ENGAGE

INTRODUCTION

This section is about methods that help to **engage** learners in sessions. The introduction considers the "Why, what and when" issues and then the sections that follow are detailed descriptions of different **methods** ("how" issues).

What does "engage" actually mean? Here are some definitions.

1. To occupy or attract (someone's interest or attention). "He ploughed on, trying to outline his plans and engage Sutton's attention." Also having ideas of capture, catch, arrest, grab, seize, draw, attract, gain, win, captivate, hold, engross, absorb, occupy. "The tasks must engage the participants' interest"
2. To participate or become involved in: "Organisations engage in a variety of activities." Also having the idea of participating in, taking part in, joining in, becoming involved with, "going in for", partaking of, occupying oneself with, or throwing oneself into.

Sometimes we only realise the importance of something when it is not there. We have all had personal experiences of learning events that were boring, when our minds wandered, when we fell asleep or when the clouds outside the window were far more interesting than the geography lesson about rainfall happening inside the classroom.

Educators sometimes complain about lack of learner engagement in post graduate training situations as if disengagement is a property of the learner, i.e. as if the learner creates the disengagement by being a lazy or uninterested student. While clearly, learners have a responsibility to learn when they get the opportunity, Educators have a responsibility to deploy skills which will increase learner engagement and make learning more likely to happen. Moreover, if we think that disengagement is a property of the learner, this hardly explains why those same learners who yawn and look bored during the session talk animatedly to each other during the breaks, and who have non work lives full of incident and drama. If we just say "well do not be boring and then engagement will improve" that's a bit like saying "be a better person", or, "make your jokes funnier"…it does not describe the "what, when, where and how" of what is to be done.

Many of the methods to increase engagement might seem superficially simple or to have nothing to do with clinical education at all. However, time spent getting to know participants and helping them to get to know each other, is an investment in better engagement and better learning.

The key to engaging learners is to invest in the beginning of the session, just as in the consultation we invest in the opening minutes, to ensure success later on.

What does "invest in the beginning" actually mean and why is it important? Kaiser Permanente, a large, not for profit, healthcare organisation in the US, educates all its clinicians regularly with something called the "Four Habits" model of the consultation. They spend a lot of money training people to do this, because it reduces patient dissatisfaction and reduces expensive litigation.

One crucial habit is to "Invest in the Beginning" (see http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/education/graduatemedicaleducation/GMEDocuments/Documents/4%20Habits%20Model.pdf for details). This means building a good rapport, finding out what the main concerns are for that day and planning what is going to happen during the time available. The payoff for this is that a welcoming atmosphere is established, there is faster access to real reason for the visit, diagnostic accuracy is increased with less work, negotiating an agenda is facilitated and the potential for conflict is minimised. This is exactly what we need at the start of any teaching session; to create a good atmosphere, get to grips with what really matters to the learners, negotiating an agenda and timings for the day. This is an example of how consultation skills and teaching skills have a big overlap.

Does this matter? Learners know they have come for teaching so can't we just "get on with it"? Learning, like the consultation, is a complex business, and learning with groups of participants even more so. Attention paid to the larger context of the learning of the group will pay dividends. The methods described in this manual can also be applied to work with any team, for example a practice team, a Multidisciplinary team or a team working on a task for a CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group). While consultation skills help educators with groups, group skills will help educators in their daily team work. When training clinicians in any setting, attending to the whole environment and atmosphere we create on the day will help to ensure that:

- **Learners feel that they belong**. Research in education shows that a sense of belonging is crucial for learners to do their best. Lack of this factor may be one contributor to differential attainment in our learners). This happens best if…
- **Learners know each other and the educator and have a good rapport**. Rapport is like money; if you do not have any it causes a lot of problems; when you have plenty of rapport, (or money!) then many opportunities can be realised.
- **Learners' agendas and needs are taken into account**. This matters because what participants are ready, able and needing learn next, is more important than what the Educator wants to teach next.
- **Learners participate in a community of practice**. This is a group of people brought together by a learning need, whose collective learning becomes a bond amongst them, and whose interactions affect their clinical practice in ways that vary with individual. Their learning experience helps them in a variety of ways: individuals are able to develop in the direction that is necessary for them.

Engagement is influenced by how we start things … how we start training at induction, how we develop bonds for example on residential courses or away days and how we start each and every session.

The methods outlined in this section can be used at the start of any session, or combined together for participants to get to know each other in greater depth (for example, on a residential or in a practice team). This ensures that rapport is built and that the learning agendas are negotiated and suitable for the needs of participants. Choose the methods/techniques that seem most relevant to your situation. However, I would recommend that most, if not all, sessions start with some attempt to find out the hopes and fears of those present (corresponding to the ideas and concerns of patients in a consultation) and that participants' expressed learning needs are brought out into the open at the start, so that a realistic agenda can be negotiated (just as finding out what a patients expectations are helps in negotiating what can realistically be achieved). Some techniques for increasing engagement can be used in the middle of sessions to reignite engagement if it seems to be flagging.

Spending time at the start of things is an investment in success. It may seem that pausing for everyone to introduce themselves, or taking time to enrich and deepen introductions is wasting valuable training or education time. Far from it. Good introductions create warmth, commitment and energy in the room and also draw participants into the process. This makes them much more likely to participate fully in any learning activity as well as making the learning more convivial and hence more enjoyable. Appropriate introductions set the tone of welcome to all, can demonstrate that all participants are valued, that all are here to learn and that participants also learn from each other. Including elements beyond our professional roles, demonstrates that participants can be themselves, and be respected and accepted. This builds the "community of practice" which engages participants more fully and also enriches their learning from each other.

Carefully managed introductions also help to demonstrate the *informal* or *hidden curriculum* of the event or course. The *informal* curriculum is stuff that is not written down. For example, a course may have as its curriculum "the care of patients with cardiovascular diseases". However there will be informal things learned too; for example, the ways we talk to each other about

CVS (Cardiovascular Disease) disease, the types of things we say to patients about CVS disease, which aspects of disease are prioritised (the diagnostic tests or helping patients and families to adapt?). There may also be a *hidden* or *covert* curriculum. This may be entirely covert, "we do not want women in this specialty", or expressed indirectly via statements such as "its often impossible help people lose weight/give up smoking", or "the NICE guidelines should always be followed to avoid litigation". The hidden curriculum here is that some tasks are too difficult and therefore a waste of time, or that using guidelines will "cover your back".

Educators can use introductory exercises to set the tone and enhance the informal and hidden curricula; is this a serious and heavy session? Can it be playful and light hearted? Or both? Will the creativity and individuality of the participants be encouraged and valued? Or is the aim to get a uniform approach at the end where consistency and reliability are more important goals? Getting participants to talk about psychological problems in their patients may benefit from an introduction that emphasises the participants own feelings ("say your name and how you felt at the end of your last clinic"). The end point of a Basic Life Support training course may benefit from a more cut and dried approach ("say your name and the main element of resuscitation you would like to get better at").

So much can be said in a "simple introduction". Planning this part of the session carefully can have a big impact on the engagement and interest of participants, while also using time very effectively. An effective introduction can help a group to the point of working and active learning very quickly. If people just sit with their friends and never interact, the group may remain rather detached and uninvolved. In adult education, people will nearly always communicate better, learn more actively and engage more fully if they know the people they are learning with. Introductions help to orientate and relax everyone. Many participants are likely to be socially anxious when they come to training, asking themselves questions such as:

- Will I be accepted?
- Will I be asked to do things that reveal my weaknesses or failings?
- Will I learn anything useful?

Creating an accepting atmosphere helps people to be relaxed and less anxious. Anxiety interferes with learning. Being relaxed is not the same as being sloppy; punctual start and finish times, attention to preparation and structure within the session, responding to issues that arise and having effective arrangements for IT, handouts, group tasks and so on, make a containing, organising structure within which participants can feel held and therefore less anxious.

The **ENGAGE** section of this manual describes engagement techniques that Educators can use with their audiences, whether in a one to one session, a small group or even an auditorium sized set of participants. Each technique is described in detail, with the rationale and explanation. In most Postgraduate medical training sessions, the key to success lies in the set up (explaining to everyone what is going to happen) and the subsequent debrief (discussing and reflecting on what actually did happen).

Getting to know the participants to a level appropriate for the context (perhaps superficially in a one hour one off session, deeply at the start of a yearlong programme) starts the process of building the relationships on which effective education is based. In Postgraduate education the starting points and learning needs of groups can be diverse and not easily predictable.

Understanding where participants are coming from and working with that, enables suitable prioritisation during the session. When participants understand that the education is focused around their needs, their engagement increases.

In many postgraduate contexts interactive methods for education are taken for granted (for example, in General Practice), but participants still report "Death by PowerPoint" as the preferred option for many educators. This is the "fill up the bucket" model; tell people things, show them some pictures and they will learn the material. In practice, lectures may simply mean that participants are exposed to material. Understanding the material, applying new learning to daily practice and being able to take a critical approach to knowledge, require that participants interact: with the material, with the educator and with each other.

To this end, the precious time available in postgraduate education must be used effectively and with purpose. That purpose should be crystal clear to the educator and transmitted concisely to the participants; when participants know that their needs are understood and that the learning offered has a clear purpose in relation to those needs, full engagement will follow.

Meticulous planning of how any session, exercise or activity is set up will help to ensure that the expected benefits materialise. If each activity is debriefed skilfully, (again usually best when planned ahead), the educator uses the experiences of participants to draw out reflections on what has been learned. This results in maximum educational benefit.
The debrief time is often not given the same emphasis as the exercise itself; this limits the benefits of the activity. Effective debrief encourages participants to think more deeply, to share the experiences and reflections of others.

This does not mean that all spontaneity and flexibility have to be removed during your planning stage; quite the opposite. An effective set up is like lighting the blue touch paper on a rocket … you know it is going up but not necessarily where it is going to land. Educators must avoid missing the blue touch paper and start trying to set fire to the stick, or the explosive at the top end of the rocket … you get the picture. The debrief process is like looking at the place the rocket ended up and saying "what happened here? How did we get here? What else do we need to do now?"

The techniques in the ENERGISE and ENRICH sections will help educators to take learning to the next level and maintain engagement throughout the session.

The different methods that could be used are summarised under these headings:

Techniques to establish rapport

Especially at the beginning of courses and the start of most sessions if you are not the regular educator, or if you are a visiting speaker.

1. Build your own classroom
2. Simple introductions
3. Picture cards introduction
4. An introduction using pairs interviewing each other
5. Shield introduction exercise
6. Walk around introduction
7. Broken card introduction
8. Using pictures as a starting activity
9. Ice breakers
10. Geographical introduction
11. Large group introductions for formal presentations

Techniques to establish and negotiate a learning agenda.

12. Buzz groups
13. Hopes,fears and dreads
14. Establishing learning needs at the outset

Techniques to encourage a community of shared practice.

15. Everything with a purpose (EWAP)
16. The sweep discussion method
17. Talking sticks
18. Preparing an educational brief

A worked example

The Title, Aims and Objectives and Intended Learning Outcomes are planned before the session, together with relevant, prepared didactic teaching and practical exercises to help participants embed what they have learned

Example

A one day session on Basic Life Support with assessment of competence suitable to certificate participants to the standard required for their continued training (or revalidation) which includes the relevant theory and practical hands on exercises to improve skills.

Begin the session with an introduction exercise of suitable length, depending on the number of participants and how well they already know each other/know you.

Example

A simple introduction if they all know each other, perhaps enhancing the introduction by asking "what setting do you work in and how does BLS feature there?"

Then assess the participants learning needs.

Example

Ask them for hopes and fears for the session and what they are most keen to learn about.

Negotiate the agenda for the session highlighting the identified needs you will be covering, dealing positively with any expressed fears, explaining why other issues will be best dealt with elsewhere. After this has happened it could summarised back to participants like this;

Example

Today we will cover Basic Life Support, the theory and practice. The ethical issues participants raised concerning allowing a natural death, avoiding resuscitation, and the skills needed to negotiate a Do Not Attempt Resuscitate decision, will be covered in the session on ethics later this month.

This need only take a few minutes, yet will get every participants attention, will enable some degree of participation from every member and will ensure that the session prioritises the things important to the audience. Trainers/Teachers can of course add in their own agendas just as doctors add their own agendas to a consultation.

Finally, summarise the session using the "Everything With a Purpose approach"; today we will cover the knowledge and skills needed for you to be competent at Basic Life Support so that you will be confident in a life support situation and so that you will have the certification necessary to get your qualifications.

By this point, all participants should be alert, fully engaged and confident that their own needs and concerns have been identified and taken seriously.

