

UNDP/UNDRO
DISASTER MANAGEMENT
TRAINING PROGRAMME

***GUIDELINES FOR
TRAINERS LEADING
DISASTER MANAGEMENT
WORKSHOPS***

Part 1 TRAINERS GUIDE

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*Perhaps the most valuable result of all education
is the ability to make yourself -
do the thing you have to do,
when it ought to be done,
whether you like it or not;
it is the first lesson that ought to be learned;
and however early a man's training begins, it is
probably the last lesson that he learns thoroughly.*

Thomas Huxley 1825-95

*For learning to take place with any kind of
efficiency, students must be motivated. To be
motivated, they must become interested. And they
become interested when they are actively working on
projects which they can relate to their values and
goals in life.*

Gus Tuberville

*...the idea for a book on short-term training
came from our shared observations that many
workshops, seminars, and short courses are
absolute disasters...*

John W. Loughary
and Barrie Hopson

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The guidelines open with a brief discussion about training as a microcosm, or mirror, of disaster management. They identify audiences for the guidelines and review training terminology leading to a discussion on an appropriate learning approach. The section concludes with a consideration of possible workshop aims leading to the introduction of the 'experiential learning cycle' that links experience to analysis to action planning.

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Part 2. TRAINING AIDS

Part Two, which follows, aims to provide a practical 'tool-kit,' containing a range of products that trainers may find useful in undertaking precise training functions. This inventory includes checklists, sample forms, ideas for training activities, useful books, etc.

INTRODUCTION TO GUIDELINES

Linked Publications

There is a vast, and frequently confusing literature on the subject of management training, with almost as many theories of training and learning as there are books. We see little need, therefore, to repeat basic management training issues here. Rather, we suggest as a suitable companion volume to this guide:

Training Section, UNICEF *'How to Organize and Run Training Workshops, A UNICEF Guide,'* UNICEF, New York, 1987.

Since it is unnecessary to repeat the wise advice contained in the UNICEF Guide, the authors have concentrated on issues it does not cover, and focus this guide wherever possible on disaster related training. We suggest therefore that these guidelines be used in parallel with the UNICEF Guide, which can be obtained at no cost from:

The Training Section,
UNICEF
United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA

A more complete listing of useful publications on training is included at the conclusion of this guide.

In addition, these guidelines are a complementary document to the *'Guide to Developing Training Strategies and Programmes,'* by the same authors. It is envisaged that this Trainers Guide will be useful for staff once they have set up a national training programme.

Topic Overlaps

In introducing this Trainers Guide it is important to explain that there are many overlapping themes which recur within the text. The authors make no apology for this repetition since it is a consequence of the structure they have adopted and duplication can be a useful way to reinforce these vital subjects.

PART 1

TRAINERS GUIDE

Section 1

INTRODUCING DISASTER MANAGEMENT TRAINING

SUMMARY OF SECTION 1

The guidelines open with a brief discussion about training as a microcosm, or mirror, of disaster management. They identify audiences for the guidelines and review training terminology leading to a discussion on an appropriate learning approach. The section concludes with a consideration of possible workshop aims leading to the introduction of the 'experiential learning cycle' that links experience to analysis to action planning.

1.1. Disaster Management Training - a Microcosm of Disaster Management Practice

The ambitious aim of a disaster management course is to teach the principles and practice of the subject, with a focus on the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes leading to changes in patterns of behaviour. One fundamental issue needs to be stated at the outset of the guide which can increase the possibility of these aims being satisfied.

This is to suggest that the leaders of training courses be creative in considering the **entire** training course as a picture, or mirror, of disaster management. This principle should be applied to the following guidelines for trainers:

■ *Prepare*

At present you are preparing to train others. Your preparedness will probably involve programming, allocating tasks, contingency planning, improving your teaching skills and collaborating with others. In addition, the more conscientious participants of the impending course will also be spending time getting ready for the training experience. Excellent preparation can lead to an effective workshop. Conversely, the authors have some grim memories where the opposite was certainly the case. With a little adaptation it will be possible to use the concept of training preparation as an example of the importance of disaster preparedness.

■ *Maintain Aims*

In disaster management there is a need to maintain clear aims. These aims must be continually examined to see how they apply in a rapidly changing context. The same principle applies to the approach of facilitators running training courses which also need to be managed in a manner that is responsive to changing situations.

