

Appropriate training approaches and activities. Training in National Service programs is based heavily on interactive and experiential learning, with activities that emphasize demonstration, practice, and peer teaching.

To Do: Let the trainer know that you expect experiential learning techniques (*Starting Strong*, p. 85), and be very clear that this means more than simply question and answer time after lecture. Ask the guest trainer how much time will be spent on lecture and how much on training activities. Go over the session agenda, and discuss specific training approaches. Feel free to specify how many activities you want included in the session, and to suggest topics or focus areas.

Scope of training. Sometimes guest trainers try to cram in too much information, which can lead to information overload and reduce time for experiential learning.

To Do: Work with the guest trainer to identify a few major points to be made or skills to be presented and practiced. Ask him/her to develop those few points with experiential activities and to provide a list of supplemental reference materials for additional information.

ROLES FOR GUESTS WHO ARE NOT TRAINERS

Guests are often invited to assist with sessions based on their expert knowledge, relationship to the program, past support, or reputation — even though they may not have training skills. Because these individuals are important to your program and your participants, consider carefully how to involve them. Include them in meaningful and appropriate roles such as having them:

- ☞ Co-facilitate a session with an experienced trainer
- ☞ Participate in an informal roundtable
- ☞ Give advice about training content
- ☞ Serve on a moderated panel with other experts
- ☞ Hand out awards during graduation
- ☞ Give welcome greetings before a training session
- ☞ Provide reference materials

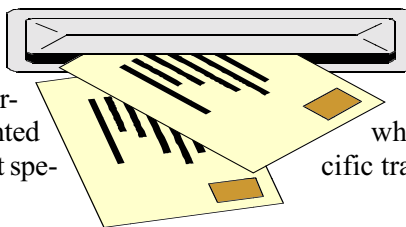
ACTIVITY: PERSONAL LETTER ACTION PLAN

Purposes:

To give participants the opportunity to set goals. To encourage participants to incorporate presented material into practical applications in their project sites.

Instructions:

At the end of a training session, have participants addressed to themselves about the training topic. two or three months in the future. In the letter, par- themselves writing to reflect on how they implemented training. Also facilitate participant discussion about spe- skills, and attitudes each of them has attained.



write a one-page letter
This letter will be dated
participants should imagine
what they learned during
cific training-related knowledge,

For example, consider a diversity training session with learning objectives focused on developing respectful relationships with an economically and racially diverse immigrant community for a literacy-based program. Encourage individuals to write about an imaginary tutoring visit they will have carried out with the relevant population and how diversity played a role in developing relationships. Have them describe what happened, what they did, what they thought and felt, and how the training — through knowledge, skills, and attitude development — helped them deal with the situation.

To process this activity, have participants share responses in small groups or in a structured large group discus- sion. Facilitate group reflection based on the stories people choose to share. This activity helps participants learn to plan how they will apply what they learned in training as well as identify what they may still need to learn related to the training topic.

Follow-up:

Seal the letters in self-addressed envelopes, and keep them. A month later, pass out the envelopes during a meeting or training session. Facilitate a discussion that compares their reflections with their actual experiences and relates them to program or individual goals.