Manual on Training Skills

- What Are Required Skills for Training?
- Tips for Conducting Training
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Glossary

Facilitation: Facilitation is the activity and process to help a group do something more easily by such means as discussing a problem, and giving advice, rather than commanding them what to do.

The word “Adult Learner” is used to emphasize the difference between conventional training and training for changing the behavior and habit of adult training participants. The word “Andragogy” is used as a disciplinary framework of the Adult Learner.

Rapport: Rapport means a friendly relationship in which people understand each other very well. This is an important precondition to facilitate a group.

Case Method: Case Method is a group training technique for analyzing and making decision with narrative documents that explain an actual event. Case Study (Method) is also used with the same meaning.

Ice-Breaking: Ice-Breaking is a short activity designed for helping participants overcome initial anxiety in a training session and/or to bring familiarity among participants. In most cases, this activity is conducted at the beginning of a training session.

Energizer: Energizer is a short activity that develops a feeling of readiness and recovers faded tension for the next session or learning event. Many involve some form of physical activity.
What Are Required Skills for Training?

To cover all required skills for training is far beyond the scope of any comprehensive manuals. Required skills for training are infinite, and new skills are developing in the field day by day. Therefore this manual covers selected basic and general topics for beginners who need to conduct some training without any relevant background.

“Concept of Facilitation” and “Adult Learner” are particularly important ideas for organizing training. They are abstract and not necessary practical, but it is useful to know them.

Concept of Facilitation

“A person who helps a group do something more easily by discussing problem, giving advice, etc. rather than telling them what to do.”

Cited from Oxford Advanced Dictionary

To give a unanimous definition to the word “facilitation” is not an easy task. This word includes various functional meanings and it is not possible to find another word that can replace this word wholly.

To understand the word “facilitation,” a definition is cited above from a popular English dictionary. The definition includes three important characteristics.

First, a facilitator does not command a concerned group to do something but
help them do something by various means. When the group needs some skills and knowledge, the facilitator works as a trainer to help its members acquire them. When the group does not work well due to internal conflicts, the facilitator holds a workshop as a catalyst to promote a discussion to solve such conflicts. In other cases, the facilitator advises the group on how to solve a problem. However, the advice is not a direct solution but the process or method to find a solution.

**Second**, a facilitator is required for group work. If an individual needs help and advice to solve a difficult situation, other methods like Coaching or Mentoring would be applicable.

**Third**, although the definition above does not mention explicitly, a facilitator is not a member of the concerned group. Neutrality is an important precondition for facilitating the group. However, this condition is not necessarily applied in real cases. A manager or team leader may be asked to work as a facilitator.

Facilitation may be applied in many situations, and training is one of the situations that require facilitation.
**Adult Learner**

When organizing a training session or course, the characteristics of the adult learner should be well understood. This is particularly important if a training designer wants to help adult participants learn through the training course.

One core understanding is that the adult learner should be treated differently from a primary school student and a school-like approach is not appropriate for the adult learner.

The following are good starting points for reflecting some distinctive characteristics of the adult learner in the training course.

**Personal Experience**

- Adult learners come to training with various and vast experiences. It is critical to use such experiences in the process of learning.
- An active use of such experiences is to compare the learner’s previous experience with new knowledge or an expected new situation.

**Motivation**

- The adult learner learns best when the contents of training meet his or her needs and interests.
- The training designer should make sure how the contents of training link with the participants’ needs and interests before conducting the training.

**Various Learning Styles**

- The learning styles of adult learners vary because they have developed their own.
- To manage that characteristic, the training designer should prepare different styles of learning opportunities such as lecture, discussion, group work, and individual exercise.
Further Study for Adult Learners

Malcolm Knowles, a prominent scholar and practitioner on adult education, puts forth the following model as foundation stones of adult learning theory.

1. The need to know. Adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it.

2. The learners' self-concept. Adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, for their own lives. They resent and resist situations in which they feel others are imposing their wills on them.

3. The role of the learners’ experiences. Adults come into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from that of youths. This difference in quantity and quality of experience has several consequences for adult education.

4. Readiness to learn. Adults become ready to learn those things they need to know and be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations.