■ *Remain Flexible*

In disaster management there is a need to be flexible to respond to new opportunities and emergent problems. There is an identical need in a responsive workshop.

■ *Assess Needs*

In disaster management there is always a need to assess the specific needs of the surviving community, and satisfy them as effectively as possible. This is necessary even where the disaster preparedness plan has gone a long way to anticipate these in advance. In a training programme the leaders will also need to assess and monitor the individual needs of each participant, and to adapt the training seminar to suit them, rather than expect them to passively 'consume' a pre-packaged product.

■ *Become Accountable*

In disaster management assisting groups need to become accountable to the recipients of assistance as well as to their employers or the donors of aid supplies. The facilitators of a training course need to be similarly accountable to the participants in the training course as well as to their employers and the sponsoring agencies of the training. In addition, an effective workshop will involve participants becoming accountable to workshop leaders and even to their colleagues.

■ *Promote Participatory Management*

In disaster management there is a need to establish a 'bottom-up' system of management, where the recipients of support become actively involved, possibly through their own representatives, in determining how assistance is selected and distributed. In a staff development programme there is also this need to transfer 'ownership' of the training from the organisers to the participants, and this will only be achieved through their active involvement in various aspects of the course.

■ *Build Management Teams*

In disaster management the scale and complexity of the task demands the efficient application of teams. Therefore, individuals need to learn how to operate in a cooperative manner. Similarly, within an effective training course the staff will be welded together to operate as a group, but without surrendering individual needs and identities.

■ *Monitoring and Evaluation*

In disaster management a rapidly developing situation will demand that needs and the supply of assistance be continually monitored so that 'on-course corrections' can be made. Then in the final analysis the operation will need to be evaluated, to learn lessons and give account to the donors and recipients of assistance. The same principle needs to apply to a responsive training course to make certain that it is meeting the needs of the participants.

■ *Introduce Various 'Fail-Safe' Systems*

In disaster management lives depend on the need to keep all essential systems in duplicate (or even triplicate), so that if one fails another can be

used. Thus, telephone links will be in tandem to radio networks. Similarly in training, although lives don't depend on duplication, effective learning can be reliant on a variety of teaching and learning modes being used in parallel. An approach that may work very well for one participant, such as a case-study analysis, may not work well for another who learns better from participating in a simulation exercise.

There are many additional examples that could be cited in which useful links can be made between the disaster training and management. By using such associations it is possible to use the workshop sessions to reinforce the lessons that trainees gain from the workshop teaching approach and vice-versa. It is also clear that once introduced, this comparison can be used to promote a largely subconscious level of learning. The result can be a vivid, and continual reminder throughout the entire course of the critical elements in effective disaster planning and management.

(In Section 3.2 on page 34 a detailed job description is provided for a Workshop Leader)

1.2 Identification of Audience

This guide has been written with a specific audience in mind: the training cadre of staff working within the UN system with the responsibility of leading staff training courses in the Disaster Management Training Program (DMTP). This audience is likely to come from various UN agencies: UNDP, UNDRO, UNICEF, WFP, WHO and UNHCR. This group is the primary focus of these documents, but there are secondary groups also involved in training. They are the 'focal points' who will be asked to play a key role within the 'in-country' training programme.

Most of the senior staff listed above are professional administrators of development, and disaster assistance programmes, and training is not their main activity. These guidelines and training aids are therefore primarily directed towards staff in this situation. However, the authors hope that parts of these texts will also be of interest to experienced trainers.

1.3 Review of Terminology

Within the previous items a wide variety of words has been used to describe 'training,' 'organisers,' 'teachers' and 'participants.' Whilst there is a danger in becoming 'bogged-down' in a protracted discussion on definitions, it is necessary to raise the question of the key descriptions to be used in this guide and how each contains an important truth concerning the training process. Therefore, each of the following expressions are used at various points in the guide - to emphasise specific aspects of training. The preferred emphasis for the guide is indicated where descriptions are set in **bold type**.

Descriptions in Common Use

The Process Being Undertaken:

■ *Education*

'Education' is a long term process that is wide-ranging in its scope and purpose. It is concerned with the process of individual development in intellectual, moral and social terms.

