

THE CAPE TOWN
TRADE UNION
LIBRARY

TUC

METHODS
IN TRADE UNION EDUCATION

SUMMARIES AND CHECKLISTS

education
service

METHODS
in trade union education

VALUE OF INTRODUCTIONS

For the tutor:

- assessment of:
 - . students' experience
 - . problems and needs
 - . expectations
- setting the tone
- encouraging participation
- outline course aims and timetable

For the student:

- information about fellow students
- gets student involved from start
- helps build confidence
- understanding aims and methods of course.

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USING THE BLACKBOARD

When to use it:

- to set tasks clearly
- for diagrams and graphs
- for reinforcement of key points
- for summary

How to use it:

- aim for simplicity
- work out a clear structure (you may need to note down discussion points before transferring them to the board for summary)
- use attention points (underlining, colour, etc)
- keep contact with your students while you use it.

METHODS in trade union education

THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR

When to use it:

- to set tasks clearly
- for diagrams and graphs
- for reinforcement of key points
- for summary

How to use it:

- aim for simplicity
- work out a clear structure
- use attention points (underlining, colour, etc)
- keep contact with your students while you use it

Materials needed:

- felt pens
- transparencies

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THE PROCESS OF TRADE UNION EDUCATION

discovery work
and reviews

Experience

New Information

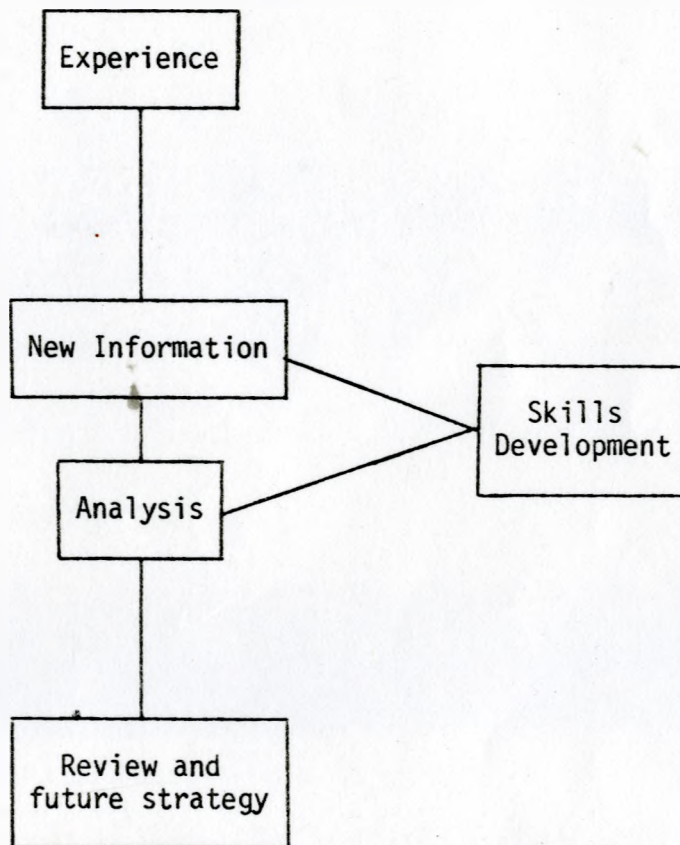
small group tasks
problem-solving
case studies

Analysis

Skills
Development

small group tasks
reinforcement and
consolidation

Review and
future strategy



METHODS in trade union education

DEVISING TASKS

Discovery methods are based largely on setting tasks for individuals or - more usually - groups of students. So choosing the right task is crucial.

Here are some of the various types of tasks that are used in TUC education:

Comprehension - asking the group to draw out key points from a handout, pamphlet, or guide, rather than 'presenting' this information.

Attitude/approach - asking the group to set out their views generally on a particular topic.

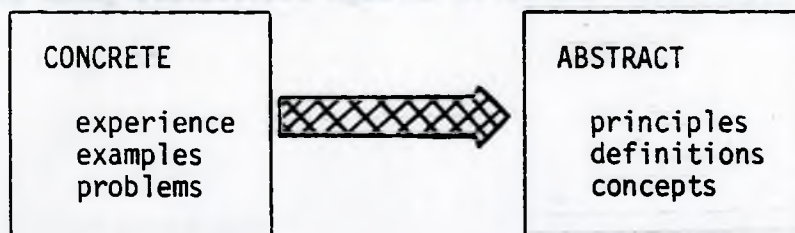
Problem-solving - setting problems for the group and asking them what steps they would take to resolve them.

