

# Teaching

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## Learning Process



Learning is more than gaining knowledge or increasing skills. Learning involves a change in the way we think, act and feel. A participant is more willing to learn if the lessons are well organized, interesting

and important to him/her. Getting the participant involved will make learning more interesting.

Principles of learning:

- The information must be meaningful and of interest to the participant.
- The learning process will be effective as long as the program objectives are clear, realistic and relevant to the participant's situation/needs.

- Practice leads to effective learning.
- Learning is increased by reinforcement.
- New habits do not automatically substitute old habits.
- Learning must be organized in sequence for cumulative effects.

Barriers to learning in the adult situation:

- Fear of failure- to be involved in a situation that may damage their self-concept.
- An acquired dislike for school.
- The influence of stress and anxiety- not knowing what to expect or what is expected can lead to a stress level that may interfere with the learning process.
- The attitude that "I'm too old to learn."
- Competition for the adult's time- people tend to spend their time doing things *they* believe are important.

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## Teaching the Low Income Audience

### Understanding the Audience

Warmth, acceptance, respect, and sincerity are basic to a teacher/learner relationship. This principle applies both when the professional teaches the paraprofessional and when the paraprofessional teaches the program participants. Paraprofessionals need to acquire an understanding of the program audience and to appreciate the fact that different people have different values. It is important to recognize and respect the values of other people with whom one works. Paraprofessionals who anticipate and accept these differences can help build a cordial, trusting relationship with the program participants.

Paraprofessionals should understand that learning is likely to take place when the learner:

- Is motivated, thinking, feeling, doing, and involved in the content of the lesson.
- Feels a need for information or a new way of doing.
- Sees how a new information or behavior can be personally useful.
- Gains satisfaction from learning.
- Develops standards against which new behaviors are judged.
- Continues to grow after there is self-motivation.
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### Identifying Needs and Interest of the Audience

Encourage paraprofessionals to note the needs of the program participants and share these observations with the FNP agent. Teaching plans can be modified to meet these needs. This is crucial in holding the participant's interest. Paraprofessionals must distinguish between needs the program can meet and those it cannot. Some problems should be referred to other agencies, but paraprofessionals should be careful not to promise results that depend on the decisions of those agencies.

The face-to-face approach is personal. It allows discussion of the participant's interest, concerns, and needs. This human element establishes the rapport which facilitates learning. During training, discuss ways by which paraprofessionals can engage participants in conversations and how to get participants to accept the paraprofessional.

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## Getting Clients to Accept You

- Get to know your clients (name, interest).
- Set dates of group meeting when it suits the most clients.
- Let clients know how long the meeting will be.
- Be friendly.
- Find something to praise. Something important to the client.
- Let them know you are there to teach them nutrition information.
- Make them feel that their participation is important.
- Start where they are.
- Talk at their level.
- Teach them only as much as they can learn at one session.
- Keep information simple.
- Be a good listener.
- Ask for their ideas and suggestions.
- Encourage them to ask.
- Be sincere.
- Be willing to admit you don't know something but will try to find the answer.
- Let them know you had to learn before you could help them.
- Don't be too critical.
- Be satisfied with a little progress, at first.
- Keep private any information about the client.
- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Be patient and courteous.
- Ask them to help you during the lesson.
- Write things down.

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## Teaching Methods

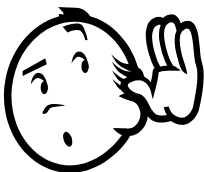
Many teaching methods used in training paraprofessionals can be adapted to help them teach program participants. It can be mentioned that learners enjoy and benefit from a variety of teaching methods that actively involve the learner. Educational materials used for teaching should attract the interest of the learner, should be easy to understand and should provide for feedback so that the paraprofessional can tell whether learning is taking place. When teaching low income audiences:

- Use examples generously and always ask yourself, "Does this fit the experience of the low income client?" A good instructor must be familiar with the audience's way of life and avoid references that mean little to the participants.
- Be explicit. Never assume that the participant has the same background and information than the instructor. Start from the beginning.
- Explain all the details. Use many illustrations. Repeat often. Summarize several times. Have participants explain what they heard or understood. Go slowly and be patient.
- Avoid creating frustrations in the participants. Be prepared. Have materials, handouts, and resources on hand. Is it expected that the participant have supplies available for the learning situation? Can the participant(s) read well enough to follow written instructions?
- Plan learning experiences for other family members, particularly for children. In contacts with low income clientele, paraprofessionals will interact frequently with other members of the family.
- Plan for success. The participant should experience success—no matter how small—as quickly as possible.

