

Facilitating and Increasing Interactivity

Why Have Interactive Sessions/Active Learning?

It's Retention! People Retain:

5% from a lecture

20% from audio-visual

50% when they participate in a group discussion

75% when they practice what they learn

According to Research by the National Training Laboratory

Do Not Do's of an Interactive Sessions:

- Put the interactivity right before a break or the end of the session. It needs to be blended into the entire session. Otherwise, people will leave when you arrive to the interactivity.
- Do not use a facilitator/speaker for more than one interactive session at WEFTEC. These require a lot of effort and time ahead of WEFTEC.
- Wait until just before WEFTEC to throw it together or contact your speakers for the first time!

The Do's of an Interactive Session:

- Contact your Speakers/Facilitators well in advance and start working with them on how the session will flow and work with the interactivity.
- Make sure any PPTs are short and sweet. Long PPTs=Long Presentations.
- Start your session with some interactivity right away to warm the attendees up, could be as simple as some questions to get their feedback so you know who is in the audience and what their interests are.
- Make sure the speakers/facilitators stay for the entire session.
- Pick a solid facilitator who knows how to engage with the audience.
- Make a realistic timeline for the session. Don't try to cram everything in!

Suggestions for Facilitators/Leaders to Facilitate Interaction are:

- Don't lecture or just answer questions - redirect questions back to the group as a whole. Try not to inject too much of your opinion or ideas even though the interaction may be lagging.
- Watch for chances when the group seems to have "talked out" a point and push forward. Don't rush the group because of time constraints. If a good dialogue is occurring don't be constrained by a set number of tasks. Remember the goal is interaction.
- Help focus the discussion and keep it on the subject, but don't be the focal point, be the guide. Encourage everyone to participate, but don't force people to contribute. Tactfully interrupt those who tend to dominate the discussion and try to bring out those who are reticent. Direct a question at the reluctant participant that you believe they can answer or have an opinion.
- Avoid being judgmental. Try to get all factors and implications considered. Try to keep enthusiasm high.
- Summarize during and at the end of the discussion. Try to call attention to unanswered questions or issues.
- Be flexible - avoid the "classroom" approach - but keep the group moving and on target. Emphasize points of agreement and disagreement. Play the "Devil's Advocate" role - ask "what if ... "type questions.
- Record the session goals, small group reports, participants' comments, recommendations, etc. If possible, type the notes and distribute them to participants after the session.
- Questions to use in a Peer to Peer Discussion:
 - What reactions do you have to what has been shared so far?
 - What does this mean to you and your job?

- Do you agree with the presenter/panelist? Why or why not?
- What do you need before you can implement what the speaker recommends?
- What concerns you most about what the speaker just said?
- What do you think of this idea? Why?
- How would you apply this at your job?
- What obstacles are keeping you from doing this?
- What would it take to make this happen in your organization?
- What is the biggest barrier standing in your way to implement what the speaker just discussed?
- What's the one thing that sticks with you from this session so far?
- What are you going to do differently as a result of what you just heard?
- What one thing can you take away to apply to your job?

Good Resources on Interactive Sessions:

Sample interactive exercises: <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching/small-groups-and-discussions/sample-small-group-exercises>

Sample Interactive exercises: <https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/teaching-resources/classroom-practices/active-learning/interactive>

PPT Improvements: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjcO2ExtHso>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i68a6M5FFBc>