Facilitating Community Health Education Trainings

Jill Tregor

This chapter comprises three activities and one assessment for community health workers (CHWs) to expand their knowledge and build their skills in conducting community health education trainings. Health education trainings may be held anywhere that is comfortable for the audience and may be on topics ranging from managing high blood pressure, diabetes, or depression, to family planning, domestic violence, or stress management.

This chapter corresponds to, and is meant to be used with, Chapter 20, “Facilitating Community Health Education Trainings,” in Foundations for Community Health Workers, Second Edition.
CHWs are often called upon to provide trainings to clients and communities. Learners in City College of San Francisco’s (CCSF’s) CHW Certificate Program begin practicing how to create and facilitate trainings immediately upon beginning the program. They are regularly asked to prepare and present presentations on health topics intended to give their fellow learners the opportunity to become more knowledgeable. This requires learners to think about how to engage audiences as well as build on the skills and knowledge of their audience. Additionally, trainers build in opportunities for learners to help facilitate parts of the CHW training itself. Learners have opportunities to facilitate or co-facilitate icebreakers, role plays, and case studies, as well as to assess their instructor’s ability to effectively utilize a variety of learning methods that engage learners and support learning.

This guide is meant to be used when teaching/training Chapter 20 of *Foundations for Community Health Workers, Second Edition*. We have included step-by-step activities for key sections, not the entire chapter. We recommend reading Chapter 20 in *Foundations*, as the textbook provides more material about facilitating trainings, as well as a deeper explanation of concepts related to activities in this guide.

### Chapter at a Glance

**Facilitating Community Health Education Trainings**

### Activity: Learning Styles (70–80 Minutes)

This training activity supports learners to reflect on their prior learning experiences as a way to determine useful strategies for teaching clients and the community about health.

**Includes:**
- Learner Handout 20.1 A: Effective and Less Effective Teaching or Training Methods

**Learning Outcomes:**
- Identify approaches to teaching and training that have had a positive and negative effect on their own learning.
- Describe and analyze approaches to training commonly used by CHWs, including popular education, participatory learning, and problem-based learning.
### CHAPTER AT A GLANCE (continued)

#### Facilitating Community Health Education Trainings

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<th>LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
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| **ACTIVITY 20.2: TRAINING METHODS (45–60 MINUTES)** | ▶ Identify a variety of methods that CHWs may use when facilitating community-based trainings.  
▶ Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various facilitation methods. |
| This activity supports learners to identify a variety of effective training methods as a precursor to designing their own training activity.  
Small group activity and pair share  
Includes:  
⦁ Learner Handout 20.2 A: Training Methods  
⦁ For the Trainer 20.2 A: Training Methods Answer Key | |

| ACTIVITY 20.3: DESIGNING A SHORT TRAINING (60–90 MINUTES) | |
| This activity provides learners with an opportunity to work in small groups to design a 30-minute training. Learners will develop learning outcomes for the training and identify training methods to reach the outcomes.  
Small group work and large group presentation  
Includes:  
⦁ Learner Handout 20.3 A: Designing a Brief Training | ▶ Develop a brief training plan.  
▶ List specific learning outcomes for the training.  
▶ Select training methods that will meet the stated learning outcomes for the training. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ASSESSMENT 20.1: CHW TRAINING METHODS</strong></td>
<td>▶ This assessment is not graded.</td>
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<td>This reflective writing assessment asks learners to reflect upon the methods that trainers have used to teach them concepts and skills for working as a CHW and identify which were more or less effective for them.</td>
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ACTIVITIES

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Activity 20.1

70–80 MINUTES

MATERIALS NEEDED
- Laptop and projection equipment
- “Effective Teaching Strategies” presentation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/foodsafety/pdf/effective_teaching_strategies.ppt)
- Copies of “Learner Handout 20.1 A: Effective and Less Effective Teaching or Training Methods” (included at the end of this activity)
- Flip-chart paper and markers

TRAINER PREPARATION
- Review Chapter 20.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Learners will be able to:
- Identify approaches to teaching and training that have had a positive and negative effect on their own learning.
- Describe and analyze approaches to training commonly used by CHWs, including popular education, participatory learning, and problem-based learning.