Resources

There is more Information available at:

https://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf

https://www.icebreakers.ws/small-group

http://www.socialworkerstoolbox.com/40-icebreakers-for-small-groups/

http://www.dvrcv.org.au/sites/thelookout.sites.go1.com.au/files/Games%20manual%20FINAL.pdf

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_76.htm

1// BUILD YOUR OWN CLASSROOM

Paolo Freire, a famous South American educator, famously thought that if adult education participants literally built their own classrooms, then their engagement in learning was much greater.

What it is for?

He knew a thing or two about getting people engaged in education as he worked with people with very low levels of education and who were uncertain of its benefits. Freire considered that group formation through the planning and organisation, then working together on a practical and complicated task had a massive impact on the commitment learners would have. So, he began education, by asking participants to build their own classroom. Clearly, it is not likely that your participants will get to "build their own classroom", but we can harness some of the benefits of this approach by considering how rooms are arranged for learning.

Education takes place in many different environments; sometimes two people are crammed into a corner of an open plan office, discussing a difficult case while secretaries wander in and out, the cleaner empties the bins, and the fire alarm is tested. Other events take place in huge auditoria with hundreds, if not thousands of participants and all the mod cons that a conference centre can offer; simultaneous broadcast on gigantic screens, microphones, video, PowerPoint, background music and a pantomime horse. (Well I made the pantomime horse bit up, but I bet any decent conference centre would get you one if you need it … for a price of course!)

For most education, most of the time, size is somewhere in between … two to 12 participants for a small group, maybe up to 40 or 50 for a medium sized group. The chairs are usually laid out by the staff who manage the room who have no clue what, or how, you are going to be teaching and so they arrange chairs in tidy rows, like a cinema audience.

My first advice to any intending educator is to move the chairs in the room they are going to work in. Even better, if feasible, get the participants to arrange the chairs themselves into an arrangement facilitated or even mandated by you … this is not quite "build your own classroom", however, as you explain the layout you want and why, it starts to orientate the audience to what is going to happen next.

When to use it.

Unless the room is already arranged exactly as you need it, get the participants to arrange the chairs themselves, after an initial introduction exercise. In small group or one to one meetings for learning, ensure attention is paid to reducing hierarchy…everyone should have a similar chair and be sitting at the same distance from each other. Ideally, there should be no desks in the way (two people can sit round the corner of a desk with benefit).

The set up: how to use this method

Explain that you would like to ask the participants for their help in rearranging the chairs and explain why this is: because you want to facilitate discussion, so that everyone can see each other, so that everyone is welcome in the group, and so that everyone can see and hear everyone else easily.

Explanations/timings

A few minutes maximum is needed for this task.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

A brief, "good we can all see each other now" maybe all that is required.

Equipment/resources needed;

Enough chairs for everyone, but not so many that there are a lot of empty seats. Empty seats create a feeling of incompleteness in the room. Move spare chairs well out of the way and only leave chairs for late comers if you are absolutely sure someone is coming.

Skills to make this work even better

- Think about the arrangement you need ahead of time, so that you can give clear instructions to participants when they arrive.
- For small groups (ideally up to about 12 to 15, in practice up to 20), usually a tight circle works best or a U-shape if it is necessary for people to be able to see a screen. Bear in mind that didactic presentations to small groups should be very short and used as triggers to interaction, rather than lectures taking up the whole time.
- For medium sized groups (20 to 40) arrange two rows in a shallow U shape. Try and have the same number in each row. This facilitates use of Buzz groups when people talk to others near them/in the row behind, and means that people do not bunch up on the back row (making for distant communication) or in the front row, (when those further behind can feel a bit edged out). Encourage everyone to sit together … if latecomers arrive, try to get them into an existing row … having a few people scattered at the back means they often do not get to participate fully.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

If you are visiting speaker as part of a longer day and the leaders of the session have arranged things, it may be meddlesome to change things around. I would still consider it though, even if it is not always possible.

Applications in other areas of the session

Rearranging the chairs can get people on to their feet and have an invigorating effect. Moving larger groups into smaller subgroups for discussions can really liven up a session, increase engagement and allow things to be tackled at deeper levels. See ENERGISE Group sorting methods, for information on how best to do this.

How does this help to build relationships?

Doing a task together helps to link people together. If the leader and the group are negotiating about how to do this task it can start to build rapport and relationships, if gently done.

How does this help to structure the education?

Learning is influenced by the "Hidden curriculum". The arrangement of the chairs can signal hierarchy: are we all equally important, in a circle, or does "God" sit at the front and all the minions at the back? The arrangements can signal whether active participation is expected, rather than the opportunity to snooze at the back and moving chairs to change group sizes during the session can help to break it up, signal a change of tack or mood or task.

2// SIMPLE INTRODUCTIONS

Introducing the participants to the speaker, and vice versa, is a crucial step for effective learning and should only be omitted when there are good reasons for doing so.

What it is for?

This step can be omitted if participants are part of a continuing group that has already invested time to getting to know each other well. The method described here is a straightforward one, acting as a simple ice breaker. Introductions orientate the speaker/educator and the group to each other, and to their roles and likely or possible preoccupations.

For sessions with participants who do not know each other and may not meet again, simple introductions followed by ENGAGE Hopes and fears and ENGAGE Establishing educational needs at the outset, will usually be enough to get the participants fully engaged and the session off to a good start. When participants do already know each other it can be fine to proceed straight to ENGAGE Hopes and fears and ENGAGE Establishing educational needs at the outset.

If participants will be working together over time (e.g. in a Specialty Training Programme, a Practice Team) a simple introduction should be followed with in depth introduction exercises (there are several in the ENGAGE section) to develop and deepen the interpersonal relationships within the group.

When to use it

This is a technique to use at the start of a session if participants do not work together regularly. Even if the participants know most of the people in the room, a brief introduction will enable new members of the group or those who are not good at remembering names to get to know their colleagues and improve their engagement in the proceedings. Introduce yourself and the nature of the session/programme.

Anticipate and adjust for the size and purpose of the group; will a simple introduction be enough, or, should it be followed up with more in depth introductions, or some kind of ice breaker method to engage participants' interest and involvement? (See ENGAGE Ice Breakers.)

The set up: how to use this method

The educator should explain that in starting the session there is going to a brief round of introductions to help everyone get to know each other and work together effectively.

The educator should model the nature of the introduction required as to content and length. If the educator just says "introduce yourself", people may say little or talk for 10 minutes, wasting session time.

Say something like "tell us your name and where you work" and model it yourself saying …
My name is … I work in X place …

At the start of the session participants may feel uncertain as to how the session will go. Giving clear instructions about the information you want will make people feel more comfortable and avoid any participants feeling embarrassed because they give the wrong info or are not sure what is expected of them.

See the ICE BREAKERS section for various ways to follow this up or make this introduction more light hearted/relaxing/tension reducing. Some participants can be so shy that they feel overwhelmed by having to speak in front of others even a relatively small group. Keeping it simple lets them off the hook.

Explanations/timings;

Ensure your explanation/instruction is simple, clear and brief. You need to allow about 15 seconds for each member of the group, as obviously it takes longer if there is a larger group. Overall aim to allow about five minutes. If the group is so large it will take longer, use an alternative method (for example ENGAGE Walk around introduction) so that energy is retained rather than being lost waiting for a large number of people to have a turn.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

Smile, look around the room, make eye contact with the participants, summarise what you have heard in one sentence ("people have come from far and wide today" or "its lovely to have you all here today") and reiterate your welcome. If you reach out and engage positively with the participants they will be more engaged in return and learn more.

Equipment/resources needed

None

Skills to make this work even better

Waiting in turn to introduce yourself can be a bit dull, especially if the group is on the big side. Give the person speaking some kind of token (see also ENGAGE Talking stick) and ask them to pass it to someone they are NOT sitting next to, signalling it is now their turn to speak. This means everyone has to stay engaged as they don't know who is going to be called upon to speak next.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

Occasionally even with good instructions one participant will start on a long description of their roles and interests, even when there is not really time for it and others have modelled something more direct. Learn from this … that participant will need careful handling to avoid them dominating the group, while at the same time keeping them on board. Have some tactful ways to stop them and move on to the next person.

In a very large group (say over about 25) or a lecture to 100s of people this is not a suitable method of introduction. See ENGAGE Large group introduction instead.

Applications in other areas of the session

It can be useful to do similar "rounds" of all participants at other points in the session. (See ENRICH Making rounds effective.)

How does this help to build relationships?

Knowing who is in the room immediately creates relationships; between participants as they get to know each other, and between participants and the educator. A sense of belongingness and being a welcomed and valued participant creates an appropriate "learning identity" and promotes effective learning.

How does this help to structure the education?

When the educator explains the purpose of the process they are using, in this case the introduction, it helps participants to understand the structure of the session, and how they will be involved. This helps to focus attention.

3// PICTURE CARDS INTRODUCTION

This is a method of starting a group off which is a more intriguing, and therefore engaging, introduction than is achieved using speech alone.

What this is for

By using illustrations it adds to the aesthetic qualities of the education, which is also appealing and engages the "right brain", as people are curious about the picture cards. Choosing the questions carefully, according to the nature of the session can make this very effective.

Varying the questions used across the group, makes for a less repetitive introduction round, and can serve to introduce the material for the session, orientating the group to what is to follow.

When to use it

To introduce a new group, or to introduce a group that knows each other already to a new speaker. This helps the speaker orientate to what the group is like and what their learning needs are.

The set up: how to use this method;

Each participant is invited to choose a card from a selection which have a PICTURE showing upwards and to look at that picture for a few moments until everyone has one. People can choose any card they like.

When ready, the participants turn the card over and there is a statement on the back – "my name is" … followed by a statement or question that they have to complete.

Each card can have a different question, or there may be a selection of questions repeated randomly through the group (as people choose their own cards by the picture not by the question).

The statements could be neutral personal introductory information:

- my name is …
- my usual breakfast is …
- my last holiday was spent …
- my favourite Sunday dinner is …

Alternatively the questions may refer to and orientate the group to material to follow. For example in a session about palliative care the statement may be:

- my name is … I came here today to learn palliative care aspects of …
- my name is … my role in palliative care has been to …
- my name is … the most difficult aspect of Palliative care is …

If it feels necessary to break things up a bit, one or two of the statements can be of the form:

- if I was not here today I would prefer to be … (or, just now I would rather be …)
- what I am hoping for regarding the lunch break is …

Such less serious statements can bring some humour in, lightening the atmosphere around very serious subjects (such as palliative care).

Explanations/timings;

When everyone has a card ask them to turn over and consider the question or statement on the reverse. The educator can model the introduction as to length and complexity.

Ask the group to take turns to say:

- my name is … and then complete the statement or question"

Depending on the complexity of the question (best kept simple) allow about 30 seconds per participant.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

The debrief depends on the purpose of the picture round. If being used as a general introduction it can be followed with welcoming remarks, explicitly thanking everyone for their contribution, leading into setting the agenda for the session.

When everyone gets an equal chance to participate, the engagement in the group will start off on a stronger footing. If the statements link more explicitly to the material of the session, then some summarising and empathic comments will lead easily into a more formal agenda setting process. (See ENGAGE Hopes and Fears and ENGAGE Establishing learning needs at the outset.) Emphasising the contribution that everyone has made to the group increases a sense of belonging and engagement.

Equipment/resources needed

A simple approach is to use clean index cards or similar. Using picture postcards or the picture parts of old Christmas or birthday cards costs little and creates a more interesting start.

People sometimes think they are going to asked to justify their choice of card; while avoiding any attempt at psychologising or trickery, one reasonable question for the back could be "I was attracted by the picture on this card because …"

Choose the questions/statements on the reverse carefully, according to how you want the exercise to be used. Ensure that writing is legible and large enough to read easily.

Skills to make this work even better

An alternate approach is to have the card put message downwards on the seat for people to look at as they assemble, or to put the cards pictures showing upwards, underneath the seats and call participants attention to them at the start of the session. It all depends on the group. In a new group simply putting the cards on chairs or handing them out will usually be enough to engage; if a group has been going for a while and getting stale, then starting by putting the cards under the chairs can increase energy as people look for them (or lose them, cover them with their bags, etc.).

Using pictures orientated to the subject matter (for example, pictures of different sports if the session is going to about teamwork) can increase the interest. Movement is engaging, so it is also possible to stick the cards on the walls (picture showing) and invite participants to go and get one they like the look of before starting the introduction.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

This method is not suitable if time is short, or the session is extremely formal e.g. a presentation at a conference. Avoid asking potentially difficult or embarrassing questions that may make people feel exposed or less knowledgeable than others. The aim is to bring people together and help them feel comfortable in the learning environment.

