being insensitive to people of another race, sex, sexual orientation, age or to a person with a disability
- Challenge insensitivity to others with different views
- Avoid training materials which make unwarranted cultural assumptions. Arrange for translation into other languages wherever possible
- Create opportunities and develop strategies

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for encouraging 'non-contributors' to join in

5. Physical access. Some venues may be physically inaccessible to individuals with restricted mobility. Ensure that:
 - All parts of the venue are accessible (including small group rooms, toilets, dining areas, social areas). This should be extended to bedrooms shower/bath rooms and any other areas used for residential events
 - The venue is in an accessible area with adequate public transport (or arrange transport) and nearby parking
 - The access for people with disabilities is the main entrance and not a segregating side door
 - The venue has an induction loop system and you provide facilities for signing whenever required
 - The venue has access and facilities for guide dogs whenever required
6. Dependent support. Some training events may involve those with responsibilities for care of their dependents. You should consider providing allowances and/or facilities for the care of dependents where appropriate.
7. Practical arrangements. It is best to create opportunities for anyone to let you know what they require to participate fully in your training events. Trainers can make this easier for potential participants by giving careful consideration to equality of access when sending out information and application forms prior to a training event. Application forms and the way training events are described can attract or put off potential participants. Avoid jargon. Equality of access should be given due consideration at all stages i.e. before, during, and after the training event.

2 Suggestions for using these materials:



- 1 Introduce the session and its aims
- 2 Lecturette on the importance of ensuring equality of access using the background notes and OHP transparency (3.1).
- 3 Ask participants to work in pairs to devise a checklist of good practice on the subject using exercise (4.1). Distribute copies of the participants'

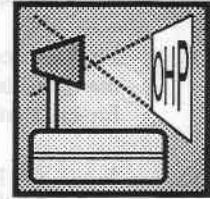
instruction sheet (4.1).

- 4 In the large group, flipchart and discuss the main ideas which emerged from the exercise.
- 5 Using these points, introduce the exercise on devising a training course application form. Distribute participants instruction cards (4.2).
- 6 Distribute 'Learning log' sheets to each participant.
- 7 Review the session against its aims . Evaluate the session.

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3.1 OHP Transparency/Handout

Factors affecting equality of access to training

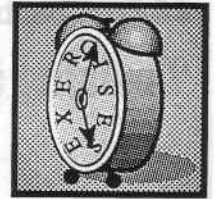


- Date and times of training event
- Participants' communication skills
- Participants' self-confidence
- Discrimination
- Physical accessibility
- Dependent support needs
- Practical arrangements

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4.1 Exercise: participants' instruction sheet and checklist

'Devising 'Good Practice' Guidelines' (for ensuring equality of access to training)



Purpose:

To consider the most important ways of ensuring equality of access before and during training events.

To devise practical guidelines which can be used by trainers when planning and running training events.

Process:

Imagine that you have been brought in as a consultant to help the Acme Training Organisation improve the accessibility of its training courses. They have asked you to devise a checklist of 'Ten Golden Rules for Planning and Running Training Events' for their training staff. The organisation wants the 'Golden Rules' to be very practical. Five of the rules should apply to what to do before the event and five to the event itself.

Work with a partner to devise your 'Ten Golden Rules'. Write them, in order of importance, below:

The 'Ten Golden Rules' Checklist for ensuring equality of access in training

Before the training event	
Rule 1	
Rule 2	
Rule 3	
Rule 4	
Rule 5	
During the training event	
Rule 6	
Rule 7	
Rule 8	
Rule 9	
Rule 10	