Suggested Description

■ *Training*

'Education' and 'training' are frequently used interchangeably, whilst their meaning often overlaps, there is an important distinction. It has often been suggested that in culinary terms 'education' can be regarded as a nutrition guide, whereas 'training' can be likened to a cookbook. Therefore training is essentially a 'task orientated' pursuit as opposed to the much broader educational process. A training activity has clear aims to equip persons to become more effective in their work through the development of the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes leading to changes in behaviour. 'Training' is a more specific and appropriate term for use in this programme.

The Title of the Event:

■ *Training Programme*

This conveys the idea of a broad approach to training, in which a specific workshop may be just one element amongst many.

■ *Staff Development*

The overall process to enable the staff of any organisation to develop and thereby improve the organisation's effectiveness, through individual study, attendance at training workshops, etc.

■ *Course*

The term 'course' describes the overall teaching event, and emphasises the progressive nature of a series of related lectures, discussions, etc.

- ***Seminar***

A term borrowed from academia to describe a small discussion group for research and study. There is a weakness in this implied concept for the type of training described within this guide and this is that seminars are traditionally dependent on a 'guru figure,' (a highly knowledgeable resource person) being present to direct the discussion. In contrast the expression 'workshop' has a strong implicit focus on participation, with varied patterns of authority.

Suggested Description

- ***Workshop***

Whilst this has become a fashionable term, it is nevertheless a useful description that emphasises the need for learning through practical action, 'learning by doing' rather than through passive reflection.

Directing Staff:

- ***Lecturer, Instructor, Teacher and Presenter***

The above terms are all didactic expressions that imply that information and knowledge flows downwards from the above to those who need to learn. Whilst there is no doubt that some aspects of training follow this traditional route, the words give a false impression that assume a passive audience. Therefore a range of other descriptions are more appropriate to describe the directing staff responsible for leading an interactive learning process. These are listed below:

Suggested Descriptions

- ***Trainer***

In the UK, most dictionary descriptions relate the term to those who train racehorses, but the use here is of a 'learner-centred conductor' of a course, workshop or programme.

- ***Leader***

The person responsible at any stage in a course for the management and direction of a given activity. This person would therefore require a knowledge of training, disasters and the management of disasters. In addition, they would require leadership skills.

■ ***Resource-Person***

A knowledgeable person able to provide 'content' drawn from their wide experience of the subject under study. Such persons may be workshop facilitators or they may retain a more passive background role to be consulted by participants as required.

■ ***Moderator***

Sometimes this word is used to describe a chairperson. The term expresses the idea of arbitration or mediation between differing opinions. Often in a training context the word is applied to a person that introduces a given session, and performs an 'interpretive role,' linking the perceptions and needs of the participants with the presentation they receive. A moderator is therefore also a 'facilitator,' making certain that new ideas are related to the overall learning process of each participant as well as balancing or moderating different positions in the event of conflicts.

■ ***Facilitator***

The biggest enemy to learning is the talking teacher.

John Holt

In a similar manner to the way in which the term 'workshop' has been preferred to 'seminar,' the word 'facilitator' has gained in popularity over the term 'trainer' in the training sphere. This is due to its emphasis on allowing participants to assume responsibility for their own learning. Its use contrasts with that of the more didactic words lecturer, instructor, teacher and presenter.

The authors recognise the value and broad interchangeability of the terms noted above, since they each carry a different emphasis that will be appropriate in varied contexts. However, there is another term needed to refer to the administrative function:

■ ***Workshop Administrator***

There is a critical need to separate the role and title of the training, or workshop manager (with responsibility for the administration of the workshop) from the workshop leader or facilitator (with responsibility for the overall teaching programme). The workshop administrator has the responsibility for all the practical matters of the workshop such as accommodation, finance, equipment, booking resource persons, booking participants, publicity material, photocopying, transportation, etc.

'Recipients of Training'

■ ***Student***

This term has traditionally been reserved for a person studying within a formal academic institution in order to acquire knowledge and skills on a given subject.

■ ***Trainee***

Any person who is undertaking a training course.

Suggested Description

■ ***Participant***

A person attending the training programme, course or workshop. The expression is an accurate description of the active role that the recipients of training are expected to play in every aspect of the learning process.

The word is also useful since it avoids any hierarchical suggestion that there is a category of person who is a 'supplier' of useful knowledge to another person who is a 'recipient.'

At the outset of a workshop, or within the papers that precede it, there will be much value in asking the participants to consider the appropriateness of the above terms. Their selection will anticipate a useful debate, as outlined above, that will rapidly move away from the issue of terminology (which is not in itself of primary importance) to the broad philosophy of learning in an interactive, mutually supportive manner (which is a vitally important issue).