5. Orientation to learn. In contrast to children’s and youths’ subject-centered orientation to learn (at least in school), adults are life-centered (or task-centered or problem-centered) in their orientation to learn.

6. Motivation. Adults are responsive to some external motivations (better jobs, promotions, higher salaries, and the like), but the most potent motivators are internal pressures (the desire for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life, and the like).
References

Tips Before Training

The role of a facilitator starts before conducting a training course. It is a responsibility of the facilitator to prepare a good environment for the training. The following is some knowledge required before starting the training course.

Advance Information Dissemination

Training participants must have certain information on a training course before attending it. They have a variety of expectations for the training course that determine their seriousness. In other words, the training participants must be prepared to accept new knowledge and information in the training course. If the participants have the wrong idea about the training course, they will have difficulties in accepting what is taught in the course.

The following information should be given to the training participants with the invitation.

- Objectives and outputs of the training course
- Schedule of the course
- Topics and applied methods in the course

If a topic of the training course seems to be little-known, some reference document should be distributed in advance.

Although it would be helpful to distribute textbooks and handouts to the training participants in advance, this may not be practical due to the very poor
state of postal and parcel delivery service in Cambodia. In addition, a certain number of training participants may forget to bring such materials to the training course when they are distributed in advance. Thus enough spare materials should be prepared for the training course.

**Venue and Environment**

The selection of an appropriate venue for the training course is a very important part of training preparation. It is strongly recommended to select the venue and room carefully considering the required conditions for conducting the training course.

The following are general points to consider for selecting the appropriate venue and room in Cambodia.

**Room size:** Room size should be appropriate for the expected number of training participants. Although a room that is too small is not an option, one that is too large is also problematic.

**Tables and chairs:** The venue should be equipped with enough tables and chairs. Simple pipe chairs that are easily moveable are preferable. Tables are not necessary indispensable, but a sufficient number of tables are required when some exercise using the table is planned.

The available number of whiteboards and boards for flipchart also must be checked.

**Tidy environment:** The room should be tidy and well maintained. Items that are not required for training must be put away.

**Power supply:** A computer and a LCD are indispensable for training these days. Thus the venue should have an alternative power source in case of power failure.

**Air conditioning and lighting:** The venue should be equipped with air conditioning and lighting. It is particularly important to check air conditioning in advance and see if it works. If the air conditioner is weak or poorly maintained, the training course is seriously spoiled.

**Location of the room:** It is better to choose a room on the ground or first floor as the training venue. When the room is located on the third floor or a higher level, it is ideal to have an elevator in the building.

**Catering service:** If the training supplies lunch and coffee during breaks, they are part of the training course. It should be checked whether there is enough
and comfortable space for a lunch and coffee break in the venue.

**Parking**: When the training participants are high-ranking officials or high profile people, it is necessary to make sure that the venue has enough parking space for their cars.

**Table and Chair Arrangement**

When the training course is planned, the facilitator should give enough consideration on the table and chair arrangement. To promote learning in the training, the table and chair arrangement should be appropriate for promoting the participants’ communication.

The following examples are for around 20 training participants. If the training participants are more than 30, alternative measures to promote participants’ communication must be applied in addition to the table and chair arrangement.

1) **Traditional Classroom Table Arrangement**

![Facilitator](image)

This arrangement is popular but not very effective for promoting mutual communication among the training participants. The facilitator often dominates the training and the training participants become passive.
2) Open Meeting Style Table Arrangement

This arrangement allows the participants to learn and communicate with each other. However, much of the learning process still depends on one-way communication, i.e., the presentation and instruction by the facilitator.

3) Round Table Arrangement

This arrangement is effective for promoting mutual communication among the training participants. In this example, a round table is located in the center, but the table itself is not always necessary. When the facilitator expects a more informal and relaxing atmosphere, only chairs are needed.

