

Designing events to suit all communication preferences

Ideas from IAF sessions facilitated by Simon Wilson and Carol Sherriff
In the USA and UK 2007

Visual preference

Physical environment

Beautiful surroundings/ in a garden
Light/space/colour/flowers
Prepare posters appropriate to a session

Equipment

Use charts extensively, record everything visually
Handouts of overheads, PowerPoint
Lots of different colours on charts
Preprint images, logos, photos, icons – use postcards –
for associative thinking
Agenda of meeting, ground rules etc on nicely laid out flipcharts
Sand trays
Paints, glitter glue
Cluster cards/images on a sticky wall
Short but impactful videos
Graphics
Slides
Posters and pictures and banners
Handouts
Video clips
Different colour markers



Activities

Draw a picture of an image discussed
Create a vision using fabrics, drawing etc
Use of photos – icebreaker exercises and content
Create a collage of a kite then see if they can fly it (will need wind!)
Symbol to remind participants of point to remember
Metaphor, visualisation, meditation, visioning
Take photos and send after session

Facilitator

You – walk – live - message
Start questions with 'imagine' or 'picture'
Draw conceptual understanding
Use props and demonstrations
Use gestures
Use pictures to prompt idea generation

Auditory Preference

Physical environment

Background music, music on arrival and in breaks and music associated with different activities

Good acoustics
No distracting background noise



Equipment

Bells and buzzers
Use a chime to regain attention
Listen to video tapes
Videos with sound
Play an auditory tape of speech etc
Musical instruments

Activities

A listening ground rule that only one person speaks at any one time
Icebreakers – use musical instruments or alliteration or describe the sound of something, each group sing name to group and group sing back
Small group discussions and dyads
Share information with each other or invite people to share short stories to illustrate a point or example
Question and answer sessions
Hypnosis
Quizzes
Debates
Tell a story a word at a time
Associate learning or insight with a word to serve as a reminder - pneumonics

Facilitator

Reflecting and reframing
Varying own intonation
Using language effectively – choice of words, play on words, poetry, alliteration
Encourage people who take notes/record to listen to the rhythm and tone as well as the words and to look into the pauses
Speak with pleasant tones
Say 'silk' spell 'silk'
Vary pitch and volume

Kinaesthetic preference

Physical environment

Pay attention to temperature
Change room round
Food
Comfortable chairs

Equipment

Stuff to play with
Models to interact with
Handouts
Koosh ball
Pipe cleaners

Sticky notes
Cover tables in paper and provide crayons and pens
Toys – squeeze balls and things on tables
Prototypes

Activities

Physical energisers
Provide opportunity for individual reflection before speaking
Drama
Touching
Moving about
6 hats
Trust walk
Non verbal exercise – birthday order with speaking
Provide opportunity for individual reflection before speaking
Random introductions using balloons or similar
Modelling with clay or Lego
Have participants do a movement improve to illustrate a point or idea
Activity throwing a ball around
Role plays
Building something as a group
Exercises
Dancing

Facilitator

Ask them to inwardly reflect and internalise
Asking participants to check how they feel when...
Permission to request an energiser when energy drops
How room is set up – right leg clockwise – number 6

All systems

Gallery walk – walk, talk, see, write and draw
Mindmaps with energising and music in the background
Multi-media presentations and evaluation
Break out groups/activities using discussion/flipcharts/post-its and a spokesperson to de-brief
Recap and Review
Pleasant odour, different colour markers that they write with
Multi-sensory visualisation
Movement e.g. warm up
Facilitator position – control space, sit, stand etc
Attend to bodily comfort, silence, attitude, quality of music
Variety but coherent – setting and set up is appropriate



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