Learning Styles

This training activity supports learners to reflect on their prior learning experiences as a way to determine useful strategies for teaching clients and the community about health. Learners will identify and discuss different approaches to learning depending on the content, audience, setting, and other issues.

Please note that this activity begins with the trainer facilitating an intentionally unsuccessful teaching demonstration. It is designed to spur and provoke thought and discussion among learners about approaches to teaching and learning.

1 Introduction

Frame this activity as an opportunity for learners to explore their own experiences with education and learning, both positive and negative. Explain that we can gain as much from understanding why some teaching approaches don’t work very well as we can from understanding why a specific teaching approach was effective for a learner.

2 Trainer Presentation and Large Group Discussion

Begin by discussing the value of using multiple approaches to teaching/training. As always, invite learners to share questions and comments as you make opening remarks such as the following:

- Every individual learns differently. This means that no one approach is best for everyone.
- Within a training session, it is generally recommended that you use more than one training method to engage different styles or ways of learning. This will help to keep learners engaged over a period of time. However, do not switch methods solely in order to say that you changed—do so based on the goals of various sections of a training.
Learning Styles (continued)

Facilitate further discussion by asking a question such as this:

⦁ What factors influence how people learn?
  ○ The training topic itself
  ○ The prior experience, knowledge, and skills of the participants
  ○ The identity (or identities) of the participants including gender, age, culture, language, education, past experiences, and many other factors that can be aspects of a person’s identity
  ○ The identity, experience, and background of the trainers
  ○ What the participants hope to learn
  ○ How the participants like to learn
  ○ The amount of time you have for the training
  ○ The resources you have available (money, space, etc.)
  ○ The location of the training

3 Counter Teaching Demonstration and Large Group Discussion

This step is designed to immerse students in a bad teaching/learning experience! You will intentionally create a counter, or negative, teaching moment in order to generate ideas and responses from your learners about what makes for a negative learning experience (and by implication or explicitly, what makes for a positive learning experience.) At the end of this step, you may want to tell the learners that they just had an experiential learning experience. We encourage you to have fun with this step and to clearly demonstrate the negative use of slides as a passive learning tool (we also wish to acknowledge that slide presentations can be used in different ways as an effective tool!).

Start the “Effective Teaching Strategies” slide presentation (or select a different presentation for this activity). Turn your back to the class, avoiding eye contact with the learners, and read the text on each slide word for word. We recommend reading quickly, with occasional mispronunciations, or mumbling, if you feel comfortable doing so. If there are questions from learners, you can say, “Could you hold that thought please?” and continue reading from the slides. Do not explain anything on the slides beyond what is written. It is important that you do not respond as you normally would, in a helpful way, to the learners!

Within a few slides presented in this manner, your point should be made. Students may already be making comments out loud, asking you to slow down or speak up, or even
Learning Styles (continued)

complaining about how you are presenting the material. This is a great time to stop and facilitate discussion among learners by asking questions such as these:

- What made this an effective or ineffective method of teaching?
- Have you had a similar experience as a learner before?
- What would you differently to improve the effectiveness of this presentation?

4 Small Group Activity

Assign learners to work in small groups of three to five. Distribute flip-chart paper, markers, and the learner handout to each group. Review the discussion questions. Ask each group to identify a recorder to take notes and a reporter who will report back the small group ideas to the larger group. Tell the learners that they will have 10 minutes to brainstorm ideas and come up with as many ideas as they can.

Circulate among small groups as they work to offer guidance as needed and to note down ideas to highlight during the large group discussion to follow.