Pre-Work (Pre-Assignment)

The training course is likely to be more effective when the training participants prepare by themselves well before the training course. A helpful means for this purpose is to give the training participants pre-work. This is also to help establish supportive expectations for the training course. The following pre-work would be given to the training participants.
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- The participants are requested to collect the information and data to use in the training like sample letters and reports for an effective writing course or some project documents for a project evaluation course.
- The participants are requested to analyze and produce data on a certain issue as preliminary work for further analysis in the training.
- The participants are requested to read complex or long documents that are close references to the main topic of the training.
- The participants are requested to identify existing problems that are closely related to the theme of the training course.

Meanwhile, pre-work is not effective in the following situations.

- Expected participants are extremely busy.
- Expected participants are top management persons who may feel uncomfortable with any enforced tasks.
- Expected participants are expected to react negatively to the pre-work.
Tips in Training

The facilitator needs various skills and knowledge in the training course apart from the sector-specific knowledge that is treated in the course. The most important one would be how to behave appropriately in the course. For this purpose, the following sections show some theoretical knowledge, but the appropriate behavior depends on each person’s personality and no universally applicable style exists. In other words, each facilitator can behave differently in the training course and different styles can be appropriate.

Some tips are closely related to the skills and knowledge to promote the learning of the participants in the training course. When the facilitator wants to use those tips in the course, it would be better to use them repeatedly in actual training courses. Although it may not be easy to use them effectively at first, one would recognize the effect of the tips gradually.

Behavior of a Facilitator

Friendly but Serious Behavior
Friendly behavior is important, but do not forget seriousness. In particular, when any problems and hindering manners by the training participants are recognized, the facilitator should stop them decisively but politely. Time management is also one of the important roles for the facilitator. The facilitator should be punctual. When the participants look sleepy or seem to lose concentration, the facilitator should insert Energizers without hesitation.

Catalytic Behavior
The facilitator should behave as a catalyst: the person who promotes an important change for the training participants. The facilitator is neither a commander nor a schoolteacher. When the facilitator behaves like a schoolteacher, the participants may feel less inclined to cooperate.

Learning Behavior
The facilitator should be always ready to learn from the training participants. This attitude helps the facilitator react to various situations in the training
course flexibly. It also sends a good message to the training participants by showing the facilitator's openness and respect.

**Rapport and Communication**

Communication with others has two types: non-verbal communication and verbal one. Experienced facilitators can use them appropriately and establish good rapport with the training participants.

**Non-verbal communication** is done through such means as facial expression, standing position, and tone of voice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Look/Facial Expression</th>
<th>A smile or calm facial expression is effective for establishing good rapport with the training participants.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eye Contact</td>
<td>The facilitator should maintain frequent eye contact with the training participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing Position</td>
<td>Sometimes the facilitator may want to bend the body slightly to the training participants. That shows that the facilitator is paying attention to the participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>A calm and stable voice is preferable. It also helps to speak slowly when appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Verbal communication** is done through exchanging words and sentences with others. The following techniques are popular ones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Closed Question</th>
<th>This question can be answered with a yes or no. When the facilitator wants to know a specific fact, this is a useful technique.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Question</td>
<td>This uses an open question word like “what,” “how,” and “why.” This question can help inquire some topic and issue in depth. It is a useful technique to draw information that is not clearly explained by the respondent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paraphrase and Rephrase

The paraphrase is to repeat a statement using different words. Sometimes it has almost the same effect to rephrase the statement as it is. This technique has two merits. First, when the training participant reacts positively to the paraphrase by the facilitator, the facilitator can make sure of his or her own correct understanding. Second, the paraphrase or rephrase can increase familiarity between the facilitator and the participant. It is a popular technique to establish rapport.

Group Discussion

To disseminate knowledge and information, a lecture or classroom-style training is efficient but not always effective. Although trainees can acquire new knowledge at the time, such knowledge may quickly fade out from their memory. Given an opportunity to utilize such new knowledge in a positive way, trainees can retain the knowledge more effectively to a certain extent. A popular means is to organize a group discussion in the training course.

The simplest way to organize a group discussion is to give key questions to the participants and facilitate the discussion. When a group discussion is applied in the training course, the following matters should be considered.

**Size of Each Group:** To promote maximum participation of the participants, the size of each group shall be around six to eight members.

**Key Question:** The key questions should be open-ended. Questions that can be answer with a yes or no or have only one correct answer are not appropriate.