In Section 3 on pages 34-39 a detailed job description is provided for a Workshop Leader, Workshop Administrator and Resource Person.

1.4 Defining Aims of Training Workshops

If you don't know where you are going you will probably end up somewhere else.

Anon.

The first stage in design (of a workshop) is to translate goals into outcomes of information, behaviour or attitudes.

John W. Loughary
and Barrie Hopson

...be clear, and make it clear, where you are trying to get in the workshop, and what you want them to go away with, e.g. information, skills, inspiration, plans, networks. You may wish to follow up the workshop after a period of time to check out what they have applied.

David Gauchos

Overall aims and specific objectives for a training course need to be:

- precisely defined
- realistic, attainable within the duration and constraints of the course
- carefully related to the individual needs and job requirements of participants
- a balance between general and specific issues (This concerns the need to cover macro issues to provide the essential global, political and environmental context that participants need, with detailed attention to the everyday tasks of disaster management that may be specifically related to the local situation.)
- divided into specific objectives for the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes
- generally acceptable to all involved, i.e. sponsors, funding groups, organisers, the management team and the participants
- carefully monitored and evaluated during and after training

It will also be important to break these aims down into primary and secondary objectives so that leaders and participants are in no doubt as to the main objectives, which are not missed in the desire to satisfy less significant aims.

The following general objectives may form a useful basis for a definition of aims for a training workshop. There should also, however, be specific local aims that will need to be added since certain training programmes are established to focus on precise requirements. A typical example would be to familiarise staff with a flood warning system leading to evacuation planning.

These aims have been broken down into **Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes** linked with **Behaviour**, but it is important to recognise that in a short training workshop, say of one or two weeks duration, the primary focus will be on sharing Knowledge, with a secondary concern to learn about Attitudes.

Within a short course there will not be adequate time available to teach and test skills in any depth since many can take years to acquire. Therefore the aims that follow have been selected on the assumption that a workshop will only last two weeks with limited objectives. Five of the following aims relate to the growth of knowledge, four to the development of attitudes and three to the development of skills.

KNOWLEDGE

1. Stimulate curiosity and a desire to learn

The one real object of Education (Training) is to leave a man in the condition of continually asking questions.

Bishop Creighton, 1843-1901

The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery.

Mark Van Doren, 1894-1914

A well constructed course can create a powerful appetite for knowledge. This process occurs as participants learn how to relate their own experience of the subjects being studied to a wider spectrum of understanding.

If subjects are covered in a manner that challenges long established pre-conceptions this can result in questioning process that is an essential prelude to the development of new approaches and policy developments. The implications are:

Firstly, a concern to use very competent teachers who are able to communicate and inspire and are well informed on the subject, preferably with first-hand experience.

Secondly, a further implication relates to the necessity of a careful selection of participants.

KNOWLEDGE

2. Facilitate the sharing of knowledge between participants

Experience indicates that some of the most effective learning in training workshops is horizontal - where knowledge is transferred between participants, as opposed to being confined to the vertical flow of knowledge from instructor to trainee.

The implications are:

Firstly, to structure the programme to enable the participants to communicate through social events, group exercises and individual contributions.

Secondly, there is a need that will be further discussed in this guide to assemble the participants in the manner of a theatrical production to cover varieties of skills, hazards, work backgrounds, etc. If a workshop can be 'cast' in this balanced manner (and we recognise that it is a rare

opportunity), there is a high level of certainty that valuable mutual learning will take place.

KNOWLEDGE

3. *Impart accurate, relevant information that relates to current knowledge of disasters and their management*

Training that is directed towards senior officials has to achieve credibility and be authoritative. It is vital that accurate current information is conveyed as opposed to knowledge merely based on opinion and prejudice, or repeating outdated information.

This knowledge has to be concerned with **both** effective post-disaster response and pre-disaster preparedness and mitigation. Even if a participant's work is confined to pre- or post-disaster activity it is considered essential that all participants are made aware of the wider dimensions of disaster planning and response. Therefore the programme needs to cover the following sectors or phases: Mitigation, Preparedness, Emergency Response, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction.

In covering these sectors information has to be shared to build a broad awareness of current knowledge of hazard characteristics, vulnerability, disaster impacts, the response of victims and patterns of assistance.