Applications in other areas of the session

Cards with specific questions or quotations can be numbered and spread through the audience by placing them on seats at the start. When the appropriate moment comes the educator can say "someone has card number … Can you read out what it says?" For example, in a session on feedback someone could get the quote: "Practice makes permanent; FEEDBACK makes perfect."

This allows suitable material to be presented in an interesting way, and engages attention as participants wonder who will be next … the cards called do not have to be in sequence. It's a good way of punctuating the session as a sort of summary at the end of one part or as an opening way into the next section of the session.

How does this help to build relationships?

This method builds relationships within the group as participants get to know each other and get to listen to everyone, and also builds relationships with the educator, as there is dialogue/interaction.

How does this help to structure the education?

Used at the start, this method can be used to begin to signpost the content and method of the session. If used during the session, quotations or prepared comments about the subject matter can act as a summary at the end of one section, or as an introduction to the next. This is a useful and efficient sign posting method and helps to keep the session flowing well.

4// AN INTRODUCTION USING PAIRS INTERVIEWING EACH OTHER

This method can be used as part of a one-to-one introduction (e.g. a trainer and trainee getting to know each other) or as part of the introduction to a small group.

What it is for?

When people get to know each other using an introductions exercise they can feel more at ease, it helps them to bond personally with at least one other member of the group and this creates an atmosphere of safety. This encourages discussions that are freer, deeper and more effective.

When to use it

At the start of something, for example, a new trainer/trainee relationship, the beginning of a new small group, the start of a residential or Study Release Course.

This method can be very helpful to use with established teams to help people get to know each other better. For example if training events are set up for Multidisciplinary Teams, Practice or unit Team meetings.

The questions can be altered to suit the situation, to be more or less personally revealing according to what is likely to be needed.

The set up: how to use this method

Give everyone the introduction sheet as an aid memoire (appended at the end of this section). Ask the group to get into pairs. With a new group pairings may not matter too much; in an established team ask people to talk to someone they know less well, or use a group sorting method (see ENERGISE Group sorting). Explain that the purpose of the task is to help group members get to know each other, to facilitate the work of the group afterwards. Explain that after the task each participant will introduce their partner to the group (see also ENGAGE Shield exercise for another variant of this).

Explanations/timings

- Explain the prompt sheet and ask them to spend 20 minutes on the task – 10 for each person.
- The participants take turns to interview their partner using the prompts on the sheet, i.e. tell me something concerning a where/what/how/why/who about their partner.
- Tell the participants that at the end of the interview process they will introduce their partner to the whole group afterwards. Stress that the prompts are there to facilitate understanding and that no one has to share any information they do not wish to share.
- Before presenting their partner to the group each participant should check that their partner is comfortable for any information to be shared with the whole group. The interviewee has freedom to respond in any way they wish to the prompts.

Introducing a partner rather than your self can be easier in a group; it takes the focus away from the individual and towards their relationships. When presenting, participants are often very positive about the achievements and interests of others. This is encouraging for participants and brings things out that individuals may not feel able to speak up about themselves.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

Ask each participant to introduce their partner to the group. If the group is fairly small (say up to eight) the educator can also invite the other participants to ask any questions to clarify or expand. Often this will happen anyway.

In larger groups the educator will have to control the time budget for each participant to make sure all are represented fairly. The educator can wrap up with a general comment about how diverse or interesting the group, thanking participants for their interesting interviews, as a prelude to continuing with the next element of the session.

Equipment/resources needed

Prompt sheets can be prepared in advance for each participant. An alternative is to give everyone a blank sheet of paper and write the headings for the prompts on a flip chart/ PowerPoint slide and let each participant write their own headings. The pre-prepared sheet saves time and has the advantage of providing guidance on the task.

Skills to make this work even better

In the debrief the educator can be positive about the interesting things being presented and identify the value of having a diverse group to work with.

In an established group who are getting together for a training session (e.g. a practice team) the questions could be altered to focus on aspects of the team, for example, "*where* is your favourite place to be at work" or "*what* was the most important thing you did at work this week".

Or it can be focused to the tasks that follow, e.g. if the session is to be about developing resilience the prompts could be "*how* do you help yourself get over a stressful day at work" and "*why* is that activity important to you."

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

This method while very useful to get a group working well together, is time consuming. So, best avoided if the group will only be together for a short period (e.g. one session or one part of a larger group session).

Participants who are not used to group work may find the level of disclosure a bit threatening, so it is important to stress that this is about sharing things they feel OK to discuss with others in the group setting.

Applications in other areas of the session

Different prompts, but using the same structured approach could be used as reflection stops during a session (WHERE has this session got you to now?) or during a training programme (WHAT have you done in this training that has been most useful, HOW … what skills have you developed during this training course?), and so on.

How does this help to build relationships?

A 20 minute, one-to-one conversation builds a relationship rapidly and this helps the whole group to be more connected, more open and more able to have in depth discussions in which real learning can take place.

For participants used to hurrying through their work as fast as possible (which is how it feels in many situations), having allocated time for a more leisurely conversation can change the pace, and allow participants to relax. Having the focused attention of a partner helps people to feel valued as part of the group, which is empowering.

How does this help to structure the education?

This approach emphasises that learning is about relationships as well as content, that the participants are worthy of time and attention in their own right. By providing a firm basis for relationships within the group the scene is set securely for work that follows.

PAIRS INTRODUCTION SHEET

In pairs – 10 minutes each way.

This introduction task helps people feel at ease in the group and helps to create an atmosphere for free discussion and exploration of issues.

The prompts are to help you to encourage your partner to talk about themselves, in different ways and at different levels.

Feel free to use the prompts in a way that seems best for you and your partner. The interviewee has complete freedom to decide how to respond. Before you introduce them to the whole group later, check that your interviewee is happy for any information to be shared. Do not share information they would prefer to keep private between you and them.

Give me a **where** – tell me about a place that has a special significance to you.

....

....

....

Give me a **what** – tell me about something unusual interesting or important that you have done.

....

....

....

Give me a **how** – tell me about a skill or ability that you are proud to possess.

....

....

....

Give me a **why** – tell me why you do a particular activity that is important to you.

....

....

....

Give me a **who** – tell me something central about yourself that makes you who you are.

....

....

....

NB: Both partners might like to clarify any disclosures they would be happy to go into, and any that they would prefer to left out of the feedback to the whole group.

Back in the group – Introduce your partner to the whole group.

5// SHIELD INTRODUCTION EXERCISE

This is an introduction exercise to help all members of a new group get to know each other better, so that they develop trust and a sense of belonging, which will facilitate learning together.

When to use it

This method takes time, around 10 to 12 minutes per participant at least. Therefore, it is best used for those occasions where you want participants to really get to know each other, to remove barriers to communication and to create trust in the group. These effects come from having talked to other people about yourself in a friendly environment. Thus, it is especially useful when forming a new group that is going to work together for a long time, or study for a period of time, for example, a term long module or a full year Study Release Course.

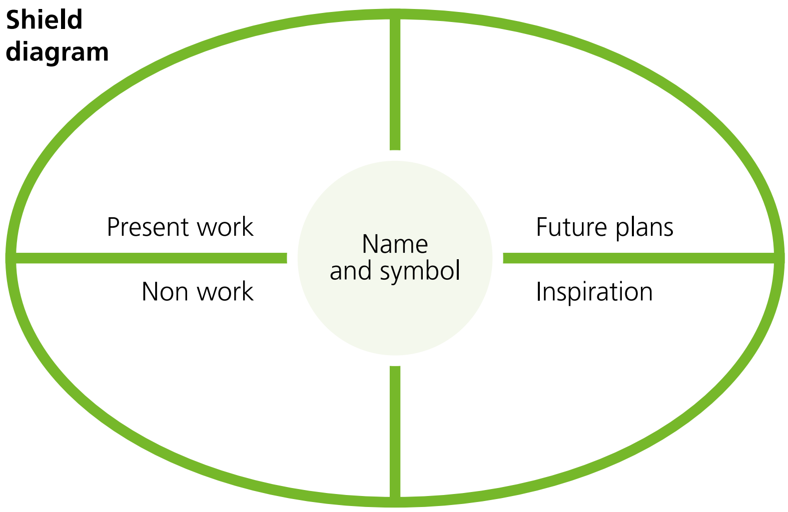
Although this method takes time initially, it saves time in the longer term as groups form quickly, and begin the processes of "Forming and Norming" (see References and Resources below) straight away. This gets participants "over the hump" of joining a group of colleagues they may not know very well.

By adapting the questions this is also a suitable method for re-engaging with a team (for example on a team away day) and for building team relationships over time. Because the method begins with people working in pairs it is less intimidating than whole group introduction methods. Quieter, less assertive participants get equal attention to noisier more confident ones. See also ENGAGE Pairs introduction, for another method to do this.

The set up: how to use this method

Each person is allocated or chooses a partner. Each person has a sheet of A3 (e.g. flip chart paper). On it they draw a shield shape divided into four with a central section for their name in the centre they should write the name they like to be called by and perhaps draw a little symbol or cartoon that says something about themselves (e.g. a paintbrush if they like DIY).

Shield diagram



Each participant is interviewed by their partner who gets to know them in more detail by asking questions pertaining to each quadrant and filling in the answers. Allow five minutes for each interview, to allow some depth without resorting to psychoanalysis! The questions work best if they include something about their current work, something about their professional future, something about non-work life and something that explores their values (for example, what inspires you? What is the most important thing about work for you?)

You can make this more fun by also asking "tell me something about yourself that most people don't generally know about (but which you are happy to share with the group).

Below are some examples. These can be altered to suit the requirements of different groups. For example, if a practice team who know each other are on an away day, the questions might be framed to explore their situation within the practice, or their hopes for the future of the organisation.

Examples

- Where are you working now? What are your career plans? Tell me something about your non-work life? What inspires you the most about your work?
- Where are you working now? What is the main aim of your participation in this course? What are your favourite activities outside work? Where do you hope to be in five years?
- What is your role in the team? What inspires you most about your work? What would you like to see developing in the future in the team? What is your favourite activity outside work?

Avoid tricky or difficult questions like "what is the most embarrassing that has ever happened to you?" This will make participants more anxious, rather than developing a comfortable rapport with each other.

Explanations/timings

This works best if the educator explains that investing time in getting to know each other is worthwhile, so that it helps the group to work together more effectively and so that everyone feels more comfortable and involved. The five-minute timing for the interview should be rigorously observed, with the pairs swapping over for another five minutes; the first interviewer becomes the interviewee.

During the debrief timing needs to be watched carefully; if the first participant is very brief, the others will be brief too; if the first person talks for 15 minutes about their partner and every one copies, then the exercise can take a long time and energy will flag (the opposite of what is needed for engaging people!)

If the educator goes first, they can introduce their partner and model how much detail to give and how much time to spend. The other participants will usually follow suit. The educator needs a partner too if the numbers don't allow for that then the educator can introduce themselves using the same shield drawing and answers and model the approximate length.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

After interviewing each other and writing the responses on the shield in pairs the group reconvenes. Then each participant is asked to introduce their partner. If you go round the group in a circle, the people waiting to speak mentally rehearse what they are going to say (which reduces their attention for listening) and the people who have had their turn relax (and may switch off). Instead, ask the participants to introduce their partner and then randomly choose the next person in the group to be introduced; their partner then introduces them and does the same. This keeps people alert as they do not know who is going to be asked to speak next.

The educator can also write down the answers to the question "A thing that people don't generally know about me is …" At the end of the shield introduction, the educator can use these facts to help the group to remember each other's names. The educator reads out the little known facts, again in random order, using the form … "which participant has two pedigree Siamese cats at home?"

Equipment/resources needed;

- Flip chart paper, and pens.
- BluTack to pin up the shields when participants are presented by their partners.
- Some space for people to work in when they are being interviewed

Skills to make this work even better

The educator can model good listening skills, reflecting back a clear summary of the individual describes, preferably with positive or interesting features highlighted. If there is time, each pair can use the spaces on the chart to also draw the "arms and equipment" of the individual, e.g. many pairs of hands for a busy working parent, musical notes for someone who plays the guitar …

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

While the interviews will be restricted to 10 minutes, debriefing is less predictable, and will take time. So this is less suitable for very large groups (more than 12–14 people). In that case it is best to split the exercise and the debrief into two smaller groups, otherwise energy will flag and it can become boring.

This method is too time consuming and too personally revealing for very short educational activities (less than half a day) or where people will not meet and work together again. As it is time consuming its best used in:

- day long or residential courses
- at the start of a course or programme
- for a new team where people will be working together for a long time
- as part of a team away day to refresh everyone's knowledge of each other and their team roles or aspirations.

Adapt the questions to the specific purpose and group.

