

50 Instructional Methods

Presentation Methods (P), Application Methods (A)

1. Action Maze (A)

A variation of the case study in which learners solve a problem or case by making decisions. Their decisions determine what they will see next. The consequences of their decisions provide learners with insight and feedback.

2. Behavior Modeling (P)

A desirable behavior is shown to participants, either through a live demonstration by the instructor or through a video tape. The behavior is then analyzed and studied. It is commonly used in interpersonal skills and communication skills training.

3. Brainstorming (P)

A freewheeling technique to generate ideas. Phase one requires a creative, spontaneous flow of suggestions without any judgment or evaluation of the suggestions. Phase two involves more careful analysis to explore the ideas and evaluate their usefulness.

4. Buzz Group (P)

A large group is subdivided into smaller groups for a quick discussion. All groups meet simultaneously for 5-10 minutes to react to a topic, generate ideas or questions, discuss an issue, etc.

5. Case Study (A)

Learners are given a written or oral account of a situation. They are asked, either individually or in groups, to analyze the case and present findings and/or recommendations. This method is usually used to practice analytical skills.

6. Clinic (A)

Learners meet to analyze and treat a specific problem or react to a problem they have encountered.

7. Colloquy (P)

A modified version of a panel involving 4-8 people. Half the panel represents the learners and the other half are resource people or experts. The learner representatives ask questions, raise issues, and make comments for the experts to respond to.

8. Committee (P and A)

A smaller group drawn from a large group of learners to handle a project or assignment that can't be handled efficiently by the large group. There may be more than one committee working at the same time. Each committee reports back to the larger group for direction and feedback.

9. Compare & Contrast (P)

A method used to highlight similarities and differences between two things.

10. Critical Incident (A)

A variation of the case study in which learners are given incomplete data. By analyzing the case and asking the right questions, they are given the additional data needed to solve the case.

11. Critique (A)

Learners analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a subject, system, approach, proposal, etc. They then make suggestions or improvements.

12. Debate (P)

Two learners, or teams of learners, defend opposite sides of an issue. Learners alternate in presenting their arguments. The purpose is to explore all aspects of an issue and to emphasize winning.

13. Demonstration (P)

Learners observe the performance of a task or procedure. The demonstration may be live or pre-recorded.

14. Dialogue (P)

Two individuals hold a conversation while the other learners observe. The individuals in dialogue may be resource people or selected learners. They may either present opposing views or simply discuss the issue in an informed manner.

15. Discussion (P)

An exchange of ideas on a topic of mutual concern. This discussion is usually facilitated by a leader, but it can be leaderless. It can be totally unstructured and spontaneous, or it can be highly structured.

16. Drill (A)

A session of repetitive practice designed to increase efficiency, improve the quality of performance, or aid retention.

17. Expanded Panel (P)

This is a panel with a vacant chair. Learners can temporarily take the vacant chair in order to participate briefly in the panel discussion. When they have had their say, they vacate the chair so another learner can occupy it.

18. Field Trip (P)

Learners are taken to the environment where the task is performed. The trip is carefully planned for learning through observation and analysis of what is observed. (This is not just a casual tour.)

19. Fish Bowl (P and A)

A modification of the discussion in which a large group is divided into two smaller groups. The “inner” circle discusses an issue or does an exercise while the “outer” circle observes and then offers observations or feedback.

20. Forum (P)

Following a formal presentation, learners discuss and ask questions about the topic. They may ask questions of the speaker or discuss among themselves. For larger groups, a moderator may be needed.

21. Game (P and A)

A game is used to present and reinforce content in an enjoyable way. In cooperative games, teams can help each other in order to reach a final product or solution. If the game is competitive, participants can compete with either the instructor, each other, themselves, a computer, or other teams.

22. In-Basket (A)

Prepared items are given to the learners as if arriving in the in-baskets. Learners must prioritize, make decisions, handle any difficulties, respond to time deadlines and pressure, etc., in order to get the workload completed.

23. Instruments (P)

Learners fill out questionnaires or assessments, to gain insight about themselves or explore a topic.

24. Interview (P)

Learners are given an opportunity to interview and question a resource person. Sometimes the interview is conducted by someone else and the learners simply observe.

25. Laboratory (A)

A training site is set up which allows experimentation and testing by learners. This can be done for technical and scientific training but also for human relations and complex behavioral programs.

26. Large Group Discussion (P)

An exchange of ideas among the whole group. It may be designed into the lesson, in which case it is typically structured and moderated by the instructor. It may also arise spontaneously as a result of participant concerns.

27. Lecture (P)

A prepared oral presentation on a given topic. When using lectures in training, make sure the content to be covered is **not** too lengthy. While learners want/expect some lectures, make sure you combine lectures with other presentation and application methods.