5 Large Group Debrief

Draw two columns on the board or flip-chart paper, label one “More effective” and the other “Less effective.” Ask the small groups to take turns posting their flip-chart paper on the wall and summarizing key ideas recorded during their discussion. Ask the first team to report two examples each of more effective and less effective training methods and to write them under the corresponding column on the board. Ask the next small group to share any new examples that are different from what other groups have already reported. When all the groups have reported their findings, ask the learners to study the columns on the board and consider the following questions:

- Is there anything on the less effective learning list that is also on the more effective learning list? If so, what does that mean? What are some of the reasons that one person could find one way of learning effective whereas another person finds it an obstacle to learning?
- What themes do you notice when you consider each of the lists developed by your colleagues? Are there certain concepts related to teaching and learning that you see repeated by each group?
- Is there any connection between the lists you generated about more and less effective methods for teaching and learning and the concepts that we have been studying about client-centered practice?

You may wish to pose further prompting questions here, such as, “Is there a connection between your ideas and the concept of cultural humility, or strength-based practice, with the emphasis on power and autonomy?”
Learning Styles (continued)

6 Large Group Discussion

Once again, draw two columns on the board; label one “Harmful” and the other “Empowering.” Ask learners to share examples of how a learning experience might be harmful or have the potential for harm. Ask them to consider examples that they have experienced or witnessed. Be prepared to add a few of your own examples, if necessary.

For example, telling someone what to do, how to feel, or what to believe may be harmful to learning. It could hurt the relationship between the teacher and the learner as well as bring harm to people who attempt to follow this advice.

Next ask learners to share examples of how learning has the potential to be empowering, to foster real and meaningful change or transformation for an individual, a family, or a community. Ask them to consider examples that they have experienced or witnessed. Again, be prepared to add examples from your own professional training and experience.

For example, when an individual begins to see new possibilities for their health or their life, when families learn new ways to communicate or take care of each other, when communities come together to take action to create social change—these are the possibilities and promise attached to education and learning as conceived by Paulo Freire and others. Education can be liberating, and even revolutionary, rather than reinforce the status quo.

You may wish to connect some of the ideas shared by learners and recorded on the board with some of the techniques and theories presented in Chapter 20. These include popular education, adult learning theory, and problem-based learning. For example, if learners shared a more effective idea for teaching or learning that features the use of a case study or the use of a real life question or problem, you could point out that this is a good example of problem-based learning.

7 Reinforcement

Take a few minutes to reinforce key messages about facilitating trainings and the importance of utilizing the right teaching methods for a CHW’s audience. Reinforce messages shared by learners during the training activity, information from Foundations and other resources, and your own professional training and experience. Key messages to reinforce may include the following:

- Choices about the approaches to teaching and training should be based on considerations of the audience and the topic.
  - Who are the learners? What is their primary language? What level of education do they have? How old are they? What cultural concepts and concerns need to be considered?
  - Why are they interested in your topic?
  - What do they already know about your topic?
Learning Styles (continued)

- Who is the right person/people to teach the topic(s)?
- What are your goals for the training?

- There is no one right way to teach a topic and everyone learns in multiple ways.
- Learning is often successful if the learner feels connected to the material—the topic needs to matter to the learner, and the learner needs to feel that either they or their community will get some benefit from the material they are learning.
- It is best to use training methods that get learners actively involved in the process of learning. These provide them with opportunities to reflect, to share their experiences, to problem solve and demonstrate, to ask questions, and to voice their concerns and ideas.
- What gets called training or education has the potential to inflict significant harm on individuals and communities, but it also has the potential and promise of deep, lasting personal and social change. Training can lead to better health for community members and communities as a whole if done thoughtfully and with the intent of empowerment.
Learner Handout 20.1 A: Effective and Less Effective Teaching or Training Methods

Activity 20.1

Work together to brainstorm ideas—based on your own experiences—of effective and not-so-effective teaching or training methods. Record your answers on the flip-chart paper. Select a member of the group to share your ideas during the large group discussion. Give specific examples! In other words, don't just say, “visual learning,” but also give an example of something that was taught using a visual approach.

Discussion Questions:

1. What teaching or training methods or approaches (including attitudes and behaviors) have best helped you to learn about a subject or a skill? What approaches have worked best to help you to remember or understand a topic? What approaches kept you most interested?

