

Train-the-Trainers Learning Strategy

Today you will observe, learn, and practice elements of a workshop format that can be used to help campus and community partners develop enhanced skills essential to creating service-learning partnerships. The basic approach is to share what has been learned about the features of effective partnerships and what strategies help partners move toward success. This approach emphasizes the exploration of common and distinctive goals as a way of clarifying expectations, and a shared approach to planning, teaching, and assessing partnerships in a way that focuses on the mutually beneficial relationship more than any individual project or activity. In this way, we learn as partners that projects and students may come and go, but our interaction is sustained through our knowledge of each other's capacity and needs, and our commitment to exchanging expertise and knowledge in many different ways over time.

Basic Organization of Workshop Elements

- Learn key terms and core concepts
- Focus participants on importance of shared goal development as foundation of effective partnerships
- Learn and practice effective practices for strengthening and sustaining partnerships
 - Focus on partnership relationship more than individual activities
- Link service-learning objectives to partnership design; students as bridge
- Recognize and cope with the inhibitions/limitations/challenges of academic culture and suggest ways to overcome same
- Learn strategies for actively involving community in SL planning and teaching
- Learn and practice strategies for aligning SL activities with learning objectives
- Role of assessment in building and strengthening partnerships
- Resources for further information

Suggestions for Workshop Replication

- This is a workshop that is most successful when done over four hours with two short breaks or split over a meal in the middle.

- The setting should be round tables with space in the room or nearby for small groups to work together.
- The most effective workshops bring campus and community partners (and students if possible) together.
- The program intersperses short periods of lecture with intense small group work; the emphasis is on teaching a few concepts and then encouraging participants to practice the application of those concepts to their projects and partnerships. The interactive work activities should be given 20-30 minutes to work and then just 5-10 minutes to share in brainstorming mode. The idea isn't to have everyone hear all of everyone else's work as much as to practice the techniques that they can more fully develop later within their own partnership.
- The design of the program encourages participants to continue working on a partnership assessment plan after the workshop is concluded, thus fostering the continued use and application of partnership techniques and strategies.
- A good idea would be to reconvene participants several weeks after the workshop and encourage the sharing of goals, activities, and assessment ideas along with new strategies for partnership operation. An alternative would be to hold a conference call or to at least exchange documents online so as to share ideas.
- You might wish to assign one or two of the resource readings ahead of time to enhance preparation for the workshop.
- Involving both a campus and a community partner in facilitating the workshop would be ideal.

End-of-the-Day Reflection Question:

What were your own reactions to today's (albeit accelerated) workshop? When were you excited/eager, uncomfortable or very clear, wanted to ask more questions, felt skeptical? This reflection may help you anticipate how you might need to adjust the workshop elements, especially the time for each segment, for your own colleagues.