

Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC)

Training of Trainers – The Process



Peer-to-Peer teaching among student leaders is a very desirable objective. The Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC) would like to share with others what we feel is a successful and effective method of training presenters of workshops with the desired outcome being student lead, high quality workshops. Learn the process, experience some tidbits of the training, and take away solid ideas to encourage peer-to-peer training in your councils.

Workshops

1. Facilitation and Feedback
2. Visual Aids for Teaching
3. Trouble Shooting
4. Writing a workshop
5. Teambuilding and Get-to-Know You

The “Training of Trainers” program is an intense full day conference to train new student leaders and re-train student leaders who have previously participated in the training. For the most part, all workshops are actually taught by peers (high school and college students). After the participants have completed their workshops, using all the techniques they have learned that day, there is time to choose a topic and begin to flesh out an outline for a workshop that they might present in the future. It is a long, intense day, but most fruitful.

Workshop Highlights:

Facilitation and Feedback

- Identify the skills and traits of a good facilitator
- Share different ways to engage learners
- Discuss different ways to assess what we’re learning
- Determine different strategies for making a workshop fun and engaging!

Engaging in activities covers these objectives:

- Explore ways to give clear directions/instructions when facilitating activities
- Identify strategies to manage various participant behavior situations
- Discuss facilitation techniques and tips, including checking for understanding and attention getting strategies
- Define feedback and discuss the importance of effective feedback
- Distinguish between short-term feedback, long-term feedback, content feedback and presentation feedback
- Practice giving feedback

Visual Aids for Teaching

As 90% of learners are visual learners, this workshop is designed to teach by example – the entire workshop is facilitated without talking! Through the use of body language, facial expressions, paper and electronic visuals, the facilitator leads participants to explore:

- value of visuals
- factors to keep in mind
- types of charts
- use of color, shape, emphasis, variety, craftsmanship, materials
- hand lettering tips
- electronic presentations – wordiness, space, color, animations, transition

Trouble Shooting

The troubleshooting workshop is designed to:

- Discuss what it means to “plan for the expected” and “prepare for the unexpected”
- Utilize strategies to help negotiate group challenges
- Create a toolbox of strategies to help troubleshoot potential issues

Troubleshooting STARTS WITH YOU - The focus is all on the facilitators. Troubleshooting starts with the leader. Leaders do this through activities that re-evaluate self-responsibility during past failures and show the benefits of critical thinking, flexibility and remaining calm in sticky situations.

For example, in small groups, leaders would talk about possible “*sticky situations*”

Expected Sticky Situations

- People arriving late
- Someone forgot needed papers/handouts
- Someone is sick and unable to make it
- Traffic on the main roads leading to the event

Unexpected Sticky Situations

- A/V equipment not working
- Guest speaker is late or cancels last minute.
- A group debate/ conversation becomes very heated
- No internet access
- Room for the meeting is double-booked

Writing a Workshop

- objectives (action verbs)
- target audience (age, experience, background knowledge)
- theme (adds the element of fun and inspires activities)
- activities (helps the audience discover, collaborate, brainstorm, summarize, and review. A good rule of thumb is to have at least one activity to go along with each objective)
 - Take your favorite workshop activity - find a way to incorporate it
 - Remember your least favorite workshop activity - find a way to AVOID it
 - Consider - if you wouldn't want to participate in it, don't use the activity
- learning styles – different ways that people learn or engage (multiple intelligences)
- transitions – between activities
- check for understanding – techniques to be sure your audience is learning (debriefing)
- handouts – how to effectively use during the workshop and as a “take away” resource
- writing workshop outlines – time management incorporating “time and time running”

Teambuilding and Get-to-Know You

Purpose of games / activities

- Getting to know names
- Getting to know a little bit more about each other
- Discovering similarities and differences
- Establishing trust
- Building on existing trust
- Practicing Teamwork
- Letting loose and just having fun
- Creating a sense of unity
- Showing that it is okay to be goofy

Considerations

- How much time does it take? How much time is it worth? How much time do we have?
- Is it appropriate for: the age range with whom I am working? context of the event? time of day?
- What will the parents think when the student describes it?
- How well should students know each other before I use this activity? How far along should a group have developed before I use this activity?
- Will it expand students' comfort zones? Is it too far outside of some comfort zones? Will it make some students uncomfortable?
- Does it accomplish what we need to accomplish at that point in the program?
- Does it enable every student to connect with other students?
- If I am using it in connection with a workshop, does it further the content of the workshop? Can I draw a logical connection between it and the workshop content?

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