Unit 6: Training Programmes

INTRODUCTION

Many organisations, providers of services and commodities, have invested time and money to improve the productivity of their human resources. This is done largely through training programmes.

Training of teachers will form an integral part of your job as an inspector. This unit is designed to assist you to plan and execute training programmes, and to institute follow-up activities.

The effectiveness of your training programmes will depend largely on how well you practise these key skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:
- identify needs and prioritise them
- design a programme for a training session
- plan and conduct workshops
- design evaluation instruments to assess the effectiveness of training
- plan and carry out follow-up programmes

PURPOSE OF TRAINING

Training is important for the professional growth of teachers. Can you think of reasons why there is a need to conduct training programmes?

It is noted that training is conducted for multiple reasons. Some people conduct training to improve the quality of teaching. This means that teachers are instructed on the methodology, the content and techniques that relate to certain subjects. Others conduct training for newly appointed teachers. These training programmes will address policy guidelines, schemes of work, continuous assessment, lesson planning and issues relating to the state of subjects in schools.

You might also have noted that, changes in a syllabus and the curriculum are normally followed by a series of workshops. These training programme are meant to familiarize both new and serving teachers with curricular changes and other innovations.

There is always a need for serving teachers to receive training even though the curriculum may not have changed. During these workshops, teachers share ideas, and they are also provided with guidance during training. Training also provides serving teachers with opportunities to reflect on the work they do at their schools and they are further provided with an opportunity to receive positive criticism of their work.

Training is also conducted to address any other identified needs that may hamper the learning/teaching process. These needs might have been identified by the school, by yourself the inspector, by the school community or by any other agent.

COMMENT

Look back at the five reasons why training is conducted:

* to improve the quality of teaching
* to help new teachers
* to inform teachers of curricular changes and innovations
* to provide training and guidance to serving teachers
* to address identified needs

IDENTIFYING TRAINING NEEDS

Current thinking on staff development focuses on the need to involve teachers in deciding on issues to be addressed in their training. It will therefore be important for you to identify the correct needs when planning a programme.

In the face of limited financial resources, it will not be possible for you to address all the needs at any one time, therefore it will be necessary for you to decide on the order of importance or urgency of the issues to be addressed. Obviously, you will need to focus on these first and leave the rest to a later date or until more funds are available.

COMMENT

A possible starting point could be to ask each headteacher to complete a questionnaire containing the following points:

* List what you think are the causes of poor performance in your school.
* How do you think you will try to improve the situation?
* What measures have you put in place to address the problem?
* What is your policy on the amount of written work, homework and number of tests per term?
* Does your policy conform to regional guidelines?
* How often do you:
  - sit in lessons?
  - collect pupils' exercise books?
  - look at schemes, lesson plans and attainment records?
  - attend departmental meetings or ask to see minutes of such meetings?
  - call departmental meetings?

- Does your school keep past examination papers for all subject?
- How committed are your teachers to discharging their responsibilities?

This type of instrument, like any other, has its advantages and disadvantages. What are the advantages of using a questionnaire?

Analysis of Examination Results

Examination results are common indicators of teacher performance and also of the learning in schools. You would agree that much more attention is given to external examination results. However, internal (school based) examinations are equally important.

When analysing examination results, a lot of information about performance in subject areas and in individual schools can be obtained. These may prompt a need to mount a workshop to address any identified shortcomings. However, further planning might be needed to address other specific aspects.

Reflecting On Inspectors' Reports

As you have noted in Unit 4 of this module, reports contain valuable information on the teaching, administration and performance of teachers. They also contain useful recommendations from inspectors. These will, in many instances, identify needs for further training for the teachers and schools in question. They are very useful instruments for needs identification.

Plenary Meetings

You might also find it necessary to call teachers to a meeting and explore their problems through interviews. This is more practical when planning a school-based programme or a cluster programme.

Why do you think it is more difficult for other types of programmes?

TYPES OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Part of your job, as an inspector, is to mount workshops for teachers, school heads and other stakeholders. You have at your disposal quite a number of training programmes. The type and nature will vary depending on the problems to be addressed. You have probably attended training programmes in one form or another during your career.

Activity 6c

List the types of training programmes that you have attended and also list others that you think would be appropriate to the needs of schools.