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## Teaching Techniques: Listening



Teaching techniques involve listening, seeing, and doing. Maximum learning occurs as the learner progresses from listening to seeing and doing.

Teaching techniques that involve listening are used to increase a person's knowledge.

**Lecture:** An individual gives facts to a group on a topic of interest. There is little or no chance for the audience to participate.

**Discussion:** Group of people say what they know, think, and feel about a topic. Group discussion may be used to give information and share ideas. Conducted by group leader.

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## Teaching Techniques: Seeing

Teaching techniques that involve seeing may help participants use and apply knowledge they have learned.

**Demonstration:** The demonstration is an oral and visual presentation of how and why something can and should be done. Demonstrations help the learner visualize some things that may be hard to understand and it presents subject matter in a way that is easy to understand.

**Tours:** Tours give learners the opportunity for new experiences and information, allowing them to see things in their natural setting, and provide them the opportunity to learn by doing. Keep in mind that tours require detailed planning and organization.

**Illustrated Talk:** Adding illustrations or visuals to a talk or lecture increases the learning that will occur in the session. Examples of illustrations would include: charts, pictures, transparencies, food models, posters, visual aids, and diagrams. Illustrations should be large enough for the audience to see and read.

**Exhibits:** Exhibits use words and objects to show and tell basic ideas on a specific theme. To prepare an effective exhibit, you need to know your purpose in doing the exhibit. (For FNP, nutrition exhibits include a display, handouts and the program assistant must interact with the people seeing the exhibition. Nutrition displays are usually in the libraries and health clinics.)

### **Get Creative with Other Ideas:**

- fortune cookies with nutrition messages
- Put nutrition messages in unexpected locations...floor, bathroom, ceiling, lights, etc.
- bumper stickers
- placemats with nutrition tips
- cartoon characters featuring fruits and vegetables
- nutrition fortune tellers for waiting rooms
- puzzles with nutrition messages
- book covers
- nutrition messages in church bulletins
- coloring books
- grocery-cart messages
- magnets with nutrition themes

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## Teaching Techniques: Doing



Teaching techniques that involve doing may also help participants use and apply knowledge they have learned.

**Workshop or Work session:** In a workshop or work session the learner is shown how to do a particular thing and

then given an opportunity to do it under the guidance of the instructor (program assistant).

**Role-playing:** In role-playing, the participants act out a real-life situation for the group. The learners put themselves in the places of other persons and see how they would react in a situation. Role-playing is followed by a time for discussion (how the role-players felt, observations by the group).

**Judging:** Judging is the process of comparing quality with an established standard. Practicing of judging helps the learner to make wise choices. The learner develops the capability to observe carefully, recognize good products, improve their work and be a better buyer.

### **Get Creative with Other Ideas:**

- plant a garden
- teach canning
- Field trips to the grocery store
- Dress up like their favorite fruit or vegetable
- playing charades in the nutrition classes
- asking parents to give their testimonials on feeding toddlers, picky eaters, etc.
- puppets for the children's classes
- crossword and seek-and-find puzzles about nutrition
- Nutrition Stations—Have a nutrition clue at each station related to a mystery nutrition message. Make it a mystery and not just “5 a Day.”
- Nutrition Bulletin Board—Have participants create a nutrition bulletin board.
- Nutrition Graffiti Board—anything with a nutrition Zing goes!
- Nutrition Skits—Have clients make up their own
- Nutrition Talk Shows—Letterman’s Top 10, dress like Oprah or Fergie.
- Nutrition Rap Songs

# How to Be an Effective Trainer

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## Effective Communication

A good trainer communicates well with the group. To communicate effectively, the trainer should:

- Be sure that information is presented at an appropriate level, so that it is informative without being overwhelming.
- Develop a good relationship with the group so that they feel comfortable.
- Listen as well as talk. Active listening sends the message that the speaker is valued, respected, accepted, and understood. Active listening means paying close attention to what the speaker is saying & feeling and then stating back in your own words your understanding of the meaning and feeling.
- Be straightforward, nonjudgmental, tolerant.