28. Lecturette (P)

A structured oral presentation method in which the instructor delivers content in segments ranging from 5 to 20 minutes. Each segment requires some interaction between the learners and the instructor. Lecturette variations include:

- **Abbreviated** – Learners list everything they know about a topic and the instructor provides the missing content.
- **Graphic Association** – The instructor shows a picture or symbol to represent a key idea/topic and then explains its significance.
- **Mock Interview** – A volunteer participant “interviews” the instructor using a list of questions or a script provided by the instructor.
- **Multiple Choice** – After the instructor has delivered a segment of content, learners respond to a series of multiple choice questions.
- **Search & Learn** – Learners are given a series of questions and work in small groups to research content provided.
- **Cartoon** – The instructor shows a cartoon that illustrates to reinforce a key idea/topic.
- **Fill-in-the-Blanks** – Learners fill in words or short phrases on an outline of the key ideas covered in the lecturette.
- **Cooperative** – The instructor randomly distributes numbered topic cards to learners who are called upon to read them aloud.
- **Examples/Exceptions** – Learners, in small groups, are asked to create an example or an analogy of the content presented or identify exceptions to rules or procedures.
- **Mind Mapping** – Learners create freeform graphical representations (i.e. mind maps) of the content presented and exchange the maps with other participants.
- **Key Words** – The instructor writes a single key word on the flipchart as each content item is presented.

29. Listening Team (P)

A group of learners are assigned to listen to a speaker, take notes, prepare questions, and then summarize a session. They may also be allowed to question the speaker. Each listening team can focus on a different aspect of the session and report their observations and conclusions.

30. Marathon (P and A)

Learners stay in the learning environment continuously for an extended time. Usually done in a secluded spot to minimize distractions and allow intense concentration on the objectives of the session. Usually reserved for interpersonal skills, personal learning, and self-assessment.

31. Mental Imagery (A)

A process of relaxing and imagining yourself performing a task properly. Repeated mental rehearsal is a supplement or replacement for actual practice.

32. Mini-Case (A)

A modification of the case study in which a brief situation is described to the learners who discuss how the case should be handled. Characterized by only key facts being presented and by brevity in discussion. Often used to give examples of situations and procedures.

33. Neighbor Discussions (P)

A quick method to create participation and activity by learners. They are asked to speak to the person beside them for a few minutes to discuss an issue, answer a question, or generate questions to ask.

34. Panel (P)

A discussion among a group of experts takes place while learners observe. Sometimes learners ask questions after the panel has spoken. Often requires a moderator to direct the flow.

35. Peer Review (A)

Learners work in small groups to review content previously presented. The purpose of a peer review is to check for understanding of knowledge and/or procedure.

36. Peer Tutoring (P)

Participants help each other to learn under the guidance of a group leader. It is also used to give advanced participants an opportunity to help their less advanced peers.

37. Practice Exercise (A)

A method used to reinforce a skill. The learners practice the skill demonstrated by the instructor, either alone or in teams, using a performance checklist.

38. Question (and Answer) (P)

A method in which the leader covers course content by asking a series of questions. Also reversed in which the learners are asked to generate and ask questions in order to learn about the subject.

39. Quiz (A)

A method of assessing learning or giving practice by filling out a questionnaire or test.

40. Reaction Team (P)

A group of 2-5 learners is selected to react to a speaker's presentation by asking questions or making comments. They may be allowed to interrupt to seek immediate clarification.

41. Reading (P)

Learners read course content or review materials to prepare for a group session.

42. Reflection (P)

Learners are given time alone to review and think about what has been learned, assess its applicability, or think about how to make it work in their setting.

43. Role Play (A)

Learners practice a new skill or apply knowledge by acting out specific roles in the context of a realistic situation. It is usually used to practice interpersonal and communication skills. Formats for role playing include:

- **Traditional Triad** – Two learners interact to practice a skill while the third learner observes the interaction and gives feedback.
- **Doubling** – Another learner sits or stands behind the role player and acts as an alter ego to expand upon or reveal feelings not expressed by the player.
- **Tag Team** – A number of separate role plays occur at the same time in various parts of the room.
- **Role Reversal** – Learners assume the roles of others they would normally interact with on the job.
- **Role Rotation** – The role play is stopped briefly so that players can trade roles before continuing.

44. Simulation (A)

The training environment is set up to allow the learners to practice a task under very job-like conditions. The equipment and/or the situation may be used to make the training as “real life” as possible.

45. Skit (P)

A short, dramatic presentation that is carefully prepared and rehearsed to illustrate principles or provide material for analysis and discussion.

46. Slip Writing (P)

A quick method of generating questions from learners by asking everyone to write their main question on paper and pass it to the leader. The leader then reads all the questions to the group and either answers or refers questions back to the group. Can be used any time a learner wishes to ask a question anonymously.

47. Study Guide (P)

Materials that provide a map for the learners to follow in learning a subject. It can include many types of activities and materials. Can be used individually or in groups.

48. Symposium (P)

A series of brief lectures on related topics are presented by resource people. Each speaker presents only one aspect of the topic. A moderator often summarizes. Sometimes learners ask questions afterward. A rather structured, formal method.

49. Syndicate (A)

Learners are subdivided into small groups of 3-6 people to perform an assigned task as a team.

50. Workshop (P and A)

A highly participative session that puts greater emphasis on learner application than on presentations by the leader. Learners work to produce a product or solve a problem with guidance from a leader.