2. What teaching or training methods have been least helpful for you to learn about a subject or skill? What approaches were dull? Not helpful? Confusing? Disrespectful?
Activity 20.2

**Training Methods**

This activity supports learners to identify a variety of effective training methods as the precursor to designing their own training activity. Learners will work in small groups to identify training methods and when to use them, and they will consider which techniques they would like to strengthen their skills to use.

1 **Introduction**

Frame this activity as an opportunity for learners to prepare for designing their own training, which they will be doing for a later training session. Briefly review Activity 20.1 by asking learners to share some of the training methods they identified that were more effective, and some that were less effective.

2 **Review of Training Methods**

Before beginning the small group portion of the activity, facilitate a brief review of Chapter 20. Review the three approaches commonly used in the field of public health to actively engage participants in learning: popular education, participatory learning, and problem-based learning. You may want to ask questions such as these:

- What are some of the similarities and differences between each of these approaches to learning?
- What are some strengths and weaknesses of each approach?
- Are there training approaches not identified here that you are interested in learning more about? How might you go about learning more?

3 **Small Group Work**

Assign learners to work in small groups of three to five, and distribute the learner handout, a piece of flip-chart paper, and one or two markers to each group. Clarify any questions learners may have about the group activity. Ask each group to identify one person...
Training Methods *(continued)*

to act as a recorder of their team’s ideas, and one person to act as the reporter when it is time for reporting back to the larger group. The group should record their answers on the flip-chart paper. Give groups 10 to 15 minutes to brainstorm and record their answers.

4 Small Group Report Back

Ask all small groups to post their lists at the front of the room. Have the first group share two or three training methods with the large group. Encourage the group to ask questions and to add information about when and why the method is most effective. Each subsequent small group will share two or three additional training methods that have not yet been identified.

5 Large Group Discussion

Remind learners that every method has advantages and limitations. Some methods may seem awkward to use until a facilitator has had a lot of practice with them, whereas other methods may seem instinctively positive and effective from the start. Additionally, some methods are much more effective with certain types of learners than with others or are less effective when learning about certain subjects. Continue to facilitate discussion by asking questions such as these:

- What were the methods that came up repeatedly? What is it about those methods that make them appealing to you?
- What is one method you would feel confident using if you needed to conduct a training right now?
- Were there any methods that were identified that you have concerns about? What are those concerns, and is there anything you could do to be able to use the method without encountering those challenges?
- How many different methods might you want to use in a 1-hour training?

This is an opportunity to talk about not over-complicating a training, or focusing too much on methods rather than the big picture (learning outcomes).

6 Professional Development

Ask learners to turn to a partner. We like creating an imaginary line down the middle of the room and telling all of those on one side to get up and find a partner on the other side. Ask everybody to share with their partner one technique in which they would like to build or strengthen their skills. What is one step they could take to become more familiar with using this method in the next six months?
Training Methods (continued)

**OPTION** If you like, you may ask learners to record their plan on a piece of paper and turn it in to you at the end of the session. Having an opportunity to see what each learner is interested in working on may influence choices you make in later lessons.

1 Reinforcement

Take a few minutes to reinforce key messages about training methods including information shared by learners during the training activity, from *Foundations* and other resources, and from your own professional training and experience. Key messages to reinforce may include the following:

- Selecting a training method should always be done after defining the audience, the training topic, and the learning outcomes. Which method or methods will best support this audience to achieve the identified outcomes?

- Always consider which types of training methods will provide your audience with opportunities to share the knowledge and skills that they already have and to apply new knowledge and skills, if possible, to relevant questions, problems, or tasks.

- Don’t give in to the temptation of filling a training with overly-complicated training methods or too many training methods. The methods you select won’t matter if they don’t engage your audience in active learning.

