Moving from teacher to trainer (MTT1)

Resource 4: Planning

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The next set of questions will help you to start planning the session(s) in detail. These are the kind of questions that you will want to ask about the location of the session well in advance:

* Depending on the number of participants and the nature of the session, what sort of room layout do I require?
* What kind of equipment do I need?
* Will I have internet access?
* What does the school or location provide?
* Will technical assistance be available?
* If the technology fails can I still run the session?

How will you create a session from a module? Let’s take as an example the Reading Module. As trainers you will want to feel confident that you are familiar with the essential components of this module. First and foremost it is vital that you read the module thoroughly. It is important to focus on effective ways of presenting the module in order to ensure lively discussion and reflection around the essentials of good languages pedagogy and practice. Obviously the best beginning is to have a thorough understanding of what is in this module and how this relates to the concerns raised in the HMI report, frameworks and syllabuses, course books and exams! You need to be familiar with the structure of the module, recognising the significance of the key points, of those instances where pause for thought is recommended, and of the various session activities.

When using such things as Diamond Nine activities or ‘speed dating’ activities, of course we want teachers to enjoy these. But we do need to focus their thinking and discussion around the area of effective pedagogy rather than simply on immediate enjoyment and fun. So we may want to think about having a structured approach in which every ‘activity’ is followed by discussion in pairs or groups around a key focus or a brief set of questions e.g. which particular reading skills are we developing here? How is the pupils’ understanding of the perfect tense (or another element of grammar!) supported by this activity? How could you adapt this activity to make it appropriate for a different year group? Are there any learners who would feel excluded by this activity? What activity will follow to ensure progression in learning?

**So what does a session look like?**

Now let’s think about ‘stir and settle’ activities appropriate for an adult audience. Video or YouTube clips can be used to stimulate discussion and reflection. Some of these clips may actually be an effective way of opening a session on this module as they create an environment in which everyone will be able to contribute to the discussion. Let’s think about any clips that are recommended in the module and decide which and how many to use and for what purpose.

Many trainers may have limited experience of being a presenter, let alone drawing up an agenda and running a whole session, so you will need to work on timing a session and looking at just how much time needs to be allocated to each part of the session to make sure that there is the right balance of input, activity, discussion and reflection and that you fully cover what is on the agenda.

**Agenda for a 2 hour session**

Welcome and introductions 5 minutes

Brief overview of what will be covered in the session 5 minutes

**Focus 1**

**Focus 2**

**Focus 3**

Short break

**Focus 4**

**Focus 5**

**Feedback and discussion** final 5–10 minutes

**Session activity 2**

Plan the first session on familiarising participants them with the Module. Focus on planning in depth rather than breadth, i.e. discuss what resources might be used and how you can exploit these to the full, how you avoid ‘tips for teachers’ sessions; how you keep the discussion focused on learning and linguistic progression.

Discuss appropriate techniques and strategies for working with adults.

A whole day’s training is a huge commitment for a single presenter. If you are in the position of having to run the day alone then it is worth giving careful thought to how you can involve delegates in presenting part of the day. In our experience many teachers are often happy to present a language learning activity or a resource that they feel works well for them and for their learners. This mustn’t be left to chance. Trainers need to know in advance who is prepared to do this and what equipment they will need. Make it clear to participants how long you would like their presentation to last and that it will be used as the stimulus for another activity.