

THE JAIL AS PART OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Project Description

- Observe the training in [REDACTED] presented September 27 – 29, 2011
- Review curriculum: lesson plans, slides, workbook
- Recommend revisions needed for curriculum to follow the ITIP (Instructional Theory Into Practice) model of instruction

Context for the comments below:

- ITIP method of instruction
- Bloom's Taxonomy of objectives with emphasis on objectives that are measurable and at the application level and above
- Brain research on effective learning: engaging participants, aiding memory through repetition and visual cues, avoiding information overload, limiting text on visuals
- Purpose of lesson plans: detailed "road map" for trainers, documentation, consistency from one training program to another and from one trainer to another (with the assumption that the same training team will not always be available)

Program and Curriculum Strengths

- Trainers: [REDACTED] (NOTE: due to canceled flight and resulting late arrival in [REDACTED]) were energetic, engaging, prepared and knowledgeable about the entire curriculum.
- The trainers actually led the group in a few anticipatory sets, even though these were not written into the lesson plans.
- Performance objectives – most are measurable and written at the application level and above (Bloom's Taxonomy).
- Activities/exercises – There are quite a few excellent activities throughout to engage participants in a wide range of learning opportunities. The Ugli Orange activity was particularly effective.
- Questions asked by the trainers were, in most cases, excellent "checks for understanding" and were thought-provoking
- In the module The Role of the Jail in Your Community, there is a series of participant activity/exercises used for Instructional Input (it's labeled Input and/or Guided Practice, but the activities are actually used to glean Input from the participants)
- The outlines provided give the trainers a wealth of information for their presentations.
- Facility Activity Schedule exercise as described in the Staffing lesson plan would be an excellent guided practice activity (this was not done in the training.)

- The action plan and report out at the end of the training provided an excellent opportunity for the participants to review and engage with the learning and work on their next steps. Some of the teams were able to use tools as taught and created a workable plan.

Concerns/Issues

- Lesson plans indicate that the curriculum was developed in 2002 (one module in 2003). Although it is likely, or even evident, that instructors have provided updates in the actual training, there is no documentation that the curriculum has been reviewed or updated for nine years.
- Some performance objectives are not measurable (i.e. “to understand ...”) and some could be written at a higher level in order to promote learning of information and skills at a level to match job performance. (i.e. “list, define, identify are rarely actions called for on the job)
- Although the words Anticipatory Set are in these lesson plans, the Introductions are the traditional overview and presentation of performance objectives and they are all in lecture format. Lecture would not be an appropriate instructional strategy for an Anticipatory Set. Anticipatory Set is the first part of the ITIP model of instruction. The purpose of the Set is to get participants to begin to engage with each other (creating a learning community) and with the subject being taught in order to help them anticipate, or prepare for the learning. It answers the questions “Why am I here? Why do I need to learn this?”.
- Lecture is the primary instructional strategy used for Instructional Input in the curriculum. Although lecture IS an appropriate instructional strategy for Instructional Input, it is not the ONLY strategy that can be used. Instructional Input in the ITIP model answers the questions “What do I need to know? What do I need to be able to do, or do differently?” Many/most of the lectures are quite long (up to an hour) without much participant engagement. Adult learning theorists and brain research suggests that there should be some type of participant engagement about every 10 minutes to check for understanding and help participants make a mental connection with the information being presented.
- In most of the lesson plans in this curriculum there is a section entitled Instructional Input and/or Guided Practice. These two ITIP components are not the same thing. Guided Practice in the ITIP model answers the questions “How does this work? How do I use this?” and is intended to get the participants to practice using the information learned in a work-related situation or practice the skills learned in the way they have been taught, all with observation and coaching by the trainers. Although Guided Practice always involves participant activity (or “exercises”), participant activity is not always guided practice. For example, the Anticipatory Set always includes participant activity to get them to think about the topic, but they are not practicing with the new information or skills. Input can involve participant activity through reading and researching information and teaching or sharing with each other, or other discovery methods of learning, but this is the “what” rather than the “how” of the learning cycle.
- Many of the activities – or exercises – do not have sufficient instructions for the trainer to set up or debrief the activity (Debriefing questions along with anticipated or desired responses.) Some of the instructions as written are very confusing – although the trainers

were clear about the purpose and how to guide the participants.

- Legal Issues and Civil Liabilities
 - Updates would be critical in the lesson plan for documentation and for consistency should there be another trainer at some point
 - This is a four hour section that, according to the lesson plan, is straight lecture other than one 30 minute activity
 - Information overload. Although it is likely that all the detailed information presented is necessary, without frequent checks for understanding and opportunities for participants to practice using the information, it is highly unlikely that they will remember much of it.
- Stakeholders and special interest groups. There seemed to be an emphasis (in the actual training) on stakeholders as competitors for the same funds. Although this is reality, it seemed to need a little more balance in terms of how to get stakeholder support and cooperation.
- Action Planning was taught and the action plan completed at the end of the training. There were a number of useful tools presented, but there was not enough detail nor enough time for people to practice using them with guidance to enable them to use these tools for planning when they return to their work setting.
- Power point slides – many of them were text-heavy

Recommendations

- Review and update content throughout the curriculum
- Create an Anticipatory Set for the overall program and for each module
- Include a variety of instructional strategies for Instructional Input (i.e. reading assignment, study and teaching groups)
- During lengthier lectures, include activities to engage participants and check for understanding. (e.g., Open ended questions, brief worksheets to complete and discuss concerning material presented, brief “pair-share” where participants share with each other key learning points)
- Provide detailed instructions for all participant activities.
- Develop debriefing questions with anticipated or desired responses for each activity.
- Include a purpose statement for each activity
- Design questions that are open-ended but specific enough for participants to be clear about response. (e.g., Rather than ‘What did you learn from that video?’ ask instead ‘What are the three most commonly held myths about jails?’)
- Create Guided Practice opportunities throughout the curriculum.
- Introduce the Action Planning guide early in the training and guide participants to work on it after each module, or at least daily.
- If planning tools are to be taught, such as Force Field Analysis, allow ample time and provide detailed instructions, along with guided practice, so that when they actually use this as a tool in the action plan they are clear about how to use it.
- Determine the essential components of the module on Legal Issues and Civil Liabilities and reduce the amount of detailed information. Participants could be given situations to

review, questions to answer and resources for finding the information they need.

- Revise the stakeholder/special interest group activity, possibly getting participants to determine which stakeholders and which special interest groups are in various categories. For example: who are your/the allies, critics, decision-makers, informants, formal/informal leaders, connectors, insiders
- Create a glossary
- Revise slides so that they are resources and visual aids for the learners. Text should be limited to no more than six words across and six lines down, although the current research suggests that it be much less than that.
- Replace text-heavy slides with information in participant manual.
- Provide detailed instructions in the lesson plan on use of the slides. Since slides are indicated by title only in the lesson plan, it might be difficult for a new trainer to coordinate the activities and the slides
- Create more obvious connections between modules by building on information from one module to the next and by asking questions that “reach back” to information learned earlier. For example, in the module on staffing, ask questions about legal concerns. In the module about stakeholders, ask questions related to civil liability.
- Build in a follow-up via Web Ex with one or two representatives from each team to give them an opportunity to share what actually happened when they worked to follow their action plan and receive guidance from the trainers – and from each other – on how to address any challenges they faced.
- Move the module on Relationships to earlier in the agenda. Participants could be guided to be more aware of their conflict modes and communication skills throughout the workshop, building in a Guided Practice. This module begs for a more learner-centered approach rather than lecture. Teams could then work on their teambuilding throughout the workshop.