



Practice the Selection of Training Activities

Step 1: Curriculum planning starts with the content.

Step 2: Write learning objectives to help the learner grasp or be able to practice the information. Below is a sample learning objective.

The learner will be able to list and describe the three education programs of the River Lovers Foundation, using the Volunteer Handbook, in 30 minutes.

Step 3: Think of all the ways you could teach people what the learning objective says they should know. See the list below.

Training Activity	How I Would Do It
Problem Solving in Small Group	Form groups of 2-3 people. Give people 5x8 cards with names of programs and ask them to match with other cards with description of programs. Flash card exercise.
Lecture	Provide handout or use PowerPoint with all programs in state and describe them with real examples.
Song	Form small groups of 2-4 people. Groups write a song about the various programs of the River Lovers Foundation.
Panel	Representatives from the programs of River Lovers come to the training and talk about what their program entails. Volunteers are provided a worksheet to record information. Follow with a quiz.
Game	Create a board game to help people remember the names and functions of various program.

Step 4: Things to consider when deciding which training activity is the best.

- The audience—age, previous training experience, educational level.
- Time—how much time is available overall and how much time should be devoted to the topic.
- Supplies needed—time to prepare them, cost, ease of use, familiarity of the learners with the materials to be used.
- Logic—Is it a logical way to teach the topic?
- Level of interactivity for learner—adults like to be “engaged.”
- Evaluation—how easy is it to evaluate the learners’ ability to meet the criteria of the learning objective.
- Sequence—does it logically follow the preceding training activity and set up the next training activity, the “fit.”



Step 5: Select the "best" training activity based on the considerations listed above.

Assume you are planning training for volunteers who are just beginning their service. There are six people to be trained. Read the learning objective listed below. Then review the choices of training activities listed below. Assume you have 25 minutes to accomplish the learning objective. Yes, it's okay to suggest a different training activity. But, you still need to say why it is your best choice.

Learning Objective: The learner will be able to list 5 things that negatively impact the water quality of rivers and streams served by River Lovers, in 20 minutes.

I would select this training activity for this learning objective, check one:

- Small group brainstorm
- Game
- Lecture/PowerPoint
- Song
- Simulation

Here are the reasons why:



Nancy's two choices are as follows:

1. Small Group Brainstorming. Why?

Adults have great fun with brainstorming and it is a quick way to learn information from each other. Going from group to group and getting one item, until all lists have been exhausted could capture a list of ideas impacting water quality. The list is likely to be longer than 5 and discussion allows the trainer to make key points or pull them from the group. It is quick, interactive, fun, and easy. There should be a handout that lists the things that impact water quality. That is the content.

2. The panel. Why?

The panel is a way to engage other staff, but for a short period of time. It could be used to emphasize the importance of working effectively with the paid staff, make for introductions, and provide information from the folks who really know about it. Talking about water might be only one part of what they do. There should be a handout for learners to take notes. It is also important to "test" the learners' knowledge following this activity. That could be a game or competition to make it more interactive, as the learners have been sitting and listening for a long time.

Why didn't I choose the others?

Lecture—Go back and look at Dale's Cone of Experience. Retention is poor. My learning objective wants more than that. Volunteers will go to sleep!

Song—Fun, but would take more time than I have. Also, these are people who are just getting acquainted and they might be uncomfortable being silly with another person they don't know well.

Game—If the game could be done in 15 minutes, and if I don't have to create it, then it's okay. It requires too much up-front time to develop a game that lasts only 15 minutes.

Now it's your turn. On the next page is a learning objective. Select three to five different training techniques that could be used to teach the content of this learning objective. You have 45 minutes to train six new volunteers. Be sure to look back at the list of training activities that begins on page 49 to get some ideas of how you might do this. Don't be afraid to try something you have never used. This is a practice session!



Learning Objective: The learner will be able to process a credit card sale correctly in the store within 45 minutes using the Credit Card Training manual.