Applications in other areas of the session

It can be helpful to refer back to issues that arise in debriefing, as long as this is in a relevant positive and tactful way. For example, if participants mention wanting to develop "educational skills" in the future, the educator can refer to the part of the programme when these skills will be learned. This can be a good demonstration of active listening skills and further build the relationship with the educator.

How does this help to build relationships?

Talking to one person at the beginning starts to build intra group relationships in an unthreatening way. As the group get to know each individual, intra group relationships are also reinforced.

The educator observes carefully and starts to understand the group and its participants; do they engage with this task? Did they listen to the instructions or zone out and have to ask for them to be repeated? Do they need more experience of non-standard group methods to feel comfortable working together? How interested are they in their fellow participants? Do they ask superficial questions or are they really interested in their colleagues as people? This sometimes mirrors their attitudes towards patients; the educator may then decide to ensure training addresses the skills of developing rapport and interest in patients as individuals, which are learnable skills.

How does this help to structure the education?

By being explicit about the purpose and timings of this exercise, educators can help participants begin to understand and value the group process. Modelling accurate timing of the report back and then finishing the exercise on time, because the right amount of time has been planned for, helps participants new to group work to feel "held" and safe in unfamiliar educational settings.

References and resources

Tuckman described the stages of team or group work as being "Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing". There is a quick summary of this here:

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_86.htm

and a useful Wikipedia section here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s_stages_of_group_development

Tuckman later added "adjourning/mourning " as the stage when a team or group break up having completed their task. (See ENRICH Endings.)

Although the term "team" is used by Tuckman, the same processes occur in educational groups that meet over time. Successfully "Performing" educational groups pay greater attention to the relevant tasks and provide effective support to the learning of all participants, with the potential for greatly improved outcomes. Methods to improve group work in education can be very profitably used in practice and other teams too.

6// WALK ROUND INTRODUCTION

If you want to create the benevolent energy of a pleasant party, try this method for introducing participants for the first time, or for a new purpose.

What it is for?

To enable participants to become engaged in the group and ready to participate in the learning, without doing a long tedious introduction round.

When to use it

This can be a helpful method if a new group is a bit too large for a simple introductions round, which can become slow and tedious if there are more than 10 to 15 participants. It can also be used if participants do not know each other, as the interactions are one to one, and so less threatening than speaking in front of a larger group.

This method can also be used during the life of an enduring group (for example a study release course group that meet every week for a longer period) to refresh the engagement by asking people to talk about something of relevance to the days topic, or to talk about a topic will help to deepen their knowledge of each other (for example, their attitudes to an issue, or how they personally cope with a particular type of difficulty).

The set up; how to use this method

Explain that everyone will stand up and walk around the room, when they catch someone's eye they will introduce themselves to each other (and shake hands for even greater engagement) and discuss an additional question to develop some intra group relationships (suggestions below). Explain that after a minute or two the educator will clap their hands (or ring a bell or whatever will be a loud enough signal) to indicate that it is time to walk around and catch the eye of another participant. Repeat a few times, depending on the time available.

Planning ahead

If you are confident you can make up appropriate questions on the day, then wait and see what the room "feels like". If you are new to this approach or less confident plan ahead and identify a follow up question that will be relevant to the topic of the session.

Here are a selection of some potentially suitable questions; educators can feel free to choose other questions, being mindful of how that will relate to the rest of the session. Questions should be open (not closed) and of a form that will trigger relevant discussion.

- How did you come to be at this event?
- What is the best/worst thing about your current work situation?
- Who have you had to leave behind in order to come and work here today?
- What are the two main things you want to get out of this event?
- What are two things you find most professionally satisfying about today's subject?

Explanations/timings

Explain that though they probably won't meet everyone, they will speak to a few people and feel welcomed. Explain that no one has to speak in front of everyone, acknowledging that some people find that difficult. Acknowledge that it feels a bit weird wandering round the room to say hello to people they don't know and point out the advantages.

It usually takes a minute to explain the process; educators can decide how long to let the group part run. Observe the process and ensure that participants speak to several people and do not just get into a conversation. The time allocated depends on the educator's view of how many people need to talk to each other. Perhaps allow about a minute for each introduction, hence five to 10 minutes for the whole exercise. People do not need to introduce themselves to everyone. The ice will be broken and they can introduce themselves to anyone else during breaks. The educator should encourage participants to do this if they are not already known to each other.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

At the end of the exercise the educator can thank everyone for introducing themselves and encourage participants to use breaks to introduce themselves to anyone they did not get to meet initially. This helps to develop intra-group relationships.

If a specific topic has been discussed the educator can debrief by asking an open question such as "What kinds of issues came up when you discussed …?"

Equipment/resources needed

Space to move around and meet other people. If in a confined space and participants do not know each other (for example, at a first meeting, or at a session at a conference or meeting) simply ask participants to say hello and introduce themselves to the people on either side and in front or behind them. Even a few people getting to know each other increases the engagement in the room.

Skills to make this work even better

The educator needs to be sensitive to how the introductions are going and whether to allow the participants to continue and when to draw the process to a close. Leaving it too long can create feelings of awkwardness, as people are looking to find anyone they have not already met. If it is too short, people will feel rushed or that the exercise was pointless. If using this with an established group to trigger discussion about the days topic, encourage participants to seek out others that they know less well, or have not got to know so well.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

Occasionally participants may feel awkward doing this

- if they are not used to small group methods
- if there is furniture in the way
- if they are used to courses when they sit behind a desk take notes and say nothing. If you suspect that the latter is the case then introduce your rationale for this method carefully and make sure that your set up is simple and very unambiguous.

If in doubt model the process yourself to the group – "I am Anne and I have left behind my new car to come today (I came on the train!)"

As this is an introduction aimed at facilitating small group working, make sure you plan in advance and move the chairs around to the arrangement that suits the task before participants arrive.

Problems could also occur, if, during the debriefing, it becomes apparent that participants have very different expectations of the session. However, while this may initially identify conflicts, it is much easier to deal with them if they are out in the open and up for discussion. Buried in silence, such disagreements can cause the group to disengage and the learning opportunity can be compromised.

If any participants have mobility issues be mindful of this and place them somewhere in the centre so that other participants can come to them.

Applications in other areas of the session

A variant of this would be to use it later in the session as an energiser. For example, after introducing new material one way to maintain engagement during the session could be to ask participants to go round and speak to others about how they might apply the new learning in their own workplace, or to identify new questions raised by what they have been learning.

How does this help to build relationships?

When participants have opportunities to talk about themselves and their interests to other members of the group relationships start to form and trust is enhanced. Encouraging talk between people who do not know each other well develops a greater sense of belonging and "esprit de corps" which is a strong motivator for learning together.

How does this help to structure the education?

Having brief exercises such this at suitable points in the session can provide a sort of "punctuation mark" offering opportunities to get participants to get involved at the start, to summarise the impact of the learning so far, to stretch their legs. This method helps to avoid boredom and gives opportunities for the educator to signal what is coming next.

For example:

"Now we have seen how this subject relates to your work in the area of … we will consolidate this by talking with each other about how to apply this in our own workplace; after that we will move on to …"

Having an overt structure helps to keep the pace moving effectively and reduces the risk of getting too bogged down in one area. It helps participants to continue to feel invested in the session if they know where it is going and how it will relate to them. Participants who are not used to smaller group methods will find this element of structure reassuring. Breaking up the session in this way also keeps the educator awake.

7// BROKEN CARDS INTRODUCTION

This gets participants off their chairs and was described to me by one participant as "the only ice breaker I have ever done that actually broke the ice".

What it is for?

This is a quick icebreaker (although it requires preparation beforehand) and can be used as part of an introductions process or to get people moving around and talking to each during a session (when it might also belong in the ENERGISE section).

When to use it

When you want to get people moving around and talking to people they are not used to sitting next to, especially as part of an introductions process or to liven things up. It is especially useful if participants always tend to sit with people they already know.

The set up: how to use this method

Beforehand get some postcards/old used Christmas cards/greetings cards which have a picture on one side and are blank on the other side.

For an introductions exercise write a "get to know each other" question on the reverse (for example, "What is your favourite film/book/meal/holiday, and why"). If used as an energiser during a session use educational questions such as "How could you fit this learning into your daily work? or, "How does this change your thinking?" or, "What three things will you take away from what we have done so far?"

Then cut each card into four sections (or two if they are not too big). Ensure you have enough cards so that participants can all get a section of card.

Mix up the sections of card randomly and distribute to the group asking them to keep the cards face up. Ask them to walk around the room and find who has the other sections of their card. Then ask them to turn the cards over, match them up to read the question, and spend a few minutes discussing that question.

This approach mid-session can help if participants get into a bit of a rut of always talking to the same "buddies".

Explanations/timings

Explanations need to be concise and in order; explain everyone is going to get a section of the card face up, that they then have to stand up and find who has the rest of the picture on the card then discuss the question on the reverse.

The benefit increases if you explain why you chose this particular method and why it is important to break the ice anyway. This is done so that everyone gets to know each other, to speak to people they may not know very well, so that they might hear different ideas, or so that the group can discuss the learning they have done so far. (See ENGAGE Everything with a purpose.)

It usually takes a minute or two for everyone to get sorted with their fellow card holders. Allow a few minutes discussion, stopping when the room starts to get a little quieter, before everyone runs out of things to say. Leaving them with more to say keeps energy levels and engagement up.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

The benefits of this ice breaker occur if the ice is broken! This will be judged by how much chatter and good humour there is in the room.

In an introductions exercise a brief debrief question like "Did anything interesting come up?" may suffice, before going on to further activities which could use the new groups of four that have been formed.

If educational questions are used debriefing can be initiated with a general question like "What issues came up when you were talking?" Facilitation can then relate this to the content already introduced, or if used near the start of the session this can provide the focus for a ENGAGE Hopes and fears or ENGAGE Establishing educational needs at the outset exercise to help focus the agenda for the session.

Equipment/resources needed

The educator needs to get cards ready ahead of time, divide them into suitable pieces and shuffle the well so that so that there will be a good mixing of the group members. Make sure the sections to be matched are the same as the number of group members so that no one is left out or made to feel like a spare part.

Skills to make this work even better

This method can be extended. In a new group of any size greater than, say, eight participants prepare cards in sets with the same image or the same type of image, each card cut in half; initially participants find the partner who has the other half of their card and discuss the question on the back. The participants are asked to find everyone who has the rest of their "set", for example, local beauty spots, cards with flowers on, arty cards… Let them work out what connects the parts of the set as this will promote further mixing and discussion amongst participants.

The question to discuss in a group of four or six could be the same, or a different question … the educator can say "all people with flower images discuss this … people with steam trains discuss this …, etc). The questions need to be purposeful, lead into the next section of the session and the debrief needs to bring out any important issues.

This method can be done simply with different coloured index cards, or even with a deck of playing cards with selected cards chosen, a question written on the back and then cut up so that participants have to find a match.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

The questions need to be appropriate to the purpose of the exercise (introduction or energiser?) and of interest to the participants. There has to be space to move around. It works best if the group size is relatively large say 10 to 12 or above. Not suitable for very large audiences or lecture halls. The educator must pay attention to numbers and ensure that the number of cards/sections/card sets matches the number of participants and is appropriately divisible. If this does not happen properly someone could end up feeling very left out which is extremely counterproductive and distracting.

Applications in other areas of the session

Can be used as an **energiser** as described above, perhaps with questions suitable to the stage of the session. With adapted questions/ card sets could be used to make an evaluation process more interesting, see EVALUATION Snow ball evaluation methods.

How does this help to build relationships?

The more members of a learning group get to know each other and understand each others' points of view, the more they will feel that they "belong" in the group, which can then develop into a community of practice. This deepens learning and models important parts of the informal and hidden curricula. This includes **knowledge** (what have other people learned? How did they prioritise that?), **skills** (we can learn effectively when working with others) and **attitudes** (others may have different yet very valuable viewpoints, feedback from more advanced participants can help others, sharing learning can reinforce it, everyone is important here).

How does this help to structure the education?

Exercises like this, while enjoyable, are very serious in their intent. They can provide punctuation points within sessions so that new sections of the learning session are signalled and prepared for. Questions can be structured appropriately so that learning is reinforced or deepened. Planning such moments within sessions help educators to think through the structure and process of the session, so that effectiveness is increased within the same time budget.

8// USING PICTURES AS A STARTING ACTIVITY

A picture is said to be worth a thousand words and certainly gets the creative right side of the brain involved, as well as the analytical left side.

What it is for?

This is a method for engaging participants attention at the start of a session and setting the "tone" of what is to come in an interesting way.

When to use it

At the beginning of a session or at the start of a new part of the session or activity.