Discovery exercise - asking the students to find certain information/documents from their own workplaces, in order to bring them along as examples for the class.

Strategy/priorities - asking the group to set out their priorities for change, and their strategies for action.

Case study work - setting a situation for a role playing case study, with aims for the group to achieve.

HOW PEOPLE LEARN:
from examples to principles



Trade unionists come along to courses with their experience of work, the union, management, the working environment, the problems they have, and so on. The tutor should frequently draw on this experience for examples of the jobs union reps do, and the problems they face.

You can use questions like these:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| <i>'give me an example of....'</i> |) <i>issues such as:</i> |
| <i>'what was the most recent case you took up....?'</i> |) <i>grievance safety,</i> |
| <i>'how many of the group have been involved in....?'</i> |) <i>organisation</i> |
| <i>'has anybody faced problems with....?'</i> |) <i>problems,</i> |
| |) <i>agreements, claims,</i> |
| |) <i>discipline,</i> |
| |) <i>and so on.</i> |

'Concrete' questions like these are much more useful than 'abstract' or general questions. And they are much less likely to lead to an embarrassing silence as students don't understand or don't see the relevance of a general question.

Compare these two questions, which are getting at the same thing:

- 1 *'What are the main objectives of unions in collective bargaining?'*
- 2 *'Give me an example of an improvement in wages and conditions that the union is trying to negotiate with your employer.'*

Question 1 is very general, formal, and very likely to fall flat.

Question 2 can be answered concretely, and could lead immediately to a useful discussion of union bargaining priorities. The tutor can then summarise this discussion, drawing out a number of key principles.



This order of doing things - moving from concrete examples, problems, and experience, to principles and concepts, is very much more effective than trying it the other way round. People develop concepts through comparing and analysing their experiences - just as young children develop their ideas about the world through activities, games and play.



These materials come along to courses with their experience of work, the nation, management, the working environment, the problem they face, and so on. The latter should frequently draw on this experience. The examples of the job order type do, and the principles they face.

You can use questions like these:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Give me an example of... | 1. What was the most recent case? |
| 2. What was the most recent case? | 2. How did you...? |
| 3. How did you...? | 3. Just half of the group have been... |
| 4. Just half of the group have been... | 4. How many...? |
| 5. How many...? | 5. How many...? |
| 6. How many...? | 6. How many...? |
| 7. How many...? | 7. How many...? |
| 8. How many...? | 8. How many...? |

Concrete questions like these are much more useful than 'abstract' or general questions. And they are much less likely to lead to an abstracting reference as students don't understand or don't see the relevance of a general question.

Compare these two questions, which are asked at the same time:

1. "What are the main objectives of labour in collective bargaining?"
2. "Give me an example of an improvement in wages and conditions that the union is trying to negotiate with your employer."

Question 1 is very general, formal, and very likely to fail flat.

Question 2 can be answered concretely, and could lead naturally to a useful discussion of union bargaining practices. The latter can then summarise this discussion, drawing out a number of key principles.

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TEACHING PRACTICE - CHECKLIST

1 Introduction

- Were the aims of the session made clear?
- were the key points to be covered in the session introduced?
- was the subject put into context as part of the longer course?

2 Setting the Task

- was the task manageable?
- was the task clearly set and understood?
- were all groups set the same task?
- were chairperson and secretary called for?

3 Supervising the Groups

- were the groups allowed time to settle?
- did the tutor supervise without dominating group discussions?
- were groups allowed adequate time to finish the task?

4 Report Back and Discussion

- were aims of the discussion clear?
- were group reports used to make comparisons?
- was further questioning used in order to clarify key points?
- were examples called for on every main point which arose?
- were students encouraged to show their knowledge and experience?
- did the tutor jump in with answers too readily before asking for replies and examples from the group?
- was documentation used actively?
- did the analysis of the subject develop as the discussion progressed?
- were all key points reinforced verbally and visually?



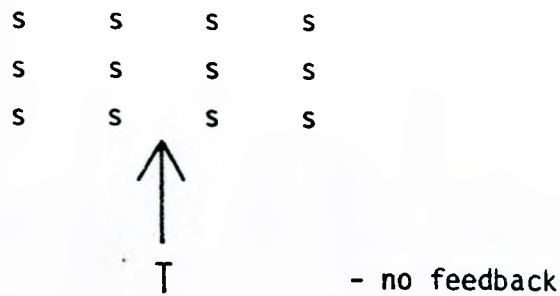
5 Ending the Session

- did the tutor give a summary?
- were implications for action discussed?