1. List 3-5 possible training activities that could be used to teach this skill. List them in the boxes under "Training Activity."
2. Describe how you would carry out the training activity in the column at the right, "How You Would Do It."

Training Activity	How you would do it
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Now, which training activity above is your **first** choice and why?

My Training Activity Choice



SECTION FIVE

Organizing Training Activities

Training Plan

All of the information you have just learned is pulled together in the training plan. A training plan begins with content, written behavior-based learning objectives, and selection of training activities; all of which are combined in a training plan.

Here is a sample of what a training plan will look like.

Learning Objective: The learner will be able to list and describe three programs of River Lovers (Water Quality, River Safe Recreation, Local Advocacy) using the Program Descriptions information packet, in 30 minutes.

Training Activities	Time Needed	Supplies Needed
<p>1. Practice Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organize the learners in teams of two. b. Give each team an envelope with River Lovers Program flash cards. c. Provide a handout with the names of programs sponsored by River Lovers. Include brief description and samples of activities. Review the programs and answer any questions the learners might have. d. Each team has 10 minutes to memorize the program, acronyms for programs, and what the programs do. There will be a contest following the practice session. 	15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 packets of River Lovers flash cards • Handout on River Lovers Program
<p>2. Pre-Testing Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Put two teams together and have them test each other on accurately identifying programs. b. Encourage them to use the flash cards. 	5 minutes	
<p>3. Test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Distribute a paper test on the River Lovers programs. Each person takes the test. b. Individuals can correct their own test or you can ask participants to trade papers. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Lovers Programs Test



Now it is your turn!

Directions: Select a topic (keep it narrow, such as confidentiality), on which volunteers need to be trained. Write the content in outline form. Next, write learning objectives for the content. Select appropriate teaching activities. Then write your training plan.

My content:

My learning objectives:

The best teaching activities:



My Training Plan

Training Activities	Time Needed	Supplies Needed





SECTION SIX

Evaluation of Training

The purpose of evaluating training is to grow and improve training. Effective evaluations are based on data, not hunches, intuition, or feelings. Evaluation is one of the most complex of our mental faculties, and is done well only after knowledge is acquired, understood, applied, analyzed and synthesized. Trainers of volunteers want to start the evaluation process before the workshop or session is ever held, continue it during the presentation of the workshop, immediately following the session, and after time has passed and the learner has the opportunity to assimilate information.

Volunteers' performance is being evaluated, as well as the skills and abilities of the trainer. Evaluation assesses both. Attention to these basic elements of evaluation can foster your growth as a trainer and improve learning sessions for volunteers.

Why Evaluate Training?

The primary reason to evaluate training is to enhance instruction. Organization of training, material used in training, skills of the trainer, competence of the learners, and quality of content are all things that influence the success of training. The training is aimed at learning objectives. Instructional improvement is aimed at meeting those objectives as often as possible, for the greatest number of volunteers.

Evaluation also determines the effectiveness of training. What the participants can do at the end of training versus what they are actually doing on the job three months later is an important measurement to take. Evaluation is also a tool to assess whether training should continue to be done in the same manner, year after year. For example, the history of the organization is covered in orientation. An evaluation might determine if it is necessary, or if there is another way in which it can be presented.

Last, but by no means the least important reason to conduct evaluations of training, is to provide justification and accountability for the training program for volunteers. Dugan Laird, in "Approaches to Training and Development," says, "Evaluation costs something: thought, time, money, and energy." If you are going to the trouble to evaluate, a budget is needed, in both time and money, to do it well. That means providing meaningful information about the effectiveness of that training, when budget-planning time rolls around.

The Evaluation Purpose Statement

Evaluation of any type—formal, informal, of training course or an individual—begins with a statement of purpose. This is a statement that outlines the reason for doing it in the first place. It is a list of the intended result. This practice exercise gives you a "training" situation and then asks you to write a purpose statement. There is a sample for you to compare to when you are done.



