

Training Tips

We learn and remember more when we feel comfortable with the learning process. As a trainer, you can create a comfortable place for learning to take place. Learning about cancer can be difficult for many people.

Some Issues that Hinder Learning

- Fear of discovering that one has a high risk of cancer;
- Fear of exposing one's lack of knowledge to others;
- Fear of remembering painful memories of loved ones lost to cancer;

Other issues can include differences in learning styles and cultural beliefs and perspectives. At the beginning of your training, you can reassure the participants that these feelings are normal and will be carefully considered during the training session.

Below are some basic trainer qualities and communication skills that may help you. For more information about training, please use NCI's Trainer's Guide for Cancer Education that is included with the curriculum.

Some Qualities of Effective Trainers

- Understands the impact that her/his own behavior can have on the learners;
- Encourages learners;
- Patience and respect for the needs of the learners;
- Gives information in a clear manner and allows plenty of time for questions/discussion;
- Uses audio-visual aids (flipchart, videos, slides, etc) to keep learners engaged;
- Culturally sensitive and open to different ways of thinking about things;
- Adapts the training to meet the needs of the learners;
- Responds to sensitive and confidential issues appropriately;

Communication Skills

Voice

- Breathe from your stomach.
- Speak so that everyone can hear you.
- Use expression in your voice.
- Emphasize key words so that the audience understands the main points of the lesson.

Eye Contact

- Look around the entire room.
- Look to specific individuals throughout the room.
- For large audiences, look to general areas to establish contact.

Posture

- Use a relaxed posture.
- Walk around and use the entire area during your presentation.
- If sitting, rest your arms comfortably in front of you; don't slouch forward.

Gestures

- Use gestures that feel natural to you.
- Keep your hands empty so you don't distract the audience by clicking a pen, etc.

Pacing

- Speak at a comfortable pace.
- Do not use "um," "O.K." or "uh huh" to fill the place of silence.
- Use pauses or a faster speaking pace to emphasize key points.

Adapted from: Trainer's Guide for Cancer Education, National Cancer Institute; Training Design and Delivery: A Capacity-Building Workshop for CIS Trainers, National Cancer Institute; and Effective Training Techniques, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

References

Trainer's Guide for Cancer Education: Designed for lay people and health professionals who provide cancer education in a variety of settings. Includes sections on adult learning, planning, implementation, and appendices of tools to use in trainings. National Cancer Institute (2001), NIH Publication No. 02-5052.