COMMENT

The list you made may include the following:
- short duration programmes
- extended programmes
- school-based programmes

- cluster programmes
- departmental programmes
- subject programmes

Short duration programmes are often meant to address urgent matters. Normally, they last for a day or part of a day. If held at a central venue, time should be provided for participants to get back to their stations on the same day.

Extended programmes on the other hand can last from a few days to weeks. The programme normally has several issues to be addressed. Sometimes provision is made for participants to visit specific places to reinforce some aspects of the workshop.

Subject programmes normally focus on the subject content and its mode of delivery, the quality and quantity of written work, pupil performance in the respective subject and general day-to-day matters which affect the teaching of the subject.

Departmental programmes as the name suggests, are organised to discuss departmental issues. They may be internal or external. They are normally scheduled outside teaching time. The content of the programme can address both administrative and instructional issues.

School-based programmes normally address issues peculiar to that school and may involve all or part of the staff. Resource persons could be drawn from within or from outside the school.

Cluster programmes involve participants from a group of neighbouring schools and the venue could be one of the schools or some central place. Quite often, issues pertaining to the cluster are discussed and like school-based programmes, resource persons could be drawn locally, from another cluster or from the district or regional office.

TYPES OF TRAINING TECHNIQUES

Generally, in training, knowledge and skills are acquired for a specific purpose. It is therefore imperative that each training programme is serving a specific purpose. The training technique to be used in such a programme should then suit the purpose of the programme. It should be designed around the identified needs. Note that research into how adults learn, emphasises the need for the active involvement of participants.

Activity 6d

In a typical training session, which training techniques would you use?
Give advantages and disadvantages of each technique.

COMMENT

You may have chosen to include some of the following in your workshop:
- participatory
- lecture
- role play
- case study
- film/video
- field trips
- demonstrations

- group work
- games
- ice breakers
- simulations
- exposition

Let us look at one advantage and one disadvantage of some of these techniques:

Participatory Technique:

This is a technique in which participants are actively involved.

Advantage: encourages participation and therefore learning by all.
Disadvantage: difficult to manage, especially for new trainers.

Lecture:

Information usually dispensed through a monologue.

Advantage: maximum information given in minimum time.
Disadvantage: reduces participants to passive receptors of information.

Role Play:

An exercise/or game in which participants act the part of another character.

Advantage: members participate actively.
Disadvantage: takes time to prepare (time-consuming).

Case Studies:

These are write ups drawn from real life situations e.g. newspapers etc.

Advantage: these are very useful because they put participants in a real situation.
Disadvantage: may drag on for too long; there might not be clear cut conclusions.

Field Trips:

Advantage: expose participants to actual situations.
Disadvantage: expensive and time-consuming.

Ice Breaker:

A strategy used to relieve inhibition at the start of an activity.

Advantage: very good starters of a new topic.
Disadvantage: can be misinterpreted.

PLANNING A TRAINING PROGRAMME

Planning is one of the most crucial steps in conducting a successful training programme. Some of the aspects to consider are:

- rationale for the training programme
- workshop objectives
- resources

The rationale for any programme is an expression of the purpose for mounting that programme. It is expressed in precise and clear language. Sometimes background information leading to the purpose is given.

Example:

The rationale for a workshop organised for newly qualified teachers could read "For any teachers in the district schools who are new and are not able to exploit the resources around the school for teaching purposes. The workshop will equip participants with skills of improvisation."

Objectives are statements of intent about what participants will gain from the workshop in terms of knowledge, skills or attitudes.

Activity 6e

Several factors are included under resources. List them.

COMMENT

For you to mount a training programme, you have to think about the venue and what is available there in terms of facilities and training materials, accommodation and regular meals for both resource persons and participants. Also consider funding to cover travel and subsistence for both participants and resource persons. You may consider designing a checklist to avoid leaving out important aspects. When considering a venue, take note that government institutions are preferred, to cut down on expenses.

Activity 6f

Think of a workshop you may want to conduct. You have identified the key issues that you want to address. You have decided to run a two day instructional workshop that will address the role and importance of home work, drawing up a scheme of work, lesson presentation, lesson planning and any other issues raised by teachers. You have targeted new teachers in your area of jurisdiction.

It is assumed that the programme takes two full days starting at 08:00 and ending at 17:00.

- what is the best time to conduct that workshop?
- what is a reasonable time to send out invitations to participants?

Give reasons for your answers.

- draw up a workshop programme for the two days.