Practice

"A Purpose Statement for Evaluation"

Juanita Ramirez is the volunteer coordinator for the Belton County Humane Association. The volunteer corps is 300 strong. Volunteers walk dogs, groom cats, give baths, answer phones, clean cages, raise money, provide landscaping care, clerk in the thrift shop, and serve on committees. All volunteers, including the board of directors, are required to attend an orientation training that is two hours long. The orientation workshop reviews the history of the organization, covers policies on such sensitive topics as what it means to be a "low-kill" shelter, and the importance of confidentiality. Volunteers receive the Volunteer Handbook and complete a detailed personal information sheet.

There is \$200 allocated annually for evaluation of training in the volunteer office budget. Juanita's supervisor has asked her to write a purpose statement that includes a justification for maintaining the money in her budget for evaluation of training.

Imagine you are Juanita. Write such a statement for her program.

Sample: Writing A Purpose Statement for Evaluation

Your purpose statement should look similar to this statement.

The purpose of evaluating training at the Belton County Humane Association is to determine the effectiveness of all training programs as it relates to volunteer performance, to enhance the quality of instruction to improve volunteer skills, and to provide data for accountability.

Your Turn

It is your turn to practice writing an evaluation purpose statement. Write a purpose statement for volunteer training for the organization with which you are affiliated or familiar.



Types of Evaluation

Formative evaluations are conducted during a workshop or training session. It might be a short quiz after an exercise, group discussion applying principles just learned, or demonstration of the learner's ability to complete a specific task. The formative evaluation provides immediate feedback to the trainer so changes can be made to enhance learning. It is an opportunity for a "mid-course" correction. Formative evaluations are especially important tools to measure volunteer progress as knowledge develops.

Summative evaluations occur at the end or after a workshop training session. At this time the learner can judge and compare all the information presented, and assess its effectiveness. It can be a multiple-choice test, a demonstration of a skill, or an interview after the volunteer is in their job position. Sometimes summative evaluations are done several weeks after the training session to determine whether volunteers are retaining necessary information. Summative evaluations provide guidance in determining whether to change the workshop content or activities the next time it is offered.

Practice

Formative or Summative?

Can You Tell The Difference?

Juanita at the animal shelter does the following evaluative activities during her orientation training for volunteers. Decide if they are formative or summative.

TRAINING EVALUATION TECHNIQUE	FORMATIVE OR SUMMATIVE?
1. The Belton County Humane Association has a 15-minute video on the history and work of this animal protection organization. At the end of the video, Juanita distributes a 10-question quiz on the history and activities of the group. Volunteers correct it with Juanita. Anyone with 90%-100% correct answers receives a pencil.	
2. Volunteers practice answering questions about policies on euthanasia of dogs, as if they were talking to someone on the phone or at the front desk.	
3. Juanita distributes an evaluation form at the end of training for volunteers to assess what they have learned in the training session.	
4. The volunteer handbook distributed to all volunteers contains a checklist titled, "What You Should Know When You Complete Your Orientation." Volunteers are urged to review this before they come to their first assignment at the Shelter. If there are things they don't know, they should check with the volunteer coordinator. This follows the orientation session for volunteers.	



Practice Answer Key Formative or Summative?

Can You Tell the Difference?

TRAINING EVALUATION TECHNIQUE	FORMATIVE OR SUMMATIVE?
1. The Belton County Humane Association has a 15-minute video on the history and work of this animal protection organization. At the end of the video, Juanita distributes a 10-question quiz on the history and activities of the group. Volunteers correct it with Juanita. Anyone with 90%-100% correct answers receives a pencil.	<u>Formative</u> Juanita can correct misperceptions during the correcting discussion.
2. Volunteers practice answering questions about policies on euthanasia of dogs, as if they were talking to someone on the phone or at the front desk.	<u>Formative</u> Juanita can observe practice of behaviors and stop and correct as needed.
3. Juanita distributes an evaluation form at the end of training for volunteers to assess what they have learned in the training session.	<u>Summative</u> Training is complete. The assessment can ask learners to rate their learning on the objectives for the workshop.
4. The volunteer handbook distributed to all volunteers contains a checklist titled, "What You Should Know When You Complete Your Orientation." Volunteers are urged to review this before they come to their first assignment at the Shelter. If there are things they don't know, they should check with the volunteer coordinator. This follows the orientation session for volunteers.	<u>Summative</u> This is done days or weeks after the training and is the best measure of what learners retained from the workshop.

