

Who comes to your workshops?

Written by Administrator

Wednesday, 11 January 2012 20:18 - Last Updated Tuesday, 14 February 2012 16:54

It may be an oversimplification, yet I have found thinking of learners as one of 3 types can be useful in helping facilitate a more productive and positive experience for the group.

Participants



These people come to your workshops with well-defined intentions, a willingness to learn and the desire to support others in their learning quest. They contribute positive energy to the workshop, manage themselves well and focus on both their learning needs and the learning needs of others. They are focused, active and enjoy a variety of workshop activities. Their wisdom and experience will bring new insights that add much value to the product and process of the workshop.

Passives

If passive people were cars, they'd be stuck in neutral. Usually they are pleasant people who pose a motivational rather than a management issue to the trainer. They come with lower expectations and prefer to play the role of observer. They are the vacationers. Their lower energy is not a burden to the group but it can be frustrating to a trainer. If you could get inside their heads you might hear; "Don't bug me, just let me enjoy the class with my colleagues. Yes it's true I won't be contributing much thinking or ideas to the class but I won't create problems for you. If I get one or two ideas from the workshop, that will be fine."

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Prisoners

These folks will drain energy from you and the group. Prisoners will surface at workshops for many reasons; mandatory training, low staff morale, they feel they're the subject matter expert, personal crises, poor timing, overworked, difficulty finding the training location, certain other people in attendance, and so on. Whatever the reason, the negative luggage they bring can pose a challenge to both the trainer and other attendees. Some prisoners are more private by nature so they usually restrict their influence to the subgroup. Other prisoners are more public and can become very visible to the whole group.

Here's a summary chart on the three types of workshop attendees

Behaviour

Participant

Passive

Prisoner

Attitude to workshop

Expectant

Neutral

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Hesitant to resist

Want from other learners?

Relationship

Friendship

Partnership

Attitude to workshop events

Supportive

Non-committal

Disruptive

Manage individual needs by

Involvement

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Guidance

Consistency

Contributions to group

Energy

Pleasant

Tension

Trainer deals with them

Navigating

Stimulating

Collaborating

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Two questions might emerge for you at this point.

How does one proactively manage the different types of learners?

What about the status of the trainer? How do you keep yourself as a 'participant'?

For responses to these questions, refer to 3 blogs:

"Managing Passives"

"Managing Prisoners"

"Manage Your Status"