COMMENT

Since this is an induction workshop for new teachers, it is ideal to conduct it before the actual teaching starts. However, in practice this is impossible in many schools. It is suggested that these workshops are planned some time at the beginning of the first term of school (the term they are recruited).

Sending workshop invitations is a very tricky issue. In the first place, it is necessary for teachers to have the information in time to be able to plan properly, even for the days

they will be away from school. It is also true though that if too long a time lapses after the invitations are sent out, some teachers may forget about them. It is, therefore, suggested that a reasonable balance be maintained or alternatively a reminder be sent as the date closes in.

Your programme may look like this one below:

DAY 1

08:00	-	08:30	Registration and administrative aspects
08:30	-	09:00	Aims, objectives and scope of the workshop
09:00	-	10:00	Discussions
10:00	-	10:30	BREAK
10:30	-	13:00	Drawing up a scheme of work
13:00	-	14:00	BREAK
14:00	-	16:30	Lesson planning
16:30	-	17:00	Evaluation of the day

DAY 2

08:00	-	10:00	Lesson presentation
10:00	-	10:30	BREAK
10:30	-	13:00	Lesson presentation continues
13:00	-	14:00	BREAK
14:00	-	15:00	The role of homework
15:00	-	16:00	Lesson evaluation
16:00	-	16:40	Open discussion and action planning
16:40	-	17:00	Workshop evaluation

COMMENT

Time budgeting should allow for a natural flow of events, with minimum interruptions. You should make every effort to stick to the programme all the time. Any loss of time due to inevitable interruption should be compensated for.

CONDUCTING A TRAINING PROGRAMME

The success of a training programme depends, in the main, on the trainer's skills, among which are: empathy, flexibility and versatility.

Activity 6g

Give at least six more desirable trainer qualities that would help you as an inspector to improve your training programmes.

- ....
- ....
- ....
- ....
- ....
- ....

From the above list you have provided, select three and write down the merits of each.

COMMENT

Did your list include the following:

- subject knowledge
- creativity
- good sense of humour
- kindness
- liveliness
- tact/diplomacy
- non-threatening behaviour
- professionalism

Empathy means that trainers can put themselves in the position of the teachers (workshop participants). This enables them (inspectors) to understand what is practically possible from the side of the teachers. This will further make training meaningful and applicable.

Flexibility refers to the trainer's ability to change programmes and accommodate activities to cater for arising needs as the programme progresses. At some point, trainers may realise that participants are losing interest in an activity. They should be in a position to adjust the programme and do something else.

Versatility on the other hand refers to the skills of responding to arising needs that were not planned for. This means that trainers have to have the ability to address several issues relating to their work and to the teachers' responsibilities.

These qualities hinge mainly on the interpersonal skills of the trainer. An inappropriate approach to the participants will result in unsuccessful training. Remember you are dealing with adults and you need to be flexible in your approach to training.

EVALUATING A TRAINING PROGRAMME

There are two main types of evaluation, formative and summative. Formative evaluation is carried out as the programme progresses and adjustments are made accordingly. Summative evaluation on the other hand "summarises" the programme. A summary of the programme is made, which looks at all aspects of the workshop. This is normally done at the end of the training programme.

Evaluation involves making value judgements about a process, its success and/or effectiveness. For evaluation to be useful, all conclusions drawn should be supported by quoting examples of actual instances.

Some reasons for continued evaluation are to:

- improve on the design and implementation
- check whether the identified needs have been met
- check whether objectives have been achieved
- check whether the presentation was effective.
- give direction in formulating follow-up activities.

To reach the stated reasons for conducting an evaluation, it is important that the instrument used satisfies the purpose. Such an instrument should consider all key aspects of the programme.

COMMENT

There are several types of questionnaires that can be used to elicit quick responses from the participants. Sometimes trainers prefer to use a questionnaire in which provision is made for comments. This way, respondents are given the opportunity to open up and more information is collected. One such simple instrument could be framed as follows: Please be honest and forthright in answering the following questions. Your answers will be used to modify future courses.

- Have you found the workshop useful?
- Which parts of the workshop were most useful to you?
- Which parts should have been omitted?
- On which section of the course would you have liked more discussions or instructions?
- How do you think the workshop could be improved?
- In your honest opinion, were the personnel, methods and materials used relevant to your needs?
- Make any further workshop-related comments you wish.