- Over the course of your career, you will witness and have opportunities to facilitate different types of trainings and to enhance training knowledge and skills.
Your group should identify at least ten types of training methods (such as lecture or role plays) that you think are effective. Draw a table like following one on the flip-chart paper to record your ideas. For each method on your list, identify the following:

1. When the method might be used. For example, a method might be used to give learners an opportunity to practice skills they have read about and discussed.

2. What makes the method effective. For example, one reason that role plays are a good method is that they provide a safe place for making mistakes and trying out new approaches. A learner can get feedback from their instructor and peers without fear that something they say or do is damaging a real client.

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<th>METHOD</th>
<th>WHEN TO USE</th>
<th>WHAT MAKES IT EFFECTIVE</th>
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Activity 20.2 For the Trainer 20.2 A: Training Methods Answer Key

This table lists methods and some responses to when to use them and what makes them effective. Please refer to Chapter 20 for more answers to this table.

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<tr>
<th>METHOD</th>
<th>WHEN TO USE</th>
<th>WHAT MAKES IT EFFECTIVE?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Role plays | To practice skills  
To positively demonstrate a skill  
To demonstrate how not to do something | Allows for immediate feedback  
Makes mistakes “safe”  
Provides a chance to practice what is being learned |
| 2. Small group discussion | To allow everyone to engage with or generate ideas  
To encourage groups to problem-solve together  
To ensure that all participants have a voice | Allows many different voices to participate and be heard  
Allows for more interaction having to do with the ideas being shared than would be possible in a larger group setting |
| 3. Lectures | In a classroom setting, though for short lengths of time only | Covers large amounts of information in a short amount of time |
| 4. Games | | |
| 5. Use of films and video | | |
| 6. Case studies | | |
| 7. Interactive games (i.e., Jeopardy) | | |
| 8. One-on-one coaching | | |
| 9. Hands-on participation | | |
| 10. Brainstorms | | |
| 11. Gallery walks or graffiti sheets | | |
| 12. Forced choice or continuums | | |
| 13. Debates | | |
| 14. Other | | |
Designing a Short Training

This activity provides learners with an opportunity to work in small groups to design a 30-minute training. Learners will develop learning outcomes for the training and identify training methods to reach the outcomes.

Before the training session, determine if you will ask all small groups to address the same topic or assign groups to develop trainings to address a range of topics. Ideally, these topics should be something that learners have some knowledge about, such as the following:

- Skills for stress management
- Healthy eating
- Increasing physical activity
- Managing depression

Introduction

Frame this activity as an opportunity for learners to practice developing a plan for a 30-minute training on a health topic. Learners will work in small groups to develop learning outcomes, identity the training methods they will use to meet those learning outcomes, and facilitate a 5-minute presentation to their peers about the training they design. Encourage learners to draw from their own experience, prior training sessions, and the textbook as they develop their training plan.

Facilitate a brief discussion among learners by asking questions such as these:

- What are key elements of a training plan?
- How many of you have helped to develop a health education training before? Ask for a show of hands.
- What did you learn from this experience?
Designing a Short Training (continued)

2 Small Group Activity
Assign learners to work in small groups of four to six learners. Distribute and review the learner handout, making sure that each group understands the context of the training they will be designing and the health topic they will address. Review the key steps that they are responsible for developing.

Take time to review the guidelines for their 5-minute presentation about their training plan. These presentations should highlight the following:

● One learning outcome
● One training method they have will use to achieve the learning outcome
● How they will build upon the knowledge and skills of the audience

Before small groups begin to develop their plans, we encourage you to briefly review how to develop a learning outcome, referring to the content provided in Chapter 20. A well-written learning outcome should be a simple statement about the knowledge and skills that participants will learn. It should be as specific as possible.

Explain to learners that although they will be brainstorming two answers for the outcomes, methods, and skills building, they will only present one of each to the large group.

Circulate among small groups as they work to provide additional guidance and support as necessary and to help them to stay on task.

3 Small Group Report Back
Ask each small group to take no more than 5 minutes to share the key highlights of their training plan following the guidelines already provided.