**Process Management:** The purpose of a group discussion is not to look for one exact correct answer. Thus it is not necessary to intervene and correct the discussion. However, some kind of intervention will be helpful when the discussion stagnates.

**Presentation:** It is good to present results of the group discussion to the participants. However, the facilitator should not spend too much time in such presentation.
The Case Method is also applicable to the group discussion. Instead of key questions, documents containing information and data are given to the participants. This is an effective method to deepen the understanding of the participants and develop management skills. This method was developed and used at Harvard University in the 1980s.

It is a useful method but has the following advantages and disadvantages.

**Advantages:**

**Reality:** The participants can discuss the topic in a more specific and realistic way.

**Analysis:** The participants are encouraged to analyze the situation without any risk to one’s present status.

**Objectivity:** The participants understand that other people see situations in different ways and grasp the need to see problems from various perspectives.

**Disadvantages:**

**Experienced Discussion Leader:** To apply the Case Method properly, it is necessary to appoint an experienced discussion leader. The leader should know well how to phrase the questions to stimulate and keep the discussion on track.

**Frustration:** The participants tend to feel frustrated at first when they find there are no specific conclusions, answers, or recipes in their discussion.

For a reference on the Case Method, a sample set that was actually applied in the training course is shown in the Appendix 1.

**Ice Breaking**

Ice-breaking is a useful tool at the beginning of a training course. It is considered to have the following effects.

- a. Creates an intimate feeling among the training participants.
- b. Creates an atmosphere to be ready for the training.
- c. Detaches the training participants’ mindset from their routine work.

Below are descriptions of the effects above.
a. When the training participants do not know each other, ice-breaking for knowing each other is strongly recommended. This is meant to “Create an intimate feeling among the training participants.”
b. When the training participants know each other well, some easy group work related to the training is effective. This is to “Create an atmosphere to be ready for the training.”
c. When the training participants know each other well but seem to be still preoccupied with their office work, some physical activity can help change their mindset. This is to “Detach the training participants’ mindset from their routine work.”

The simplest and most common exercise for Ice-Breaking is **Self-Introduction**. When the facilitator wants to conduct self-introduction in an effective way, the following sequence is useful.

1) Ask training participants to write their names and expectations for the training on sheets of paper.
2) Those sheets of paper are posted in the room.
3) Each training participant is requested to introduce himself or herself in front of those sheets.
4) At the end of the training course, the facilitator can use those sheets of paper to review the training. One simple question is good enough: “Whether their expectations are fulfilled or not?”

Other sample exercises are shown in the **Appendix 2**.

**Energizer**

An energizer is applied when the facilitator wants to change the atmosphere in the room. This is especially useful after a long lecture and presentation, dull topics, and lunch break. It is sometimes considered a type of ice-breaking. No general rule exists on when the Energizer should be done in the training. However, it is appropriate to insert an energizer when the facilitator observes that the training participants lose concentration, interest, creativity, and any positive response.

Here is a simple and common exercise.
- Just ask the training participants to stand, straighten the back, and stretch arms.
- Ask the participants to move around the room like from one end of the room to the other.

When the facilitator gives some instructions to the training participants, he or she is recommended to speak loudly and clearly. In addition, the facilitator should not forget a sense of humor and fun.

If there is enough time, other intensive exercises are recommended as shown in the Appendix 3.

**References**

Tips After Training

Review of Own Facilitation

One important task for the facilitator is to make sure of the effect of his or her own facilitation in the training course. This is a bit different from the monitoring and evaluation of the training course.

For this purpose, self-reflection after the training course is a useful tool. One simple question is enough: Do you find any issues to address for the next time?

If the answer is “Yes,” it is a positive indication and the facilitator should take notes on identified issues and solutions. Such a facilitator is on the right track.

If the answer is “No,” the situation is alarming. If possible, the facilitator should check the training participants’ responses to questionnaires. If this cannot be done, the facilitator should ask some training participants how they feel about his or her facilitation in the training course. It should be a rare case that some person’s facilitation is perfect and there is no room for improvement.

It is recommended that the questionnaire include questions about the facilitator, if one to evaluate the training course is applied.
The following cases are prepared to organize Group Discussion after delivering the lecture on the internal rule of council.