The implication is to avoid a narrowly based approach to training. The scope of the programme should be sufficiently broad to embrace varied sectors and phases of disaster planning.

KNOWLEDGE

4. *Enable all participants to obtain knowledge about knowledge, to be aware of the location of useful information on varied aspects of disasters and their management*

Knowledge is of two kinds; we know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it.

Samuel Johnson 1709-1784

This knowledge will need to concern the availability of accurate knowledge to assist in disaster planning contained in books/reports/films/videos/historical archives/teaching materials/resource persons or agencies.

The implications are:

Firstly, to conduct a resource inventory on a national basis to determine what is locally available and how it can be used.

Secondly, to conduct a similar search but on an international level. This task will be a much easier undertaking than the local quest since many inventories have already been undertaken, including some specifically for this UN Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP).

Thirdly, the workshop should be used to help promote the need for local research to strengthen the knowledge of what actually occurs before and after disasters.

KNOWLEDGE

5. *Meet the individual needs of each participant to enable them to be more effective in their work in disaster management*

The teacher if he is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

Kahlil Gibran 1883-1931

The implications are:

Firstly, that a careful analysis of the specific needs of each person will be needed both before and at the outset of the training course.

Secondly, a flexible course structure will be necessary to adapt it to suit specific individual needs. A particularly useful device will be for each participant to be given the opportunity to undertake a work assignment that relates to their requirements.

Thirdly, the processes outlined above, to 'tailor-make' the workshop to suit individual needs implies that numbers are restricted to under 25 participants, with adequate resource persons to staff the programme.

SKILL

6. *Develop basic management skills*

In the final analysis, however, a person with good basic management skills will perform better in a crisis than somebody who is intrinsically a weak manager no matter how much disaster management training he or she has received.

Brian Ward, Director
Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC)

A subtle balance has to be maintained here. On one hand, it is important to recognise that participants have come to the training to learn about disaster management rather than general management, but as Brian Ward, Director of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, wisely states, the two subjects are indivisible. On the other hand, it is the authors' experience of many in-country courses that there are always a large number of participants attending with no previous experience of management training.

The implications are:

Firstly, management skills will need to be taught throughout the course, but through the vehicle of the specific disaster context.

Secondly, to include some broad aspects of management skill training within the workshop, such as: Time Management, Role-Casting, Delegation, Co-ordination, Assessment of a Situation, Data Analysis, etc.

Thirdly, to test some of these essential skills through simulation exercises of actual disaster management situations.

Learning is not a spectator sport.

Anon.

The more active the trainee, the more effective the training.

Anon.

SKILL

7. *Develop decision-making/problem solving skills expanding each participant's ability to gather data, analyze it, and resolve a problem in a systematic manner*

The winds and the waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators.

Edward Gibbons

...workshops are about work. Get people engaged in DOING things. Don't be distracted by people who want to argue points all the time. Do by all means handle questions but get people doing tasks as much as possible.

David Gauchos

All senior level disaster managers will need to develop problem-solving skills. Some will pursue these tasks in the 'normality conditions' of pre-disaster planning, where there is likely to be no more pressure than in any other management context. However, others (or possibly the same individuals who may prepare for disasters) can be suddenly thrust into a stressful situation where they have to make difficult decisions in a crisis.

The implication is to conduct exercises within the workshop where each participant is required to undertake a problem-solving task that will ideally relate to the type and scale of problems they confront (or may be called to tackle) in their work in disaster planning.

SKILL

8. *Develop each participant's ability to communicate effectively through the written and spoken word*

A frequent spin-off from training is improved communications. Because of the nature of training interactions, training becomes a vehicle for learning and practising all sorts of good communication skills.

Carolyn Nilson

Disaster managers at senior levels are likely to have a high public profile, with the need to regularly communicate with the public and other officials through their writing and speaking.

The implication is to conduct a workshop where each participant is offered ample opportunity to practice their written and verbal communication abilities in both formal and informal settings on other participants and facilitators. Through this process their colleagues can offer a constructive critique of their communication skills.

ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

9. *Build teams by constructing a group that can operate effectively together as an operational team*

People acting together as a group can accomplish things which no individual acting alone could ever hope to bring about.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt 1886-1945

Disaster planning is rarely an individual pursuit, rather it takes place within an integrated team situation where all the decision makers become increasingly dependent on each other for information, advice, analysis, implementation, mutual encouragement, etc.