Remind learners that each small group member is expected to participate in the presentation. Explain that you will raise your hand or call out when the group has 1 minute left to wrap up their presentation. Even if the group is not done, call time, and stop their presentation.

After each presentation is completed, make room for just one or two questions from other learners (in order to keep the presentations moving along).

4 Large Group Discussion
Facilitate discussion among all learners by asking questions such as these:

● What did you learn about establishing learning outcomes for a training?
● Were some training methods selected by more than one group?
  ○ What training methods were these?
  ○ Why do you think that these methods were so popular?
Designing a Short Training (continued)

- What aspect of this activity was most challenging for your group?
- What did you learn from this activity that you would apply on the job to develop a health education training?
- Do you have any outstanding questions or concerns about training?

5 Reinforcement

Take a few minutes to reinforce key messages about designing a training including ideas shared by learners during the training activity, information from Foundations and other resources, and your own professional training and experience. Key messages to reinforce may include the following:

- An effective training plan should be based on
  - Knowing who the audience is and what they most want to learn
  - Understanding the audience’s prior level of experience, knowledge, and skills, if possible
  - A clearly focused learning outcome or outcomes that detail what the audience will walk away from the training with in terms of knowledge and skills

- Successful trainings
  - Build upon the knowledge, experience, and skills of learners
  - Use training methods that are a good fit for the audience and will help them achieve the learning outcomes
  - Are not crammed too full of methods, but allow space and time for the audience to breathe, reflect, and share their ideas

- Engage in ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance your training skills over time.

- Attending trainings as an audience member allows you to carefully observe what the trainers do and how the audience reacts. What were the learning outcomes for the training? What training methods were used? How successful were the trainings at engaging the audience? Did the methods support the audience to gain knowledge and skills and meet the learning outcomes?
Activity 20.3 Learner Handout 20.3 A: Designing a Brief Training

Team members: ____________________________________________________________

The health topic for your training is ________________________________________.

The audience/learners for your training are people at a community center who are interested in your topic because it is relevant to their lives.

1. **List the learning outcomes(s).** What is the outcome you want to achieve in this training? When the training is completed, what will the audience members know and/or know how to do?
   
   A. ________________________________________________________________
   
   B. ________________________________________________________________

2. Describe two methods that you will use to engage learners and support them in achieving the learning outcomes you established.

   A. Method: _________________________________________________________
      Why did you choose this method?____________________________________

   B. Method: _________________________________________________________
      Why did you choose this method?____________________________________

3. Describe how your training will build upon the knowledge and skills that your audience already has.

   A. ________________________________________________________________

   B. ________________________________________________________________

**GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING BACK TO THE LARGE GROUP**

- All group members must participate in the report back.
- Your group has 5 minutes to present your ideas.
- Your presentation will include:
  - One learning outcome
  - One training method you will use to reach the learning outcome
  - One approach you will use to build on the knowledge and skills that the audience already has about the training topic
We have included an assessment that covers important skills for this chapter. There is not an assessment for every activity or for every learning outcome in this chapter. We encourage you to adapt this or add any other assessments from your own resources.

**ASSESSMENT 20.1: CHW Training Methods.**

- This reflective writing assessment asks learners to reflect upon the methods that trainers have used to teach them concepts and skills for working as a CHW and to identify which were more or less effective for them. This assessment is not graded.
Assessment 20.1  CHW Training Methods

Your name: ____________________________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________________________

Please reflect upon the methods that trainers have used to teach you concepts and skills for working as a CHW. This is not a graded assignment but an opportunity for you to provide constructive feedback about the quality of your training experience so far.

Please answer both questions and be as specific as possible in describing the training methods and in explaining why they were effective or not so effective for you as a learner.

1. Please identity one training method or activity that was highly effective and engaging for you as a learner. Describe the training method/activity as clearly as possible, and explain why you found it so effective/engaging. How did this training help to prepare you for your work as a CHW?

2. Please describe one training method or activity used in the CHW training program that was less effective for you as a learner. Describe the activity clearly, and explain why you feel that it was not so effective or engaging.