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## Non-Verbal Communication

If two messages—one nonverbal, the other verbal—are received at the same time, the nonverbal message is usually the strongest.

Personal appearance, such as clothing, hairstyle, and accessories, sends a message about you. Cleanliness, neat & pressed clothing, and only a mildly scented cologne give a professional image. Obvious displays of material wealth and status, such as expensive jewelry, can cause others to react defensively.

The major nonverbal ways to communicate are personal space, facial expression, tone of voice, eye contact, gesture, and touch.

Nonverbal signals are perceived in groups. Facial expression is the first signal to be noticed. A relaxed, pleasant expression, along with a voice tone that is calm, controlled, energetic, and enthusiastic—all of these show support. Eye contact is a must.

To seem personal, patient, and sincere, you should look at people instead of down at notes, attempt to connect physically through a handshake or gently touch, and avoid frequently looking at your watch.

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## Techniques for Working with Diverse Cultures

The following techniques are recommended for trainers working with diverse cultural groups:

- Learn all you can about the target population. Especially try to understand reasons for habits that are unique or different.
- Value and respect cultural differences.
- Show an interest in individuals and the community.
- Use facial expression, tone of voice, hand movements, and reassurances to show emotion.
- Communicate in the same natural manner you would use with others, but be aware of language problems. Speak slowly and allow extra time to communicate. Avoid slang and jargon.
- Include the target population in your planning.
- Appreciate different ways of communicating.
- Be comfortable with silence and do not fill every gap in communications.
- Be open and direct in giving feedback.
- Talk about differences and address fears.
- Be tolerant of other value systems.
- Remember that all members of any group are not the same. Treat people as individuals. Identify by race or cultural origin only when relevant.
- Substitute substantive information for ethnic cliches.

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## Qualities of Effective Trainers

Good trainers have the following important qualities:

- Genuine enthusiasm for teaching and learning
- Patience
- Maturity
- Energy
- Ability to identify with and care about others
- Ingenuity
- Flexibility
- Friendliness

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## Teaching Adults

One of your primary functions is to work with parents, and because adults learn in different ways from children, special skills are required.

Adults are used to making their own decisions and managing their lives, so they prefer to be independent and self-directing in learning experiences. Treating them as children is threatening and will interfere with learning.

Adults have a background of experiences which serves as a resource for learning. To ignore this experience may be seen as a sign of rejection of the person and will hinder learning.

Adults are ready to learn when they are confronted with personal problems that they must solve. Consequently, learning should deal with the individual's current problems or projects.

Adults are motivated to learn by a need for recognition and the desire for a better quality of life for themselves and their children.

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## Organizing Presentations

All presentations should be consciously divided into three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion.

### *Introduction*

- Introduce yourself or identify the speaker.
- Tell the group how they will benefit from the lesson.
- Describe the lesson.

### *Body*

- Develop the ideas mentioned in the introduction.
- Include at least one activity in which the group can participate.
- Encourage a comfortable relationship between the group and the leader to enhance participation and interaction.

### *Conclusion*

- Let the group know that the lesson is about to end.
- Make it clear that questions and comments are expected and welcome.
- Summarize the main points of the lessons.

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## Leading Group Discussions

Trainers should start discussions by emphasizing the importance of everyone's participation in the discussion. The following list details specific skills and actions to lead group discussions successfully:

- Tell the group what the rules are so all will know up front what is expected and allowed.
- Make people feel comfortable with the group by allowing social interaction.
- Tolerate silence. If you encourage participation and wait long enough, someone will eventually take responsibility for directing the discussion.
- Guide gently, encourage interaction. Facilitators ought not to allow themselves to become the focus of the group. Look away from speakers who speak only to you and not to the group. Wait for others to reply to the speaker. The trainer should participate only to refocus or guide discussion.