The set up: how to use this method

Have a table or tables set up at the side of the room. Small groups may only need one table, larger groups may need several. Get a lot of pictures (no words), with as much variety as possible; place them on the table. This could be postcards, photographs, pictures of art works, pictures from magazine, old greetings cards with the pictures cut off … anything and everything.

Explanations/timings

Ask everyone to choose a picture that they personally feel expresses their feelings about the question you offer them, so that everyone gets a chance to talk about their own personal take on things, so that everyone's position can be taken into account at the start of the session or at the beginning of a new phase of the session.

Examples could be:

- "How are you feeling right now?"
- "How are you feeling about your training so far?"
- "What is your current placement like?"
- "What would you like your future to look like?"

The debrief: maximising the benefits

In a small group, ask everyone to explain how they came to choose that particular image and what it means to them. In a large group ask people to explain their choice in groups of four, then in the larger group invite anyone who wishes to share their choice and reasons.

Encourage participants to elaborate with phrases like "go on" or "anything else", although these may only be needed if participants are very brief. Usually participants are happy to explain their choice. Those that go first encourage quieter ones to elaborate. Offer no judgments, rather model acceptance and interest; no choice is better or more worthy or more useful than any other. They all give useful sharing and a way for the educator to increase their awareness of the "tone" of the group for that day: is the group comfortable and ready to work, or are there stresses that need to be acknowledged, and possibly, addressed.

Equipment/resources needed

Make sure there are at least triple the number of images compared to the number of participants so that there is plenty of choice for everyone.

Skills to make this work even better

This engagement method can be used at the start of any session. It can also be a useful one to use prior to doing an evaluation with the group; using an image orientates participants to feelings and holistic assessments (right brain) and can lead to more fruitful evaluations. (See also the EVALUATE sections).

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

If you are with an unfamiliar group, or if it is a brief or one-off session, this may be a relatively time consuming energiser/introduction. Choose another one instead if needed.

Applications in other areas of the session

Images can be used later in the session to sum things up, or to signal the group's response to information that has been part of the session.

How does this help to build relationships?

Participants share very personal things in an exercise like this (hence the need for non-judgemental, encouraging, debriefing) and this can help groups develop richer relationships with each other and help people to understand that other people may have quite different points of view or preferences.

How does this help to structure the education?

Short engagement exercises help to provide punctuation, help to pace learning and give variety.

9// ICE BREAKERS

Ice breakers are techniques to get everyone engaged, talking to each other in a way that helps participants get over the threshold of starting a session.

What it is for?

They are particularly useful if participants are working with people they do not know well, or have not met before. The number and intensity of the ice breakers chosen will depend on the purpose; spend more time (and possibly use more than one method) if the purpose is to start "forming" and "norming" (see General introduction) a group that will exist for a period of time, (more than one day), for example a Study Release Course group. If the ice breaker is for one day, or one session, one will suffice.

When to use it

Use Ice breakers at the beginning of a session, to get things off to a good start, usually after initial introductions, especially if participants come from different backgrounds and need to bond quickly so as to start working on the topic at hand. Also useful if your group is newly formed, or if the topics you are discussing are new or unfamiliar to many people involved. Ice breakers are also helpful when the educator needs to get to know participants better, for example at the start of a course or when running educational events for a team. The process of getting to know each other increases trust

The set up: how to use this method

Choose a suitable ice breaker and explain its purpose, which is to "break the ice" so that everyone interacts together and gets to know each other, so that working together will be more effective. Be very clear about the task (what is to be done) and also the process (how is this task going to move people around and get them to talk to more than one person).

When designing your ice breaker, think about the "ice" that needs to be broken. If you are bringing together like-minded people, the "ice" may simply reflect the fact that people have not yet met. If using an ice breaker in a practice team meeting or training day, the "ice" may come from the difference in status between participants, and there may also be different backgrounds, cultures and attitudes to work: thus the "ice" may come from people's perceptions of each other. Focus on what important ice may need to be broken for your training session or course; it is not necessary to deal with the whole iceberg or get a Nobel Peace Prize afterwards. Focusing on similarities, or things that everyone can talk about (for example, their favourite food or what kind of professional problems or successes they have) is usually enough.

Explanations/timings

The specifics of this will depend on the ice breaker chosen (some examples are given below). Allow enough time for interaction but stop before everyone goes quiet which can feel awkward. Less than 10–15 minutes is usually needed for a group up to about 25 to 30.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

Not much debrief is usually necessary, but a synthesising comment about how everyone mixed a lot, or made a lot of noise, or that participants have certainly been able to share some important things, will provide both a summary and a structuring comment to lead into the next part of the session.

Equipment/resources needed

This depends on the ice breaker chosen. Below are some examples with comments about possible benefits. There are many more on the internet and it is easy to make up new ones inspired by these ideas.

1. Allocate groups randomly on arrival/ registration, for example, by giving each participant a different coloured sticker/ picture/number which is matched to a group area or table. This means participants are less likely to stick to talking to people they know already and gets better cross fertilisation of ideas. You can ask them to do one of the ice breaker tasks below to get the group talking.
2. Ask people to move around the room talking to as many people as possible with the following being possible tasks:
   - share your biggest current challenge at work
   - share two things about yourself that you think no one at your table knows about you
   - share what you appreciate most about your colleagues or participants they may have met before
   - share what you like about your current job
   - share the most fun situation you have experienced at work
   - are you a cat person, dog person, bird person, or gerbil person
   - what is your favourite pet and why?
   - what is your favourite type of holiday and why?
   - what is your favourite Sunday dinner?
   - Tell your table mates or colleagues three things about yourself. Two of them are true and one of them is a lie. Ask people to guess which the lie is.
3. Word association. This helps people explore the breadth of the area under discussion. In pairs ask them to generate a list of words related to the topic; for example, in a safeguarding training session ask participants what words come to mind relating to child abuse, (be precise with language here; decide whether you want to ask what feelings come up, what thoughts come up, what words pop into their minds, what pictures the subject conjures up for them). Give them one minute, and then ask pairs to team up with another pair and share their lists. The debrief could take the form of writing all the findings on the board (perhaps by theme e.g. angry feelings, sad feelings, guilty feelings and so on). Summarising thoughts or words that come up may lead to a summary of the form "this is a difficult and sensitive topic that will bring up some difficult thoughts and feelings for us. This is natural and important; if you feel overwhelmed or troubled by things we are discussing please feel free to take a short time out of the discussion and come back in when you are ready". The debrief and summary will clearly vary according to the topic.

Other examples can easily be found at:

https://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf

https://www.icebreakers.ws/small-group

http://www.socialworkerstoolbox.com/40-icebreakers-for-small-groups/

http://www.dvrcv.org.au/sites/thelookout.sites.go1.com.au/files/Games%20manual%20FINAL.pdf

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_76.htm

Skills to make this work even better

There are many ice breakers possible and even a quick Google search will yield numerous possibilities. Choose carefully; if too frivolous some groups may lose interest or feel patronised. If too serious, or too focused on the medical tasks at hand, the opportunities for group formation and bonding will be more limited, because people will not have the chance to be themselves and share aspects of their lives with each other. Be wary of ice breakers like "what is the most embarrassing that has ever happened to you?" as they risk raising anxiety and tension, especially in cautious or inexperienced participants. What you are aiming for is something that reduces anxiety, that everyone has an equal way of participating in and that gives them an opportunity to share their best side.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

Avoid if time is very short, if participants already know each other well and are likely to be ready to get on with working together (use other engaging techniques such as ENGAGE Hopes and Fears).

Applications in other areas of the session

Ideally ice breakers are not needed later on because the ice is broken. However, some ice breakers can also be used as ENERGISERS to re kindle or maintain energy and focus over the course of longer sessions, or to explore new areas of the topic. For example, if the topic has been developing a new consultation skill, an ice breaker like "what is likely to be the biggest challenge you have practising this skill in the future?" or "what feelings or thoughts come up now?" can re energise the group and also help the educator to identify any residual difficulties to be addressed in the session. Often attitudinal issues come out in this way ("This is all very well in theory but …") and this enables the educator to explore/challenge such issues while they are fresh in everyone's minds.

How does this help to build relationships?

Participants get to meet and talk to several or even many members of the group informally, often sharing personal ideas or information. This helps to build good relationships so that the importance of the group being a social, collaborative way of learning is emphasised. Learning together is more effective, if the methods and techniques used are different to those that individuals might use when learning alone. Ice breakers can be one component that fosters a sense of "belongingness" which is important in maximising engagement and success in learning. Using ice breakers that allow feelings and thoughts about the topic to be expressed early on, helps participants to feel that their concerns are recognised and valued; they become active collaborators in the session. This has the potential to strengthen learning relationships.

How does this help to structure the education?

Ice breakers provide punctuation points and when the purpose is explicit helps participants to understand how the educational session is going to be paced, how they may be expected to relate to others in the room and also helps to set the emotional "tone" of cooperation, collaboration and conversation that make groups work well. The "hidden agenda" is that we will be learning together and that individuality is to be accepted and celebrated.

10// GEOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

This is a good introduction method and can be used when people are meeting for the first time.

What it is for?

It would also make a good team building exercise to do at the start of a team training day. In teams or units staff may change, they often do not get a chance to know each other as people very well and this exercise would be a good way to overcome that.

When to use it

This introduction method is most useful at the start of a session, for the start of a programme or when beginning a study module that continues over a couple of days, for example a residential.

The set up: how to use this method.

Begin by acknowledging that the people in the room are not all from the street that your building is in! Tell the group that you are going to ask them to arrange themselves as if the room is a map, and they will go and stand in the part of the map that corresponds to the city where they did their initial training (such as Medical school or nurse training). Then ask people to move all the chairs out of the way (or use an adjacent empty part of the room if the room is large enough) and spread themselves out to put themselves in the right position. Encourage people to talk to each other to get themselves orientated. Ask the group to agree where North and South are.

Explanations/timings

The explanation should be brief but include the points that people can help each other find where they should be placed, be ready to help the group decide where North should be. Depending on the size of the group, getting everyone into position may take about five minutes. Explain clearly that seeing where people have journeyed from helps us to get to know them, so that we can work together more effectively and cordially.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

Ask the group what they notice, who is close together, who is far away, and who has travelled furthest from their educational starting point. What does it feel like if you are huddled near to others? What do they think it might feel like to be furthest away? What does the furthest away person have to say about their journey?

Equipment/resources needed. Only a suitably large space is needed. If the room is small, and if available this exercise could be done in nearby hall or outside in a garden or (safe) car park.

Skills to make this work even better

The educator can anticipate that there may be a lot or a little variety in the positions taken by the participants. Think ahead about any participants who may be anxious about "belonging" in the group or who have come from a very different environment to others. Ask them about their position first and thank them for coming all the way to work with the other participants.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

If the only room available is very small this might be difficult; people need room to move around. It will work better if an initial simple introduction has been done (if people do not know each other). In an established team, if you are sure that everyone knows each other's names, explaining the purpose of the exercise may be enough. If participants are very wary of group methods or getting outside their comfort zone, it may be better to choose an alternative introductions method.

Applications in other areas of the session

This method could be used to get people off their chairs when the group is flagging and needs energising. See ENERGISE Using line ups.

How does this help to build relationships?

As participants and educator get to know each other as individuals they start to form relationships. Developing relationships between group members and between group members and the educator deepens commitment to the learning process and deepens learning.

How does this help to structure the education?

Explaining the purpose of this clearly, enables educators to use this exercise to lead into the next part of the session (which will often be ENGAGE Hopes and Fears and ENGAGE Establishing learning needs at the outset). Explaining that first we get to know each other, so that we can work together better so that we can establish what the needs of the group are for this subject, clarifies the structure and process and helps participants to relax and participate fully, knowing that the educator has a clear plan. (See also ENGAGE Everything with a purpose.)

11// LARGE GROUP INTRODUCTIONS FOR FORMAL PRESENTATIONS

Even in very large groups, attention to interactions between participants can increase attention and engagement with your important subject matter.

What it is for?

This is an approach to increase engagement in the subject matter when teaching/lecturing very large groups (realistically over about 30 people).

When to use it

If talking to a very large group (in a large lecture theatre) or a formal presentation in a fixed slot, maybe at a conference, you may feel that all the introductions necessary will be done by the chair of the session. Indeed that may be the case.

Occasionally though, your task may also include helping participants to think differently, to see how something might apply to their specific situation. Encouraging participants to have some opportunity to interact and engage directly, however brief, can change the atmosphere in the room and increase the impact of your presentation

The set up: how to use this method

Explain why you want to do more than just introduce yourself; maybe to increase friendly interactions with people who you have not met before (for example, participants in a large conference) or as a prelude to getting them to discuss something in your paper or presentation (such as the relevance of your presentation to their specific workplace). Be clear in your own mind what your purpose is and introduce this very succinctly.