(Orientation Seminar on Basic Principles for the Sub-National Administration Management conducted from June 15 to July 01, 2009)

**Case 1**

“Council A” approved the calendar of its ordinary meetings for the period of 12 months with the clear information of date and venue of the meeting at the second ordinary meeting. After conducting the 4th Ordinary Meeting, the citizens within its jurisdiction complained that the venue of the meeting is too small and so many citizens lost the chances to observe the ordinary meetings. After receiving such claims, one councilor decided to bring this issue in the 5th Ordinary Meeting to solve this claim.

Please discuss what kinds of actions and decisions should be taken by the Chairperson and above-mentioned Councilor?

**Case 2**

Based on the local need, one Provincial Council had a meeting about the need for preparation of Deyka on preparing and managing electricity to lighten the public place in the provincial center. After the preparation of draft by consulting with relevant people, Council prepared its ordinary meeting to review and approve this Deyka. A total of Council members is 19 persons and during the meeting, there were 18 councilors attended with the chief of Council being the chairperson of the meeting. When the chairperson of the meeting had asked councilors to raise hand for supporting, there were only 09 persons supported. Even the supported voices were not more than half of the councilors, the chairperson of the meeting said approve this Deyka.

After implementation for a period, there are 05 councilors consulted with the Chief of Council to amend some provisions in the Deyka. The Chief of Council agreed and decided to include it in the agenda of the next ordinary meeting’s Council. Even though there has not had a meeting to amend the Deyka, three (03) councilors of the five who had asked to amend that Deyka had a meeting with citizens and told them that ‘On behalf of Provincial Council, I would like to inform citizens that in the near future, the Provincial Council shall expand the
preparation of electricity in every place of the our provincial center.

**Questions:**
1. Does the approval of Deyka of the meeting chairperson made appropriately? Why?
2. Is the agreed decision of the Chief of Council to include the agenda of Deyka amendment in the ordinary meeting of Council made appropriately? Why?
3. What do you think about the performance of the above-three councilor?

**Case 3**

Provincial Council “A” established a “Citizen Well-being Committee” to provide advice and recommendations to concerned ministries in order to enhance the well-being of citizens under its authorities. In order to facilitate its work, this committee invited a professor from a provincial faculty to work as its consultant. During meeting with local citizen, a member of the council talked to a group of citizens. Finally, the citizens requested the council to improve the garden at riverside so that citizens can go to take a rest there. To respond to this request, council members asked the provincial governor to study and if possible the garden shall be improved immediately according to citizen’s request. The study showed that the provincial office can do that. Therefore the provincial governor issued order to improve the garden according to the request of the above council members.

**Questions:** Among these above activities, which points are not consistent with the spirit of the sample of internal rules of MOI? And how to do to make that be consistent with these internal rules?

**Case 4**

“Council D” held 8th Ordinary Meeting. The draft meeting report was prepared by the Administrative Director and distributed to all council members in 5 days prior to the next meeting. After the discussion at 9th Ordinary Meeting, the council concluded that some important information was not included and the draft report needed to be revised.

Please discuss what kinds of actions and decisions should be taken by the Chairperson and Council?

**Case 5**

This provincial council was reviewing the annual budget plan at an ordinary meeting. One councilor began stating his opinion on the draft annual budget
plan, and he did not seem to finish his comments after half an hour.
What the chairperson can do to manage this situation?

After a while, the same councilor and another councilor started a quarrel about some budget issues, and they did not seem to stop for over half an hour. Other councilors just kept quiet.
What the chairperson can do?

After this meeting, some councilors decided to request for revision to internal rules in order to ensure that no one dominates the meeting, and all the councilors can have equal opportunity to share their ideas and opinions at the meetings.
What kind of articles could possibly be added to the internal rules?
1. Creative Introduction

When the facilitator wants to conduct the self-introduction in more creative way, following process is recommended.

1) The facilitator asks the training participants to group into pairs.
2) The pairs are requested to interview one another for five (5) minutes or so.
3) One participant introduces another partner to the group members: name, organization, partner’s expectation from the training, etc.