Besides the questionnaires that are commonly used, you could also use tests and quizzes, behavioural analysis and participants' observations. If you are experiencing problems with any of them please consult your supervisor for a discussion.

WRITING A WORKSHOP REPORT

Workshop reports are valuable resource materials, not only for yourself but for the participants, your supervisor and the sponsor as well. The workshop report is just another type of report and requires the same skills you learned in Unit 4. Among the aspects you may wish to highlight in your report, are:

- the degree of participation
- the achievement of objectives
- the attendance
- the pacing during conducting the workshop
- the logistics
- the effectiveness of training techniques.

COMMENT

Compare your reasons to the following: (remember that this is not an exhaustive list and is only meant to give you an idea of what was required):

Attendance

Inspectors must keep a record of those teachers who have participated in workshops. Comparative studies could be conducted between those who attended training on a certain aspect and those who did not. This record will inform employers which teachers/ trainers are participating in staff development and upgrading courses. When and if similar programmes are conducted, it will be easy to identify the target group of participants, because the ones that are already trained, are known.

The Degree of Participation

This aspect should be included to inform the trainers whether the workshop was interesting or not. High level of participation implies high degree of interest. When this is known, further training programmes could be adjusted accordingly. It is believed that participants learn more if they are actively participating.

A good report is not necessarily measured by its length, it is the quality that matters. Furthermore, the ability to write reports in a scholarly manner is desirable. Reports should be brief, logical and address only what they are intended to.

FOLLOW-UP

Follow-up activities are important in order to evaluate the impact of the training programme. You will be interested to know if the skills acquired at the workshop are practised. However, due to constraints of time and money, it may not be possible for you to visit all the schools as soon as you would like.

Activity 6j

Write down at least three alternative ways of ensuring that skills acquired during a training session will be implemented without you visiting each institution. Also write down advantages and disadvantages of each alternative method.

COMMENT

It is hoped that your list might have included some of the alternative methods listed below. If not, then add them to your list.

*   shifting the monitoring responsibility to headteachers
*   peer monitoring in clusters of schools
*   drawing up individual action plans for each participant, copies of which would be available to inspectors and headteachers
*   making an agreement, copies of which would be available to supervisors.

Shifting the Monitoring Responsibility to Headteachers

Instead of you doing follow-up activities, the headteachers have to make sure that expected assignments are carried out. They then check on the accuracy and provide further direction.

The advantage is that the support is on the spot and is readily available. There will be no additional expenses on transport. This will be done on the job and no work will be left unattended.

The disadvantage is that some headteachers may not be conversant with the topic in question.

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Peer Monitoring in Clusters of Schools

This alternative method, puts the responsibility of checking on progress and accuracy on the shoulders of co-participants. This means that teachers from neighbouring schools visit each other, sometimes during lessons and sometimes after classes, to hold discussions, monitor teaching and evaluate assignments.

The advantage is that distances are minimal and can be managed. These are peers and therefore open to each other. All participants are conversant with the topics since they all attended the same workshop.

The disadvantages are that some participants may not be committed to the task, thus making it difficult for others. Some schools too, may stand in the way of this arrangement if they are not committed to staff development.

Drawing up Individual Action Plans

During the closing stages of the workshop each participant draws up an Action Plan. The participant monitors the progress but it is advisable to give a copy to the headteacher to assist. If the headteacher is not accessible, a colleague will suffice. The key issue here is commitment.

Activity 6k

Look at the Action Plan form (page 50). Copy it and complete one for yourself to make use of the skills learned in this unit. Give a copy to your supervisor.

Making an Agreement

Usually an agreement is made between two parties. Participants agree to perform stipulated tasks. This type of commitment is entered into between the teacher and yourself as trainer, the teacher and the headteacher or the teacher and pupils. The good thing about this agreement is that the progress is to co-monitored by the agreeing parties.

SUMMARY

Now that you have completed the unit, please reflect on the learning outcomes. The unit has focused on staff development, the importance of identifying training needs and prioritising them. It has suggested a variety of training techniques that you could use to achieve the desired results. Finally, the unit has given you some advice on how to organise follow-up activities. The skills intended for you in this unit are not a complete package, it will be necessary for you to refine them as you gain experience in your new job.

REFERENCES

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ACTION PLAN

ACTION	KEY STEPS	DEADLINE