Simply ask people to introduce themselves to the person next to them and to the person in the row immediately behind them.

There will be some nervous laughter when people turn round to find a head turned round introducing themselves to the row behind them, but your participants are intelligent people and they will get the hang of saying hello to two people.

A variant can be to ask about groups, for example, "How many people here are from such and such a speciality/ location/ special interest group? Or use information gleaned from the conference programme "I see many people here are interested in ....", or "This session is about….. tell the person next to you why you chose this session". Use the introduction to make contact and engage with the audience, they will then be more likely to listen and engage with your subject matter.

Explanations/timings

The explanation should be very brief, under a minute. Allow a minute for people to say hello.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

This need only be brief, acknowledging that it is always good to meet new people and that now there will be more people to say hello to in the dinner/tea/coffee queue.

Equipment/resources needed;

None.

Skills to make this work even better

To increase engagement further, consider asking people to say hello and answer a question such as "Why did you decide to attend this particular presentation", or, "what is the key issue for you in this area", or "what attracted your attention in the title of this presentation?"

This will help focus attention further and may stimulate conversation afterwards too.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

Do not waste time on this if the speaker before you has just done this or something similar, if time is very short, or if the setting is ultra-formal and unfamiliar. This method could be tricky when speaking to audiences outside General Practice. GPs are quite at home with this sort of thing, however, a judgement should be made with other audiences such as a group of surgeons or histopathologists!

Applications in other areas of the session.

This introduction is a variant of the ENERGISE Buzz group approach, and can be used during a session to get further discussion and thinking. When people interact, they learn and retain more.

How does this help to build relationships?

This method can help to build rapport between speaker and audience even in a very large group setting, and can definitely help to loosen up the atmosphere and encourage people to talk to each other outside the meeting.

How does this help to structure the education?

Having a clear start and purpose to discussions: focused question help to give shape to your presentation, which makes it more intelligible to listeners.

12// BUZZ GROUPS

Using buzz groups is a way to ensure that everyone in the room gets to participate, even quieter members or those who are not particularly interested in the subject matter.

What it is for?

Buzz groups provide opportunities for those who are not engaged to interact with someone who is more engaged, which can have a modelling and peer group norming effect. Buzz groups "wake the group up" and they provide a good way to get those with "activist learning styles" involved. Activists sometimes get restless if not given something to do, or may dominate the group if there are quieter reflectors and theorists around, who may take longer to get their thoughts out. It can also be a good "way in" for quieter people or those participants who protest that, even though they are not saying anything, they are "listening and taking it all in". Even for good listeners, participation in discussion is important: it provides an opportunity to have their ideas tested and weighed by others. It also means that the ideas of quieter members are heard by participants with a different approach. That can have many benefits; those who speak loudest and more often are not the only ones with good ideas worth hearing.

When to use it

Buzz groups are a useful way to engage participants at the start of a session and can be used at intervals during a session to discuss further iterations of a subject or different aspects. This one is a good way to maintain interest and energy and keep participants engaged.

The set up: how to use this method

Ask participants to form pairs. This can be with people next to them. This risks them only talking to people they already know or see as their buddies. One alternative is to allocate pairs, to ask people to stand up and walk round to find a person to talk to (the educator could also even ask them to specifically talk to people they do not know so well). If they sit in rows ask them to talk to the person behind them. This mixes up the discussion.

Then tell them exactly what you want them to talk about; the nature of the task needs to be clear, specific to the moment and any question used need to be open ones to promote discussion.

Decide if you want them to share information or decision making ("what approach do you take to someone with asthma who is not using their inhalers regularly?), or issues connecting with emotions and relationships ("Which members of the administration team do you have the best/ worst relationships with?"), or attitudes and values ("Should you ever give a patient your personal mobile number?").

Explanations/timings

Make sure the question is succinct and the task very clear. Try go ask ONE question rather than several. You can be strict about timings (Take two minutes to list the tasks of the practice manager) or you can see how the room sounds (see pitfalls) and stop the discussion BEFORE everyone stops talking or goes on to another topic. It can be useful to be more open ended if you are not quite sure how engaged they are with the question: for example asking what happens about "extra" patients in their practice may trigger quite a lot of discussion, which it may be worth allowing to run on a little). Judgement is required.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

Do not simply repeat the question or task that the buzz groups have been asked to do. Ask an open but related question like "What issues came up?" or "What did you spend most time talking about?" "What other issues came into the conversation?" and take it from there. You can then use this method to widen the discussion, or deepen it. If the educator asks "what if "questions. For example, if the session is about managing practice teams and how to manage disciplinary issues a question such as "what if one member of the administration team is always a bit off hand or rude?" can widen the discussion or signal the subject matter to come. A debriefing summary such as "it seems a lot of us have difficulties helping patients to change their behaviour towards more healthy approaches; this session will focus on strategies that can help this" can signal the focus of what is to come next and link it to the expressed concerns of the participants.

Equipment/resources needed

This is a very low-tech approach! The educator can write the question on a flip chart and record answers there, but this is not always necessary and may interrupt the flow of the discussion.

Skills to make this work even better

Develop specific, provocative questions relevant to the groups concerns will make this an effective technique. Using recent news events/ knowledge of specific problems participants are likely to encounter or provocative questions, can help participants dive in quickly and start working.

Another strategy is to start the discussion in pairs and then ask pairs to join together to form groups of four to share their ideas further. This increases the exposure of the ideas of otherwise quiet members and enables participants to hear a wider range of ideas.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

Do not use this method if the question is too specific and the group members may not all have relevant experience of it. For example, asking buzz groups "how do you fill in the e portfolio covering fitness to practice", in a group where not all members use a portfolio, will frustrate the participants.

If the group is, on the whole, not engaged with the subject matter, then in buzz groups the discussion may fall into the "what has this got to do with me" approach, or may rapidly drift off into something more interesting. If this is relevant to the task in hand then the buzz group output can give the organiser the opportunity to reframe the session to make it more relevant to what the group needs. However, sometimes the buzz groups just gossip, go off on tangents or in some other way fail to engage with the task. This particularly happens if the task is too small and the time allowed too long. The group leader needs to listen unobtrusively to the progress of the conversations to gauge whether the buzz group task is appropriate, being carried out, or whether the groups are drifting.

If drifting away does occur this is important information for the educator, and may help them to re frame what is happening or to pay attention to other psychological processes. For example, the group may not wish to engage in the task because some other issue is more pressing for them (sometimes recent examination experiences or a something relevant in the national news). Recognising and accepting the importance of such concerns and debriefing that concern properly first, enables the group to process the other items and then move on to the material planned for the session.

This uses similar skills to the listening skills needed to establish the agenda with a patient; use those skills in educational contexts too.

Applications in other areas of the session

Repeating buzz groups at different stages of the session can help to encourage engagement and energise the group, especially if they change partners for subsequent questions.

How does this help to build relationships?

Participants feel more engaged in the session, and they get to know their fellow participants better which improves relationships. Closer relationships facilitate deeper learning and discussion of more sensitive and difficult areas.

How does this help to structure the education?

The careful wording of the questions, of the debriefing questions and of any further questions to the group, mean that the educator can structure the learning in an effective yet unobtrusive way. This might mean starting with factual and practical stuff and then leading participants into applying knowledge. This helps them to analyse usefulness, and evaluate the significance and meaning of the material within their own work (see ENRICH Using taxonomies of learning).

13// HOPES, FEARS AND DREADS

This method explicitly addresses the question of what the participants are bringing to the session.

What it is for?

It aims to bring out into the open any concerns, desires, pre conceptions or worries that participants have about the training they are about to receive.

While it takes a few minutes, the pay back is potentially huge. The educator demonstrates interest in the participants and their view of the issues/concerns/worries arising from the topic at hand. These concerns are seen as being inevitable, and useful to discuss. Participants are immediately involved in the planning of the session and will be more engaged in it.

The educator also demonstrates engagement with participants hopes for the session, which helps to orientate the educator to where the participants are "coming from" and this also helps to link the content to their educational needs, which increases their engagement. This approach can be combined with or followed by the engagement technique of ENGAGE Establishing learning needs at the outset.

When to use it

I have heard it said that **every** group session should begin with a "hopes and fears" exercise. That is an extreme position. However, effective training must begin with knowing where the learners are at in their thinking and feelings about the subject matter.

A skilled educator takes the information from this exercise into account during the session, which:

- increases the engagement of the audience
- links material closely into their *learning needs at that time*
- increases effectiveness of the education.

If you have been given a brief to talk about one particular subject area, or to teach one particular skill, it might seem that this exercise is redundant. Consider this; if participants are not interested in or resistant to learning about that issue, or have attitudes towards the topic that may impede learning, it is even more important to do this exercise and arrive at a shared view of what the session can reasonably be used for and what is beyond its scope.

If this doesn't happen the hopes, fears and dreads will still be there. If their hopes for the session are dashed and the fears/dreads realised, participants can become demotivated, which is very counterproductive.

This approach can be especially effective if the educator is introducing an outside speaker (check if they plan to use this approach themselves first to avoid duplication). The speaker is rapidly orientated to the group and can link what they say to the participants' needs. See also ENGAGE Preparing an educational brief.

The set up: how to use this method.

Ask participants to consider on their own, inside their own heads for (say) 15 to 30 seconds, the question What are your hopes for today's session? What are your fears? Or what do you dread will happen? Use your observation skills discretely as participants wrestle with this question. Who immediately starts scribbling notes? Looks puzzled? Shrugs? These non-verbal clues can help you assess your audience.

Then, ask people in pairs (a neighbour or the person behind them), to discuss the same questions for a few minutes, before starting the group debrief, described overleaf.

Explanations/timings

It is useful to allow people time to collect their own thoughts before they start to discuss things in pairs. The time allocated to the **paired** discussion can be varied; if the material is complex, or challenging, if there is like to be a great variability in the concerns within the group, or if the group do not know each other well, **allow longer** … up to five minutes.

If the subject is well defined, the group more homogeneous and already know each other well, allow a shorter discussion. Listen to the overall sound the group makes, when the sound begins to diminish but before everyone has stopped talking, interrupt for debriefing.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

Do not ask each pair to report back unless the group is small enough to make that approach feasible. Going round everyone in turn can be boring and the group can lose energy.

Ask a large group to report back as follows:

Draw a line down the centre of a flip chart and label one **hopes** and the other **fears/dreads**. Ask the group "What issues came up in your discussions?"

This allows speakers to generalise, rather than being very specific about their own worries or concerns, if they are not keen to share them with the whole group.

Write the **hopes** and **fears/dreads** in the appropriate column. When things die down, ask if anyone has anything not yet recorded. You can comment as you go along about hopes, e.g. by saying "we will be covering that…"

Then, challenge the group to say how they would like a "fear/dread" to be turned into a "hope" for the session.

For example, if a dread is "a long PowerPoint lecture with no time for discussion", that could be turned into a hope of "enough time for discussion" (a heads up for the educator).

Or, if the dread is "it will be boring", then the hope will be that people join in and offer contributions that will make it more interesting.

Specific dreads may need careful handling. In GP training people often "dread" role play. If your session has role-play at its heart this could be off putting. Instead, ask the group to use this concern to create appropriate hopes. For example, that everyone will behave respectfully towards each other, or that no one will have to role play in front of everyone, etc.

At times issues will come up that seem unrealistic or beyond the scope of the planned session.

Educators who work regularly with a group will often know the likely issues that will arise. Have material ready that refers to how that learning could happen (for example, a web resource, book, e-learning or signpost another session later in the course). That way participants' needs are heard and acknowledged as important. Guidance is offered about how those learning needs can be met – even if not during the current session.

Equipment/resources needed

A flip chart and pens should be available for debriefing, and any other reasonable method to capture and display the findings can be used. For example there are hand held epidiascope type devices that one can handwrite on, while simultaneously projecting. Just choose the tech level that works for you!

Skills to make this work even better

Making eye contact, using people names wherever possible, thanking people for their contribution, acknowledging and accepting dreads without belittling them and cross referencing comments to what other participants have said have said, can all help to maximise the benefit of this exercise.

Moving straight into an exercise of ENGAGE Establishing learning needs at the outset allows aims and objectives for the session or course to be quickly agreed, and the group is then focused for learning.

Preparation with your specific audience in mind should mean that the hopes and fears/dreads match up to (at least some of) the material you have prepared. Preparation before a session is about understanding what participants are likely to be concerned about as much as preparing what you are going to "teach". When asking a speaker to come make sure they get a good educational brief. (See ENGAGE Preparing an educational brief.)