The implication is to regard the participants in a training workshop as a disparate group of individuals who, through their contact with each other in formal and informal settings, as well as through a series of exercises, are welded together. This can enable them to act together as a single operating team.

ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

10. *Cope under pressure, aim to help each participant to handle the stress of a crisis situation*

You have the choice, you will either be managed by the crisis, or you will develop crisis management skills.

Jerry Adams, Evaluation Officer
Tear Fund

When a disaster occurs, a range of stressful situations confront the officials seeking to deal with the galaxy of problems they bring. These relate to the care of the injured, handling the dead, dealing with the acute time pressure and the need to make rapid decisions on very slender evidence.

The implications are:

Firstly, to describe the crisis conditions that will occur in a workshop, with practical advice on how to cope under this extreme pressure.

Secondly, the leaders of a workshop may wish to 'create' some stress within workshop activities, to test reactions and observe how participant's coped with the pressure. (However, considerable caution is advised, before mounting such simulations, since there may be persons present who will panic in such situations or others with health problems, etc.)

ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

11. *Face ethical dilemmas that arise as consequences of their management decisions*

For every problem there is a solution that is simple, direct and wrong.

H.L.Menke

Many decisions that are made to reduce risks, or manage assistance have significant ethical consequences on various groups.

The implication is to discuss these issues or dilemmas that pose such moral issues, in order to heighten awareness of ethical choices and consequences. Through such exposure attitudes may be challenged with the consequence of changes in the behaviour patterns of individuals.

ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

12. *Strengthen commitment to effective disaster management, to encourage a social concern to meet the needs of survivors and reduce the risks to the potential victims of disaster.*

It is inevitable that a minority of workshop participants will arrive at training courses in a very casual (perhaps even frivolous) frame of mind. Sometimes these attitudes reflect their previous experience and personality types, or they can result from them being 'drafted' as unwilling participants. Whatever the cause, these attitudes are expressed as a lack of commitment to the course, a lack of motivation to their assignments and, on rare occasions, even an apparent low concern for the needs of disaster victims.

The implications are:

Firstly, to watch for symptoms of this outlook while selecting the participants.

Secondly, to communicate the need for commitment and dedication by the example of all the facilitating staff, and by creating an environment where the overall group is able to exercise its authority over members.

If workshop leaders need a single aim for a training workshop, that embraces many of the above twelve objectives, it is very difficult to improve on Brian Ward's statement

The aim of disaster management training is to improve the skills of practising managers by:

- *upgrading their knowledge of the theory and practice of disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, reconstruction and recovery, and their relationship to development*
- *introducing them to the special tools of disaster management e.g. risk and vulnerability analyses, counter-disaster planning and crisis management.*

Brian Ward, Director
Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC)

1.5 The Experiential Learning Cycle

Help people think about the overall structure of the workshop by explaining the cycle and if possible where they are in the structure at particular points in time.

David Jaques

You cannot teach a man anything, you can only help him discover it for himself.

Galileo Galilei 1564-1642

The only kind of learning which significantly influences behaviour is self-discovered or self-appropriated learning - truth that has been assimilated in experience.

Carl R. Rogers

In much of the developing world, people learn by doing, not by being taught in formal settings. Experiential learning responds directly to this tradition.

Water and Sanitation for Health Project (WASH) 1990

*I hear and I forget,
I see and I remember,
I do and I understand.*

Confucius

The diagram that follows is an attempt to unravel the most effective learning process. This starts with personal experience which then progresses through a number of steps to the development of action plans. An official has to cope with some aspect of disaster planning. They then attempt to describe the event to others which will assist anyone analyzing the experience to make sense of it. Then, and only then, is it possible to move away from the experience to generalise from it with a view to its possible relevance to a future similar event. A plan is then formulated.

An example of the cycle is as follows:

The authors EXPERIENCED a minor earthquake whilst eating a meal in Mexico City. This caused them and their colleagues (working ironically on a seismic protection project) to rapidly vacate their hotel.

They DESCRIBED the event to various people and realised that their experience left much to be desired. For example, they reflected that it was decidedly unwise of one person to run from the restaurant to a bedroom to collect a camera during ground shaking. This could have cost him his life.