The fourth evaluation technique in this example is a bit tricky! The person completes it after the session. Juanita might check up on several volunteers to see if they filled it out and determine if they still have questions. She could ask selected volunteers to turn it in after a week or two. It is, however, a summative evaluation process.

Elements to Consider When Designing a Training Evaluation

1. Use the learning objectives to determine the most important things volunteers need to know, understand, perform, or explain. That is what is evaluated.
2. Before the workshop begins, decide how to assess the work of the volunteers in accomplishing the learning objectives. This is the time to consider such things as formative and summative evaluation methods; group or individual evaluations.
3. When should the evaluations be administered--during the session, at the end of the workshop, or after they are on the job?



4. Select the type of evaluation tool you will design for each learning objective and the overall training session. Remember to assess the training “climate”—location, parking, amenities, timing, etc
5. Once you have determined the types of evaluation to be used, you must determine how to compile the results. This is especially important with formative evaluations. How can you tabulate the responses to an evaluative technique when a workshop is in session? What is the best way to record? Can you use another volunteer (experienced) to assist with the evaluation process?
6. If you are measuring comments from group discussions, record such things as how often something is said. That is a measure of how well the volunteers really understand the concepts.
7. Results of evaluations need to be shared. Compile a report at the end of training and provide the results to your supervisor, another volunteer manager, or an experienced adult educator. Ask for feedback. Listen to what that person thinks about the responses. Try hard not to be defensive.
8. Act on the results of the evaluations. If volunteers consistently do poorly at learning a skill or understanding a concept, figure out a method to train differently to be more successful at getting your message through.

Evaluation Techniques

Evaluation techniques are tied to what the volunteer is learning. The three major areas of learning are knowledge, skill/behavior, and attitude. Different evaluation techniques measure different types of learning. For example, a paper and pencil test is a poor way to measure if a volunteer knows how to safely transport a patient in a wheel chair. A better method is to actually have the volunteer practice. Have the participant do it. First the wheel chair is empty, then another trainee is in the wheel chair, and then with an experienced volunteer in the wheel chair, who can provide immediate feedback. The learning objective is an excellent place to see indicators of the type of learning required, and thus is a guide to selecting the most effective evaluation technique.



The following techniques are commonly used to evaluate training. They are by no means the only ones available. These techniques can also be used across all three of the types of learning.

Evaluation Techniques

KNOWLEDGE	SKILL/BEHAVIOR	ATTITUDES
<p>Group Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> oral presentations to the entire class from smaller groups small group course critique 	<p>Observation In Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> volunteer demonstrates the skill in class equipment is actually used simulations are used 	<p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> small groups (2-3) practice the attitude being taught case study - learner assessments in discussing a "case" related to a topic introducing new beliefs or views on a topic can indicate a shift in attitude
<p>Written Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sentence completion true/false test matching fill-in-the blank journals comparison to the "correct" answers 	<p>On-the-Job Observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess behavior in actual setting compare behavior to written standards of behavior 	<p>Attitude Assessment Tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> statements related to "feelings" journals - begin workshop with journal entries; end class with assessment of what the person wrote attitude scales -especially before and after the training



Selecting Evaluation Techniques Practice

Directions: Read each learning objective situation. List two (2) techniques you think Juanita could use. **Explain** specifically how she would use it.