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

Does not work for very large groups/auditoria or where there is a formal agenda and a formal presentation is expected, for example, if delivering research findings at a large conference, or if you have been asked to deliver a lecture style presentation on a very specific topic, to a specific audience as part of a greater whole. In that situation ensure that you understand your educational brief very clearly before preparing your talk.

Applications in other areas of the session

Referring back to hopes and fears, when relevant, will help to demonstrate that you have been listening. At times a new and important issue may arise unexpectedly; quickly establishing what participants' hopes and fears are, around the new topic, can help to keep things on track or evolve into relevant but previously unexpressed areas. This is a bit like the patients "hidden agenda". If something comes up later on, it is often something so difficult or concerning that participants only bring it up when trust is established.

How does this help to build relationships?

Mutual and respectful listening helps to build rapport and trust between participants and educator. This makes for effective learning.

Getting bad feelings or concerns out into the open is a valuable way of engaging with the audience, demonstrating that you are interested in and listening to them. This usually enables dreads/ fears to be dealt with. Care with language will help this along. Saying things like "yes I know you are interested in case x but today I am only going to deal with this" can put people off. Try "case x is really important and interesting and will be dealt with best in …. setting (make some sensible suggestions), today we will be focusing on ….which most participants seem most concerned about".

How does this help to structure the education?

All education needs preparation and should be guided by the curriculum. Exercises like this can help to focus participants' attention, while also signalling that other material will be covered in future sessions, or in their work place learning or via their private study.

14// ESTABLISHING LEARNING NEEDS AT THE OUTSET

This method enables educators to establish what the priorities for learning are for the specific group of participants present.

What it is for?

The aims and objectives for sessions will of course be considered by educators as they plan, influenced by the curriculum relevant to the whole course of study that participants are engaged with. In planning, educators can also use a Taxonomy (see ENRICH Using taxonomies of learning). Therefore, it might seem a waste of time to negotiate the aims and objectives with participants in each session. However, the stage that participants are currently at in their learning/thinking has a huge effect on what will be achieved in the session and whether participants move forwards in their learning. Participants get bored if the level is pitched too low and frustrated if pitched too high to address their specific needs.

In an ideal world the educational brief that educators prepare beforehand (or that a visiting speaker has been given in advance) will include an assessment of the nature of the material, and the level of complexity, that the participants are likely to be interested in.

However, that is just a start. Participants will bring their own individual hopes and fears, (see ENGAGE; Hopes/fears) and have their own ideas about is most important to get from a session. Finding this out will enable the educator to pitch the session at the right level; enough to challenge some of the most able and yet clear enough to enable the less developed participants to get something useful.

Furthermore, really teasing out what participants are actually struggling with, rather than what the book says they need to know, can help to focus the session round the important subject matter. This can also can save time if certain areas can be treated more lightly because everyone is already happy with them.

This discussion also helps to introduce and engage participants in thinking about different levels and types of learning; is the session to address knowledge gaps? Skills deficits? Explore attitudinal and professional issues? Skilfully done, engaging participants in exploring their learning needs can move them away from expecting simple "knowledge transfer", perhaps better done by private study, and into more challenging areas, which may be actually more useful to them.

When to use it.

Use this approach at the start of a session to ensure that the planned material is adapted to the specific learning needs of the group, and to ensure that the group consider skills, attitudes, values and professional issues when learning. This method can be used before or after ENGAGE Hopes and fears assessment. Because these methods ensure that everyone is asked to consider their needs and discuss them with at least one other person, everyone's participation is ensured at the start. This increases engagement with the whole session.

A similar approach can be taken at the start of a whole programme of learning, for example at the start of a Study Release Course. This will again help to orientate educator and group to each other's thinking and assist planning; however, correctly, some participants will insist that their issue is their "unknown unknowns" and they do not yet know what they want to learn. Educators can write this up as "wanting to explore the subject matter in depth" and "identifying unknown unknowns" as legitimate learning objectives.

The set up: how to use this method

Choose the initial question carefully, depending on how the session fits into a programme of learning, and to the stage of training or skill that participants are at. For example, in a session about the consultation skill of (say)"Breaking Bad News" the question for inexperienced doctors might be "How skilled are you at Breaking Bad news and what would you like to get out of this session today?"

For more experienced doctors the question might be "What experiences have given you the greatest difficulty in Breaking Bad News and what do you want to get out of today"

For very experienced doctors or trainers "What issues come up when you are trying to teach Breaking Bad news" to your trainees?

It is worth revisiting an ENGAGE Buzz group approach here. Ask participants to consider the questions alone first for maybe 30 seconds and then ask people to discuss the question in twos or threes.

Explanations/timings

Ensure a clear (and open, not closed) question; allow 30 seconds for participants to think first, three minutes for discussion in pairs. Debrief timing will depend on the size of the group (see below).

The debrief: maximising the benefits

Each group can be asked to report back, or in a larger group, address the whole group with a general question like "What are the issues that come up?"

Record their questions/aspirations/learning needs for reference later on in the session. This will provide a useful way to reinforce learning at the end. Any issues that could not be dealt with can be identified with signposting to how learners can make progress in those areas.

A skilled educator can also classify learning needs during this discussion into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, (for example), or into diagnosis, management, teamwork. Teasing this out from participants is akin to taking an "educational history" (similar to taking a history from a patient), which will lead to a more effective educational intervention.

The listening skills are those also used in the consultation; picking up clues and non-verbal information, reflecting back and opening things up, may take a few moments. The payback will be a better structured session that participants really want to participate in.

Equipment/resources needed

A flip chart and pens.

At the start of a whole programme, participants can be given sticky notes or cards to record learning needs on .These can be mapped to large sheets on the wall headed "knowledge skills or attitudes and values" to help reinforce that training sessions are sometimes not the best place for "knowledge transfer". Training for skills or competencies can be ultimately of more long term use. Knowledge gets out of date, but skills can be continuously developed through practice.

When planning ahead, focus on the likely needs of the group in question; get information yourself in advance, or discuss with the person who has asked you to come if you are an outside speaker. The more you know in advance the better tailored your session will be.

Skills to make this work even better

Link what you are going to do today with what is done on other parts of the course if possible, and clarify what your brief/planning has been. This will enable a realistic set of aspirations to be negotiated. Write down what you hear; going back to the issues at the end reinforces the learning points and clarifies what still remains to be learned. It shows that you took the setting of the agenda seriously and adult learners benefit from shaping the learning process themselves.

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

This will not work in very large groups or if your contribution has already been tightly defined by your educational brief and your session or contribution is very short. In that case saying "this is what I intend to cover … and we will be learning it by doing ..." is a good start, followed by "Is that what you are expecting? Is that what will work for you at this point?" Really listen to the answers, including the hesitations, the groans that may mean "not another boring presentation on …"

Occasionally, even if you have been drafted in to give a 20-minute presentation on managing a specific issue, the audience may not engage if they remain unsure that these actions are in their remit, or if they are unsure that the issue is relevant to them, etc.

Sometimes, participants can be over general (teach us everything about heart disease!) or wildly unrealistic (a participant once asked that in a one-hour session on nurse prescribing, I tell them all about "diagnosis, examination and management of all the common conditions and the consultation skills that you need to talk to patients about them". In one hour, yes – it took me years to learn all that! Negotiating what was reasonable to cover took a few minutes and was crucial to making the session appropriately limited and reasonably effective).

Teasing out where your session fits in with participants' general training, or what exactly they mean by "everything about heart disease" may take a short time but will be infinitely more rewarding for the group and for you as a speaker if you get to the nub of what needs to be addressed.

The parallels with setting an agenda in a consultation are relevant; unless the agenda is agreed things tend to go awry.

Applications in other areas of the session;

As a session unfolds, educators may notice a falling off of energy, or lack of participation. Checking the focus of the learning as you go along, and that it is still where it needs to be, will help to maintain interest. Also referring back to the recorded aims of the session as you go along will help to keep things moving forward so that the group does not get bogged down on a particular issue (sometimes lead by the needs of one insistent participant). This signposting function (as in the consultation) makes for more effective use of time.

How does this help to build relationships?

This approach creates dialogue, a prerequisite for effective participant/educator and participant/participant relationships. When participants appreciate that the educator is interested specifically in them, and not delivering something generic, there is likely to be deeper engagement, which improves relationships all round.

How does this help to structure the education?

As above, checking on learning needs can help structure the session and by linking learning to a wider programme of study participants can "see the bigger picture" This helps them engage with the learning on offer.

15// EVERYTHING WITH A PURPOSE (EWAP)

This is not so much a method of delivery, but more a way of talking about learning and what is going to happen in the session.

What it is for?

In advance, educators will naturally have prepared; the aims and objectives, the intermediate learning outcomes, the methods, the pace and rhythm of the session will be anticipated. Indeed, everything will have a purpose. EWAP is shorthand to remind us to express this purpose to the participants, succinctly and overtly, at the start and in a purposeful way.

When to use it

At the start of a session, or at the start of a new part or element of a session, when theory gives way to practical examples, or when there is a change of subject.

The set up: how to use this method

Introduce the next phase or the session as a whole using the EWAP approach; this means linking what is to be addressed, to why it is important.

This works best if the sentence takes the form "What … so that …"

Just as "go on" are the two most powerful, yet low effort words in a consultation, "so that" are very powerful words to speak to participants.

Examples

- Today we are going to work on Breaking Bad News ("what") … so that … you will understand what breaking bad news is all about. We will also do some practice (what) … so that you will be better at breaking bad news in future … so that you will have these skills honed ready for the CSA exam.
- Today we are going to hear the presentations you have prepared ("what")…so that you can get some practice in delivering education…so that you will have the opportunity to receive some feedback on your educational skills…so that you will acquire evidence for your ePortfolio for this important competency (Maintaining performance, learning and teaching).
- Today we are going to be working with a poet to explore how we deal with emotions ("what") …so that you can experience how processing emotions differently can help us develop increased professional resilience.

Explanations/timings

This initial explanation of what is going to happen should be very succinct – basically one sentence. By introducing the purpose of the session, participants are orientated to what they are going to be learning about and the purpose of such learning. Identifying what the EWAP sentence is going to be is also a crucial factor when planning. The purpose of the session needs to be crystal clear in the educator's mind if it is really going to land successfully in the minds of the participants.

Prepare your EWAP statement in advance (what) so that your preparation is focused and your choice of methods appropriate – ensuring that participants are engaged, understand what they are doing and why, and will be learning all the time. (I am sure you have got the idea!). EWAP does not necessarily mean that the session is rigid, prescriptive or teacher centred.

An EWAP sentence could just as well be "Today we are going to do some problem case discussion … so that you will get a chance to explore sharing cases, so that you will understand what other people find difficult and so that you can reflect on the usefulness of problem case discussions as part of your CPD. Such a sentence prescribes no specific outcome (for example "you will learn how to do an audit") yet expresses the purpose of the session clearly.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

The EWAP statement can lead into other engaging strategies, especially ENGAGE Hopes and fears and ENGAGE assessing learning needs at the outset. Knowing what the overall purpose of the session is means participants will be able to engage in reflection on what their learning needs are. In a well prepared session most of those needs will have been anticipated by the skilled educator, who will be prepared with suitable strategies for engaging with those needs. Debriefing the EWAP sentence really occurs in the review part of the session towards the end; referring back to the aims of the session and the learning needs expressed is a good way to encourage reflection and evaluation of the session and what was learned. See the EVALUATION section for strategies to achieve this successfully. Reviewing the learning also reinforces it.

Equipment/resources needed

Plan ahead, put the EWAP sentence on the board or a slide to reinforce it.

Skills to make this work even better

The skills for EWAP are really in planning and anticipation; clarifying the educational aims, objectives and intermediate learning outcomes leads to better training. Time spent thinking through what needs to be achieved and why, will pay dividends. Most of this handbook is really concerned with the "how" of education rather than the "what" (which will be inspired by the curriculum") or the "why" (which will be inspired by the outcomes…doctors who are knowledgeable, skilful, continuously developing, who pass their exams and become independent practitioners in their own right).

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

EWAP is always needed. Pitfalls could arise if the EWAP is poorly thought through, or, does not take account of the anticipated or assessed learning needs of the participants. This is why it is also important to assess those needs at the start of the session.

Applications in other areas of the session

EWAP statements can be used at any point when there is a change of emphasis or subject ("we are now going to do some skills rehearsal of the things we have been learning about … so that you can get some feedback, so that your skills will improve so that you will be able to use these skills in consultations and in your examinations).

How does this help to build relationships?

