

# BEST PRACTICES FOR ABE PRESENTATIONS



## A Workbook to Design Your Presentation

Being a presenter doesn't mean you know everything about your subject. It just means you have something to share. It could be something you've learned, something you've tried in your classroom, or something else.

Presenting can be intimidating, but it doesn't have to be. This workbook guides you through the process of designing your presentation, so you can head into your session with confidence.

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## Presentation Objectives

### What are objectives?

Like teaching a lesson in your classroom, objectives identify what you want your audience to get out of your presentation. In the classroom, your objectives are specifically about the skills you want your students to learn. The difference in a presentation is that you may be teaching new skills or sharing information. Either way it is essential that you know exactly what you want your audience to take away from your presentation.

It's important to remember that objectives are *not* activities (Don't let your brain take you there, yet)

### What do strong objectives look like?

LESS is MORE! Limit the amount of information you present to give participants the opportunity to engage with it. Your audience will benefit more from a chance to really understand or try out a smaller more complete set of information.

### Sample Objectives

Topic	Participants will be able to...
Communicative Language Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain what communicative language teaching is and reasons for using it</li> <li>• Use several communicative reading &amp; writing activities</li> <li>• Use several communicative speaking &amp; listening activities</li> </ul>
Error Correction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose which errors to respond to based on the purpose of an activity</li> <li>• Determine when to use subtle or explicit error correction</li> <li>• Use strategies for error correction that increase the amount of learning that takes place</li> </ul>
Tutoring a Literacy Level Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the skills new adult readers need to learn in order to become successful readers</li> <li>• Use strategies to communicate with low level English speakers</li> <li>• Create or find really low level reading materials &amp; writing activities</li> <li>• Access resources to continue to learn best practices for teaching adult emergent readers</li> </ul>

### Planning Questions

- What skills or knowledge will my audience leave with?
- What will my audience know or be able to do based on your content?
- What does my audience already know?

## PRESENTATION ACTIVITIES

### Assumptions of Adult Learning (Knowles et al. 2005: 64–68)

#### 1. THE NEED TO KNOW

*Adults need to know why they need to learn something before setting out to learn it.*

#### 2. THE LEARNERS' SELF CONCEPT

*Adults believe they are responsible for their own decisions and lives. They need to be seen by others and treated by others as capable of self-direction.*

#### 3. THE ROLE OF THE LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES

*Adults come into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from that of youths. Teachers can expect a wider range of individual differences among adult learners than among younger learners.*

#### 4. READINESS TO LEARN

*Adults become ready to learn those things they need to know and be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations.*

#### 5. ORIENTATION TO LEARNING

*Adults are life-centered, task-centered, and problem-centered in their orientation to learning. They are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that learning will help them perform tasks or deal with real problems. They learn best in the context of application to real-life situations.*

#### 6. MOTIVATION

*Adults are responsive to some external motivators (better jobs, promotions, higher salaries, for example), but the most potent motivators are internal pressures (the desire for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life, etc.)*

## Balancing Participant & Presenter Roles in a Presentation

[Participant-Centered]

[Facilitator-Centered]

In a well-balanced presentation, participants meaningfully engage with facilitator-provided content.



### Planning Questions

1. *As facilitator...* What new or interesting content am I bringing to the presentation? What interesting perspective am I sharing? What model am I sharing? What am I bringing to the table?
2. *For participants...* How will participants use their varying levels of professional expertise to engage with the model, concept, or perspective that I am sharing? How will they connect their previous knowledge to what I am sharing?
3. What will the facilitator-participant partnership look like for this presentation? Considering the objectives of the presentation, is this balance effective?
4. What activities will participants engage in? How will you provide instructions for completing these activities? Remember to explain what they will do and why it is valuable, model how it should be done, and guide the participants to be able to practice independently.

### EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES IN WHICH PARTICIPANTS ENGAGE WITH NEW CONTENT

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Presentation Activity Ideas

These activities have been successfully used with other professional development presentations, so they're a great place to use or start thinking about which activities to use in your presentation.

### WARM UPS

#### 5 Things

Participants work in pairs or small groups to create a list of 5 ideas related to the workshop. Examples: 5 reasons for multi-level classes, 5 misconceptions about writing, or 5 skills emergent readers need to learn.

#### Think, (Write), Pair, Share

Give participants a thought provoking question or problem. For example: What are some things that decrease student participation? or What are some tasks that students could do instead of the teacher?

Give participants a minute to think about their answer. If desired, ask them to write their answers. Then participants turn to a neighbor and share their ideas. Invite a few people to share ideas with the whole group.

#### Dice Questions

Write a list of 6 open-ended questions about the workshop topic for participants to discuss and project them. Give small groups some dice. They take turns rolling the dice to select a question and answer it.

Example list of questions:

1. What types of errors do you ignore?
2. How do you typically respond to an error?
3. How do you personally like to receive feedback?
4. What kinds of attitudes do your students have about errors?
5. What do you want to know about error correction methods?
6. Do you agree that making mistakes is important?

#### Self-Assessment

Participants rank their current comfort level with concepts that will be discussed during the workshop. An example scale:

I don't know what this is.	I can identify an example of this.	I can give an example of this.	I can explain what this is with details.
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## SHARE INFORMATION WITH PARTICIPANTS

### **Mark the Margins**

Participants read some new information & mark it as they read. For example, ? for questions, A for already knew this, and N for new information.

### **Card Swap**

Give each participant a card with some information on it. Participants mingle, sharing the information on their cards. Each time, they swap cards with the other person, and then share their new card with a new person.

### **Jigsaw**

Participants work in small groups. Each group is given information to read and discuss. Then count off to form new groups. In the new group, participants share the information they discussed in their original groups.