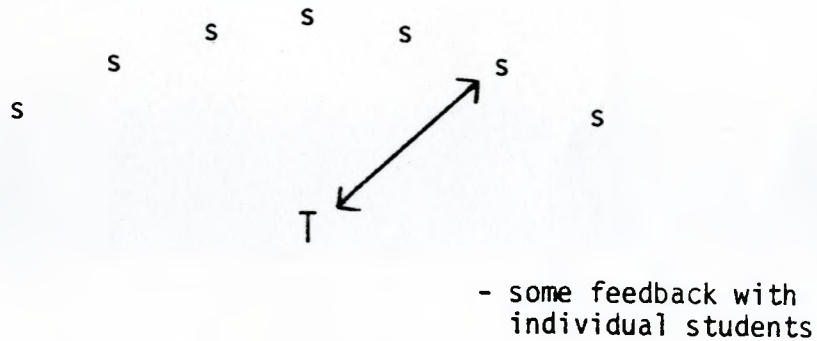
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ILLUSTRATION OF FEEDBACK

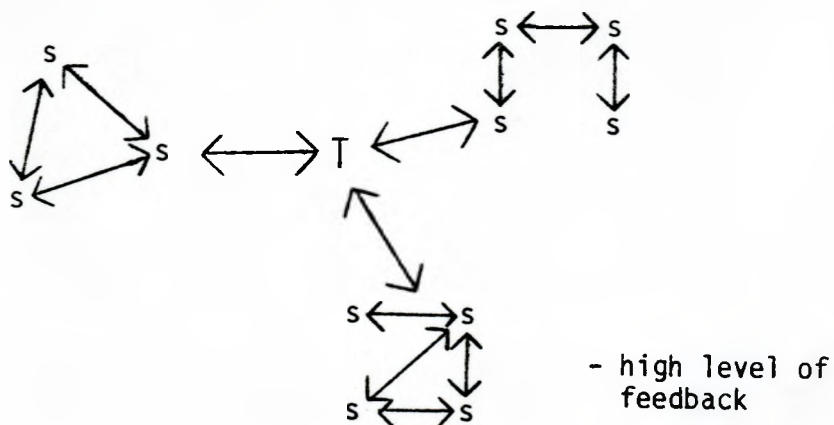
1 The lecture



2 conventional managed discussion



3 small group work



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DISCOVERY METHODS

SUMMARY CHECKLIST

- * start from the EXPERIENCE of the students. What are their problems, experiences, and expectations? What examples would they supply?
- * Build in TASKS and ACTIVITIES to achieve each major aim you have for the course. People 'learn by doing' - not by being talked at. Think about the SKILLS the students will need to develop.
- * SUMMARISE the KEY POINTS established at each stage of the course.
- * End each major part of the course with - as far as possible - a positive note. Get the students to consider their STRATEGY for converting the lessons of the course into some ACTION.

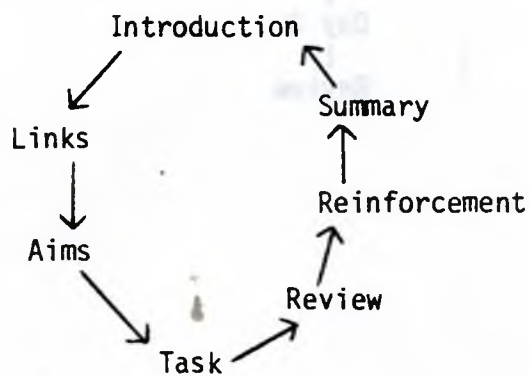
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PLANNING A COURSE

A session

The general pattern of any session should form a cycle, like this:

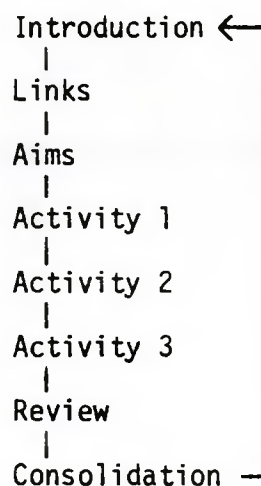
SESSION STRUCTURE



A day

The pattern of a day can be made up of a number of these cycles. The day should have its own introduction and summary, as well as those for each cycle:

DAY STRUCTURE



You can see that a basic circular pattern is repeated.

A course

The pattern of a course can be built from a series of days like this. Again, the course should have its own introduction and review.

Introduction

Aims

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Review