When participants know that their education is in the hands of someone who has prepared, who knows what they are doing and why, trust in the educational process increases. This increased trust in the educator means that participants are typically more engaged and more willing to work on difficult or challenging areas. This benefits everyone.

How does this help to structure the education?

Clarity about the "what and … so that" clarify the purpose of different activities, where the education fits in with wider agendas and makes the choice of activities and methods more purposeful. EWAP statements are useful as "transitional statements" or "signposts" at the start or within sessions, indicating clearly where the session is going.

This approach is sometimes called a "Transparent Method" because the educator's purpose and method is openly shared with the group. Explaining why you have chosen particular approaches ("what is going to happen…so that…") also helps participants to learn these educational approaches for themselves, so that they can use them other settings, for example when delivering training to others, in practice or multidisciplinary team meetings and so on.

16// TALKING STICKS

Time is what stops everything happening simultaneously; talking sticks can help stop all your participants talking (or snoozing) simultaneously.

What it is for?

This is a method to encourage all participants to talk and also to stop "cross talk" where more than one person is speaking at one, which reduces listening and fragments the group.

When to use it

Talking sticks can be used if discussing a tricky topic, or one where everyone wants to speak at once, to enable all to participate. Can be used to break up "rounds" in groups for example, where everyone is introducing themselves because the talking stick does not have to be passed directly to the person sitting next door, (See also ENRICH Making rounds effective).

The set up: how to use this method

Explain the purpose of the "talking stick"; whoever is holding the stick is the person talking and other participants should listen to that person speaking "so that" only one person talks at a time and to encourage everyone to have an opportunity to speak. When the speaker has finished they can choose who to pass the stick to (works well in introduction rounds), or participants can bid for the stick by raising a hand or similar, if they wish to follow on from what the current holder is saying. The "talking stick" does not have to be a stick, it can be any agreed token that indicates that the holder is the person speaking and being listened to. Traditionally I believe it was a conch shell, however, it can be any suitably sized object, i.e. clearly visible to all, easy and light to transfer between parties.

A variant is to give everyone some kind of token; if someone speaks they have to put their token on the floor and cannot speak until everyone else has had a chance to speak.

Explanations/timings

Only a brief introduction/explanation is usually required. Participants get the hang of it quickly if any issues are explained as soon as they arise. If the discussion is about something difficult, the educator may need to be sensitive as to whether some people are talking for too long, and find a tactful way to move to another contributor.

The debrief: maximising the benefits

The educator can summarise the discussion, emphasising the benefits of having heard contributions from all participants, and that people are heard better when there is no "cross talk", (several people talking at once).

Equipment/resources needed

A token of some sort to act as the signal for the speaker to have the floor.

Skills to make this work even better

The educator can demonstrate passing the token to another person – showing that it does not have to be the person next to them. In introduction rounds it can make people switch off if they are "waiting their turn to speak". It keeps groups alert if they do not know whose turn it will be next. The educator can invite reflection on what it feels like to have talk structured in this way and what effect it has on the group process. If everyone has a token in the variant described, the educator may like to summarise discussions and also invite reflection on what happens when everyone gets to speak including quieter members. Does the discussion take a different turn? Does it help people to feel they belong more in a group if they get a chance to speak?

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

Not all groups need this, many small groups will naturally allow all members to speak when they want to especially with alert educator looking for clues that someone wants to speak. Probably not needed in very formal situations, but useful as a backup if there is a lot of cross talking, confusion or non-listening in the group. Group exercises when well done can increase the sense of cohesion within a group. This method is not really applicable with very large groups, although the roaming microphone at large conferences is in effect, a variant of the talking stick.

Applications in other areas of the session

As with any "round" asking people to contribute, this can be used to punctuate a session if needed, to invite reflection on what has been learned so far and so on.

How does this help to build relationships?

Sometimes quieter members can find it harder to get a chance to speak and this method emphasises that all can contribute.

How does this help to structure the education?

Formal group methods like this can be used to break up a session, to enable discussion at relevant points and to help ensure all participate. Having a structure to the talk can feel containing and reduce anxiety, and can also enable to group to move on (after a summary) when everyone has contributed, which can help maintain pace and interest in the session.

17// PREPARING AN EDUCATIONAL BRIEF

When organising educational events, an educator often decides to invite a speaker from outside to give a session.

What it is for?

Inviting an outside speaker may be useful because they may have special expertise, they may be particularly effective at transmitting learning, or because the educator cannot deliver all the education personally. This technique gives some pointers about how to prepare a good brief for an outside speaker , so that they deliver what is needed, an appropriate amount of what is needed, and so that they allow space for the participants to ask relevant questions or get elaboration on points they find difficult.

When to use it

This is a preparation method. Use when planning the role of an outside speaker within a programme, conference or event, and for them to use as a trigger to their thinking and planning. If such interventions are well planned in advance they are more likely to meet participants' expectations and needs, so that they are more engaged and learn more from the session.

The set up: how to use this method

Before contacting the speaker to come and talk to your participants, the educator must carefully consider the PURPOSE of their talk; this means achieving clarity in the educators mind about the aims and objectives of the event or session, clarity about what the learning outcomes are being aimed for, and clarity about which methods of delivery are likely to be most effective. Assess the time available and how much material, and what kind of material, can usefully be covered. Will the session be about "knowledge transfer" (suitable drugs for hypertension), developing skills, "Working effectively with your team", or exploring attitudes and values ("How should you respond if a colleague is making a lot of mistakes?").

Explanations/timings

Consider using a template to clarity your own thoughts about what the purpose of an outside speaker is and what you would like them to cover. This should include the exact subject matter expressed as a succinct but clear title, a description of the content and a summary of the time constraints and allocation of time for discussion. There is an example, with a worked example, below (see References and resources)

The debrief: maximising the benefits

Debriefing in this situation is with the outside speaker; the educator should seek feedback on the proposed brief and agree the final form of the session with the speaker. Was the prior information helpful and can the speaker deliver on it? If not, what changes should be made?"

Equipment/resources needed;

Can be done in conversation, by letter or email, ensuring that the loop is closed by the speaker responding and commenting on what is proposed, to allow any further changes.

Skills to make this work even better

Use an explicit division into Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes with stated Intended Learning Outcomes, which are statements of things that participants should be able to do at the end of the session/training that they could not do before (see Reference 1).

Pitfalls/when NOT to use this method

Some speakers may have very fixed views about what their audience should be told and how they should learn. Tactful discussions may be necessary to tailor the expertise of the visitor to the actual learning needs of participants, which may be unclear to "experts". For example, a GP may be more interested in knowing when to refer, than in the pathophysiology of the disease, whereas, an ENT specialist trainee may be more keen to know how to perform a procedure or when to avoid doing certain procedures.

Applications in other areas of the session

This is a preparation method. However, referring back to the brief, especially if negotiated and modified by a "Hopes and Fears" and "Assessing learning needs at the outset" process, can be very helpful in retaining engagement of the participants throughout.

How does this help to build relationships?

If the speaker is well orientated to the learning aspirations of their audience, rapport will develop more rapidly. A good brief helps the participants to trust that the speaker will deliver what they need, so that they develop a positive relationship with the speaker and are more engaged.

How does this help to structure the education?

Good planning helps to ensure a good structure of a course over several sessions, and also means that the structure within the session is explicit and suitable for the learning.

References and resources

1. More information about intended learning outcomes and how to develop them is in *The Essential Handbook for GP Training and Education* by Ramesh Mehay.
2. Below is a potential form for an educational brief, with two worked examples. The first (page 49) shows a brief for a group of experienced General Practitioners coming to learn about the long term effects of a stay on ICU on patients. The second (page 50) is a similar brief but addressed to intensivists in training.

A simple template

Proposed Date and time
Speaker's name
Length of session
Title
Purpose and intended Learning outcomes
Structure of session
Educator/Chair present as well as speaker?
A/V and other equipment available
Size of audience

A brief for a group of experienced GPs; the comments in **bold** explain why the content is there.

Proposed Date and time: 1/10/2018

Speaker's name:
Dr JS Expert Intensivist (who works in ICU and runs clinics following up patients after an ICU stay)

Length of session: 1 hour

Title:
Coming home after critical illness; life after intensive care; what GPs need to understand to help patients recover

Purpose and intended learning outcomes:
Time in ICU or experiencing severe critical illness can have many long term consequences for patients and GPs are often left to "pick up the pieces", to try and help patients rehabilitate on their return home. Sometimes relatives come to the patients GP for information about ICU care , while the patient is still in ICU; it can be hard to know who to approach for information. **(i.e. the background and why this speaker has been invited.)**

The key issues to cover would be

- PHYSICAL IMPACTS – what is expected recovery like and should GPs anticipate any particular physical problems? What mitigates these?
- PSYCHOLOGICAL/SOCIAL IMPACTS – how are patients affected in ICU and what steps are taken to manage this for patients/their carers/loved ones? What steps mitigate these impacts?
- ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES – how are ICU services organised e.g. do patients have a named consultant? Is there any after-care?

(These elements start to focus the speaker around the issues important for this particular audience, and classifying them in this way also orientates the speaker about the ways in which GPs think.)

- PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS; what should GPS anticipate? How can they help patients? What help is available to support GPs/Their patients after ICU?

(These are effectively the intended learning outcomes.)

Structure of session:
The chair will introduce the speaker and ask the participants to reflect on any patients they have had who have recovered from ICU care, and what issues cropped up for the GP and patient once they were at home (i.e. the chair will do a basic ENGAGE Assessing learning needs at the outset).

In the light of the questions raised by the audience, a short presentation (20 minutes) is invited leaving around 35 minutes for discussion and questions. The participants are experienced GPs who will be keen to interact and discuss issues arising. The expected style is an interactive one and participants may ask frequent questions and initiate debate.

(This orientates the speaker to the preferred interests and style of the participants.)

Educator/Chair present as well as speaker?
This note is here so that the speaker knows whether they have to do all the work themselves or whether there will be a educator to assist the process. Its much easier to deliver a talk in a strange place if there is someone there to introduce you, get A/V working, etc.

A/V and other equipment available:
Laptop, projector sound, microphone available. Please email presentations in advance (to someone@preparation.ac.uk) as the IT security system will not permit download from data sticks, etc.

(Letting speakers know this info in advance means no wasted time when they turn up with an incompatible device, etc.)

Size of audience:
Variable usually – 15 to 30. Room seats maximum of 35.

Useful information for a speaker who will naturally approach an audience of 200 slightly differently.

A similar brief intended for a group of Anaesthetic trainees.

Proposed date and time: 1/10/2018

Speaker's name:
Dr JS Expert Intensivist (who works in ICU and runs clinics following up patients after an ICU stay)

Length of session: 2 hours

Title:
Managing the long term sequelae of a stay on intensive care and preventing long term morbidity.

Purpose and intended learning outcomes:
Time in ICU has many long term consequences for patients; there are techniques to minimise these and many ICU departments organise follow up clinics for their patients. This session is to cover the key issues in long term morbidity after ICU care and what can be done to mitigate the problems. Effective discharge processes also need to be covered.

The key issues to cover would be

- PHYSICAL IMPACTS – what are the potential problems/what is the evidence base for this, what evidence/guidelines inform the approach in ICU?
- PSYCHOLOGICAL/SOCIAL IMPACTS – how are patients affected in ICU and what steps can be taken to reduce these impacts? What about the impact on relatives?
- ORGANISATIONAL/QUALITY ISSUES – what should be done to improve outcomes? What care takes place post ICU? What quality criteria should be applied? What standards should discharge information meet?

See https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/system/files/TRG-CCT-ANNEXF.pdf

DOMAIN7 Domain 7: Comfort and recovery 7.1 Identifies and attempts to minimise the physical and psychosocial consequences of critical illness for patients and families 1 M, C 7.2 Manages the assessment, prevention and treatment of pain and delirium 2 D, I, C, M, T 7.4 Communicates the continuing care requirements, including rehabilitation, of patients at ICU discharge to health care professionals, patients and relatives 1 M, T, S 7.5 Manages the safe and timely discharge of patients from the ICU.

(These elements start to focus the speaker around the issues important for this particular audience, allows for the fact this is a 2-hour session and links it formally to the syllabus.)

Structure of session:
Total 2 hours, normally with break of 15 minutes for tea about midway. Aim to have some practical examples and discussions, not just PowerPoint slides.

Educator/Chair present as well as speaker?
No

A/V and other equipment available:
Laptop, projector sound, microphone available. Please email presentations in advance (to someone@preparation.ac.uk) as the IT security system will not permit download from data sticks, etc.

This information will also be posted on the Virtual Learning Centre after the session.

(Letting speakers know this info in advance means no wasted time when they turn up with an incompatible device, etc.)

Size of audience:
40 to 50