Learning Objective	Formative Techniques	Summative Techniques
<p>1. Juanita's learning objective is written so the volunteer learns to assist someone in completing an application for a shelter animal. She wants to do a formative evaluation on this learning objective during the training session so she can be assured of learning before volunteers leave. In the column to the right list two techniques that could be used. Explain the technique related to the learning objective.</p>		
<p>2. The learning objective says: The learner will be able to define the term "low-kill" shelter. List two formative and two summative evaluation techniques Juanita could use. Explain how she would use them.</p>		
<p>3. Juanita wants volunteers to be able to groom cats. Part of the orientation is a practice session on grooming cats. Her learning objective is "The learner will be able to appropriately groom a cat, using the Catzarama Method, in 15 minutes." She wants to assess learners as they practice grooming on stuffed cats. Her last measure of evaluation will be grooming one of the shelter's resident cats.</p>		



Selecting Evaluation Techniques Practice

Answer Key

Directions: Read each learning objective situation. List two (2) techniques you think Juanita could use. **Explain** specifically how she would use it.

Learning Objective	Formative Techniques	Summative Techniques
<p>1. Juanita's learning objective is written so the volunteer learns to assist someone in completing an application for a shelter animal. She wants to do a formative evaluation on this learning objective during the training session so she can be assured of learning before volunteers leave. In the column to the right list two techniques that could be used. Explain the technique related to the learning objective.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small group practice in class: Students work in team of two with all forms and complete application for their partner. Evaluation is done by learners trading papers to see if information was completed correctly. 2. Experienced volunteer comes into class and acts as one applying to adopt a cat. Each person takes information and completes in-take application. Discussion to correct application with students trading papers or correcting their own forms. 	
<p>2. The learning objective says: The learner will be able to define the term "low-kill" shelter. List two formative and two summative evaluation techniques Juanita could use. Explain how she would use them.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quiz at the end of a PowerPoint explaining the term "low-kill." Correct with learners. 2. Partners practice explaining "low-kill" after PowerPoint presentation. Trainer walks around the room and listens to evaluate student learning. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quiz-section on final test on the term "low-kill." Learners take and score test at end of training. 2. Trainer checks with supervisor of volunteers at the front desk as to how the person handled an explanation of low kill. Do this several weeks after training.
<p>3. Juanita wants volunteers to be able to groom cats. Part of the orientation is a practice session on grooming cats. Her learning objective is "The learner will be able to appropriately groom a cat, using the Catzarama Method, in 15 minutes." She wants to assess learners as they practice grooming on stuffed cats. Her last measure of evaluation will be grooming one of the shelter's resident cats.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Juanita distributes photo or diagram of cat during a PowerPoint video on grooming cats. After the video, learners take a blank copy of photo or diagram and write how they would groom on the diagram or photo. Trainer walks around looking as learners work. Do self-correction discussion when everyone is done. 2. Each learner is issued a stuffed cat and does a practice session on grooming. Trainer observes. Corrections as needed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each learner gets a real cat to groom. Partnered with an experienced volunteer groomer (2 trainees to one experienced volunteer). Experienced volunteers assess trainee and report to trainer. 2. Volunteers are evaluated annually on cat grooming skills. Reports of evaluation go to the coordinator of volunteer programs.



YOUR TURN

Select a training session you currently do or have seen done. List the learning objectives. List the formative and summative evaluation techniques currently used. Then list 2 new formative and two summative techniques for this session.

Learning Objective	Current Formative Techniques	Current Summative Techniques	New Formative Techniques	New Summative Techniques

Tips to Make Evaluation Go Smoothly

- Develop a personal commitment to use the results of the evaluation.
- Strive to be objective, realizing that evaluation is both objective and subjective.
- Be sure instructions on evaluations are clear.
- Design instruments that measure strengths, as well as weaknesses.
- Explain the use of data to those completing evaluations.
- Pre-test evaluations to refine the instrument (test, etc.) and assess the procedures after completing the pre-test. Make changes as needed.
- Help volunteers use the evaluation results as part of their overall learning goals.
- In collecting data, remember to look for the unexpected.
- Thank volunteers for helping evaluate the training and their own performance in it.
- Evaluation reports must include recommendations and plans to carry them out.
- If necessary conduct additional evaluations.



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