This exercise also contributes to enhancing the behavior to listen to the opinions from other training participants. If it seems that the training participants are not familiar with listening to others, this is worthy to do at the beginning of the training course.

2. Common Concerns Checklist

The training participants are given an opportunity to express their feelings about the training course at the beginning of the training course. Following process is applicable.

1) The facilitator requests the training participants to give their negative concerns that may occur in the training course. It may be possible to give some examples at first.

Example
- Lecture is boring.
- The content of the training is too difficult.

2) The concerns suggested by the training participants are listed on the whiteboard or flipchart. (10 minutes)

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3) The facilitator asks the training participants to choose the most important three from the listed concerns based on participants’ consensus. (10 minutes)

4) The facilitator and training participants agreed to avoid chosen concerns.

This is also effective to increase the satisfaction of the training participants. The facilitator can know negative concerns born by the training participants in advance. Meanwhile, the training participants will also appreciate the acceptance of their negative concerns, if the facilitator shows certain respect for their concerns in the training course.

3. Paper Tower Game

The training participants are given an opportunity to work together. This exercise includes some physical work, so it is also applicable as the Energizer.

The model process is as followings.

1) The facilitator requests the training participants to form groups. One group is adjusted to be around four (4) members.

2) Thirty sheets of A4 size paper, scotch tapes, and a pair of scissors are delivered to each group.

3) Ten (10) minutes are allocated to discuss how to make a paper tower as tall as possible only by A4 size paper and scotch tape. During this period, actual work is not allowed.

4) Ten (10) minutes are allocated to make a tower per group. During the actual work, the participants are prohibited to use verbal communication each other.

5) The facilitator checks which group builds a tallest tower.

6) If time is enough, the facilitator can ask the comments on this exercise to the training participants like a difficult point to work together.

This exercise is also effective to lean the teamwork including leadership, cooperation, participation, communication, etc.

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2 This idea comes from Team Building, written in Japanese, Kimitoshi Hori and others, 2007, Nikkei Publishing Inc.
One basic rule should be kept when the exercise for the Energizer is conducted. Anyone who is not willing to join the exercise can observe the exercise. One of main purposes is relaxation. The facilitator never gives any tension to the training participants.

1. Gentle Rain

1) The facilitator asks the training participants to stand and follows his/her instruction.
2) The facilitator asks to tap the palm of one hand with one finger of other hand.
3) Then two fingers are tapped with the palm of other hand, then, three, four (4), and whole hand.
4) At beginning, the action is conducted slowly. Then, the action is speeding up gradually.
5) When every participant can’t speed up any more, this is the end of this exercise.

2. Trust Fall

1) The facilitator asks the training participants to form a circle of around eights (8).
2) One volunteer is selected and stand the center of the circle. The volunteer is requested to close eyes and stand stiffly.
3) The facilitator asks the volunteer to fall back and the members of circle catch the volunteer.
4) One member who catches the volunteer gently passes the volunteer to the next person of the circle.
5) When the volunteer returns to the first member of the circle, this exercise is end.

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3 This idea comes from Participatory Workshops, A source book of 21 sets of ideas & activities, Robert Chambers, 2002, Earthscan Publications Ltd.
4 This idea comes from The Winning Trainer.
6) If the time is enough, the facilitator asks another volunteer and repeat above-mentioned process.

7) Before completing this exercise, the facilitator is better to ask the volunteers how they feel during this exercise; frightened, comfortable, etc.

3. All move who....

1) The facilitator asks the training participants to form the circle with their own chairs.
2) The facilitator stand the center of the circle and say “All persons who is wearing something blue”
3) The participants who wearing something blue should move to other vacant seat. The facilitator also moves to some vacant seat.
4) The person who doesn’t get a vacant seat gives another instruction.
5) 15 to 20 minutes may be good enough for the refreshment.

Example of the instructions
- Wearing neck tines
- Get to the training venue before 7 o’clock
- Participants out of Phnom Penh or certain province

Attention
This exercise is energetic one, so this may be appropriate for rather younger training participants. Of course, anyone can be an observer.

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5 This idea comes from Participatory Workshops, A source book of 21 sets of ideas & activities.