### **Cloze**

Give participants a handout that highlights important information in the workshop. Leave blanks for key ideas that they can fill in. Pause during the workshop to review answers, rather than leaving this for the end, so participants will remember to fill in the blanks.

## PARTICIPANTS APPLY IDEAS

### **Small Group Discussion**

Participants discuss how to apply ideas to their own teaching contexts.

### **Keep, Tweak or Toss**

Participants reflect on what they have learned in the workshop and identify ideas as use right away, tweak before using, or don't apply to their teaching context. This works well for reflecting on a list of classroom activity ideas.

### **Round Robin**

Write questions on flip chart papers (one question each) and post around the room with a marker for each. Divide into groups for each question. Give them 1-2 minutes to begin to answer. Rotate groups to add to the answer of another question until either all groups have answered all but one or all are answered thoroughly. The last group summarizes the answers to the question.

### **Jigsaw II**

Participants work in groups to solve a problem or apply ideas to their own contexts. Example: Participants work in groups by the level of their students. Each group looks at a worksheet & adapts it to make it more communicative. Count off & form new groups to share their worksheet adaptation ideas.

## PRESENTATION MATERIALS

### Top 10 Dos & DON'Ts for Your Presentation Materials

DO	DON'T
Provide your audience with materials to use or reference later. Make more than you think you'll need.	Copy or distribute copyrighted materials. It's always a good idea to include a reference list of your sources.
Organize your materials so they are easy to navigate as you give your presentation. (Staples & 3-hole punches are always valued.)	Clutter their spaces with disorganized sheets of loose paper that they have to shuffle through to find anything.
Keep visuals simple, uncluttered, and easy to read. Choose one style and use it for all of your materials.	Use styles, graphics, or animations that are irrelevant or distract the audience from your topic.
Proofread your materials. It's a good idea to have someone else look at them too.	Forget to preview your materials from an audience perspective – check your whole group visuals too
Have a backup plan for any technology you plan to use, just in case.	Wait until the last minute to set up your materials. Give yourself time to deal with any difficulties that arise.

### Planning Questions

- What materials and/or equipment will you need for each section of your presentation (projector, markers, flip-chart, etc.)? If you're working with a group, who will prepare & bring each material or arrange for it to be available for your presentation?
- Will you need a room host – someone to help you with your presentation but who is not responsible for presenting? If so, what will you have them do?
- What materials will the participants need? (handouts, articles, resource sheets, pens, highlighters, etc.) If you're working with a group, who will make the copies & bring the materials?

## PRESENTATION TIPS

### Before Your Presentation

- Be prepared. No matter how long has been allotted for your presentation the time will go by very quickly.
- Create an agenda/outline for your presentation and plan how much time you'll spend on each section. Practice your predestination so that you'll know how long things might really take.

### Sample Agenda

Time	Activity
<p><b>15 minutes</b>  <i>Hand out project overview &amp; lesson planning template</i>  <i>Have participants write a job on the chart &amp; sit in groups</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project overview &amp; discussion of Lesson Planning Template</li> <li>• Predict what will be covered in each section</li> </ul>
<p><b>15 minutes</b>  <b>Who Did That?</b>  <i>Ask yes/no questions to guess the jobs of others in the group</i></p>	<p>Section 1 of the ICA: Cultural Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who Did What? (Lesson 1 p.16)</li> <li>• Job Family Tree (Lesson 5 p.25) <i>Influence of Friends and Family</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>15 minutes</b>  <b>Birth Order Reading</b>  <i>Sit by birth order &amp; discuss traits</i></p>	<p>Section 2 of the ICA: Self-exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life Line (Lesson 5 p.42)</li> <li>• Things I like &amp; skill sort activity (Lesson 7 p.50)</li> <li>• Birth order reading</li> </ul>
<p><b>15 minutes</b></p>	<p>Section 3 of the ICA: Career Exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the internet (Lesson 1 p.70, Ver B p.74)</li> <li>• Labor Trends (Lesson 2 p.79) <i>Student Career ppt</i></li> <li>• Informational Interviews (Lesson 3 p.81)</li> </ul>
<p><b>30 minutes w/ Q&amp;A</b></p>	<p>Section for of the ICA: Career Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal Setting (Lesson 5 p.106)</li> <li>• College visit/campus tour (Lesson 16 p.152)</li> </ul> <p>Reserve 5 minutes for SI worksheets and/or evals</p>

- Have your materials ready in advance so you don't waste valuable presentation time getting organized.

## During Your Presentation

- Recognize things will go wrong, or at least not the way you planned. Deal with the situation you run into. Accept it and move on, rather than allow it to deter and detract from your presentation.
- Communicate how you want to handle questions (throughout the presentation or at the end). Have a plan for questions that don't fit the focus of your presentation.
- Draw on your skills as a teacher. Professional development is really just another teaching opportunity.

## After Your Presentation

- Be proud of yourself for putting yourself out there!
- Don't look at participant evaluations until you have reflected for yourself or with a colleague. Ask yourself: What went well? and What needs improvement?
- Focus on the positives: How many participants rated your presentation positively? What can you learn from the comments? What improvements can you make using your own reflections along with the participant comments?
- If you agreed to post materials or follow up with participants, do this right away.

## RESOURCES

**KNOWLES, M.** (1978). *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*. Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing.

**KNOWLES, M.S., HOLTON III, E. & SWANSON, R.A.** (2005). *The Adult Learner, the Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Development (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. San Diego, CA: Elsevier.

**MERRIAM, S.B., CAFFARELLA, R.S. & BAUMGARTNER, L.M.** (2007). *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

**TEACHING EXCELLENCE IN ADULT LITERACY.** <https://teal.ed.gov/tealguide/adultlearning>.

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