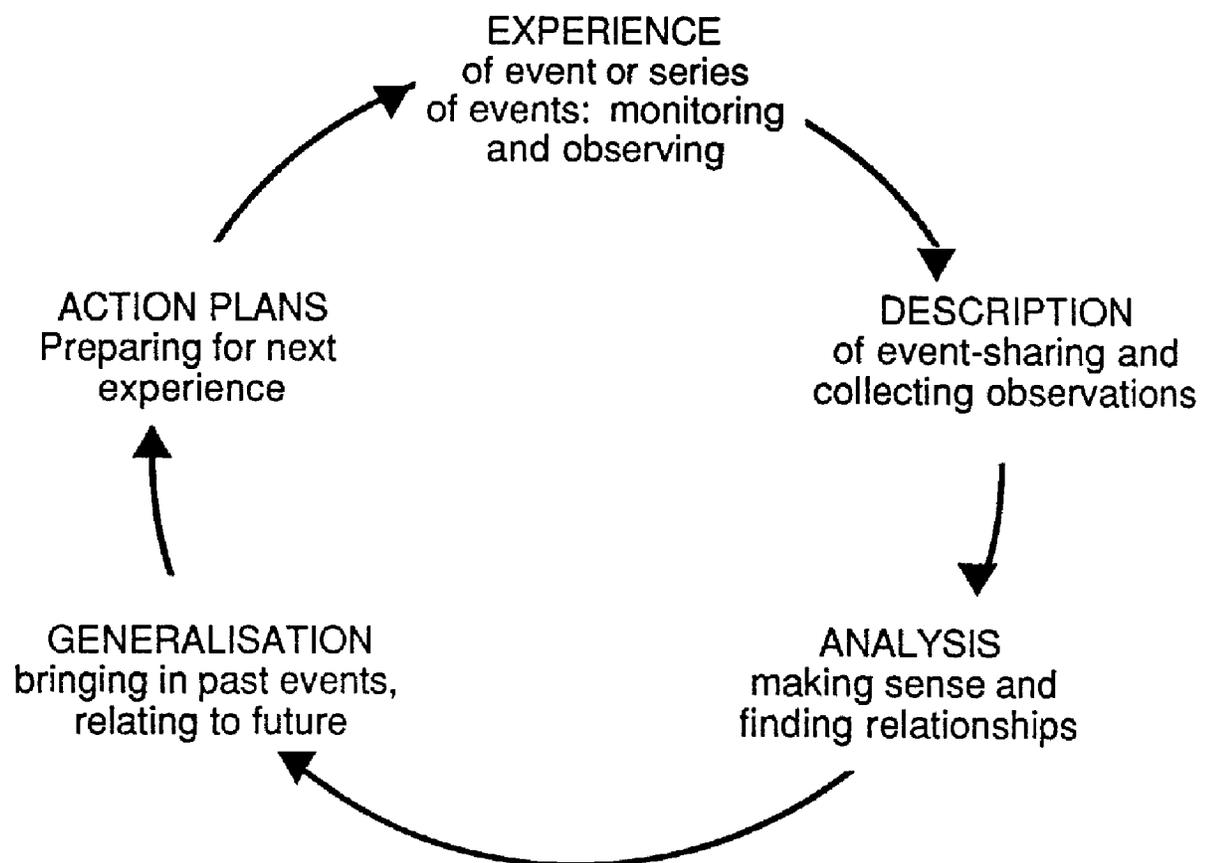
ANALYSIS then followed concerning the best ways to rapidly escape from their hotel during a further earthquake.

GENERALISATION then took place to comment on how this need to escape could relate to a much more likely risk, a building fire. Another realisation came as the authors recalled that similarly irrational behaviour is common practice during disaster impact.

Thus there was a consequent need to relate this awareness to the authors' 'ACTION PLANS' in developing public awareness programmes, as well as in personal protection plans for a possible future event, namely 'to worry less about photography than personal survival.'

It is worth noting that this sequence might relate to a past experience, as in the above example, or it could relate to the experience of both trainers and trainees are likely to gain in the forthcoming workshop. The cycle may not always start with experience, it may originate with the process of generalising (academics often start here) or the action plan may commence a learning cycle (the start of many entrepreneurs' 'learning experience' of wealth, or bankruptcy!).

Experiential Learning Cycle



From: Jaques David, 'Guidelines for Running Workshops,' Unpublished, Educational Methods Unit (EMU), Oxford Polytechnic, Oxford, Undated.