- Phrase questions so that they require more of an answer than yes or no.
- Control talkative participants by restating their ideas concisely, requesting that commentary be kept to a certain time limit, or if these fail, talking to the participant privately.
- Encourage silent members.
- To avoid side conversations between participants that disrupt the group, ask one of them an easy question.
- Discourage too much joking or wisecracking. Humor can relieve tension but, when overused, can take the focus off group issues.
- Help the group to stay on task by using a flip chart to jot down points.
- Avoid giving your opinion about ideas stated by the group as this will hinder open commentary. Especially avoid any comments that may be taken as disapproval, condescension, sarcasm, personal cross—examination, or self-approval. However, if valuable ideas are ignored because they are stated by only one person and then not supported by anyone else in the group, it may be necessary for you to support the idea.

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## Characteristics of Appropriate Materials

To see if an educational video, pamphlet, or program is appropriate, evaluate based on these characteristics:

- Vocabulary used is familiar to target group. Very limited use of technical terms.
  - Main ideas are clear and flow smoothly.
  - Ideas presented in a positive way, using active voice.
  - All illustrations contribute to the written message. Table & graphs are simple and easy to read.
  - Variety of racial, ethnic, and religious groups are represented.
  - Clear headings are provided for each topic.
- Audiovisuals - presentation progresses at a pace which permits comprehension. Some blank time is allowed for absorbing concepts presented.
  - Audiovisuals - clear speaker, voice, music; good quality of sound.
  - Information is accurate and recommendations are current, using the latest edition of the Dietary Guidelines and using the Food Guide Pyramid.
  - Subject matter (nutrition) is presented objectively and the scope of information appropriate for target audience. Reliable resources and references are used.

# Food Demonstrations

A food demonstration is an excellent teaching method for several reasons. It can introduce participants to new foods and new cooking techniques, and can allow them to watch how easy it is to create a healthy meal.

FNP has rules about what is allowed as a food demonstration. You may not prepare food to feed your audience an entire meal. You may give them samples of the food you prepare. For instance, a few bites of a veggie casserole or a

sip or two of a smoothie.

For children, showing quick, non-cook snacks is a great food demonstration. This could include introducing them to new fruits and vegetables, where each child gets a slice of apple or a few grapes.

Planning is very important for an effective demonstration. This section will help you prepare for and demonstrate foods for your audiences.

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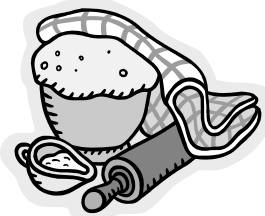
## Getting Started

- **Make an outline** following a logical sequence. Write or type the outline on note cards, dividing the demonstration into three parts:
  - Introduction - brief and catchy
  - Body or main part - clear, informative
  - Summary - brief, repeats main points
- **Prepare posters** or other visual materials. Use large well-spaced letters, words and art work that can easily be seen by the audience. Keep messages brief.

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## Preparation and Planning



- **Investigate the demonstration site.** What equipment will be available? What equipment will you need to supply?
- **Make a list** of everything needed for the demonstration. Use trays to help you to organize food and equipment. Trays enable you to move items to or away from your demonstration area quickly. Make a list of items that should go on each tray, based on the procedure and order of the demonstration.
- **Pre-measure ingredients** and place on trays along with the equipment for mixing and cooking. Use standard utensils and techniques for measuring ingredients. Measure over a tray, not over the mixing bowl.
- **Decide how you will display** or garnish your final product.
- **Follow recommended food safety practices**, such as keeping perishable foods cold, and having clean hands & a clean work area. If your demonstration involves manipulating food with your hands, obtain disposable food service gloves to wear during this part of the demonstration.
- **Other tips**
  - Avoid displaying name brands or labels.
  - Use clear bowls so the audience can see your product.
  - Plan to have a damp and a dry cloth handy to wipe hands and spills. Avoid licking food from fingers.
  - Chop on a cutting board, preferably plastic, since wood has crevices that collect bacteria.

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## The Audience

- **Let your audience see everything you do.** Show the audience the product before and after completion. If time or facilities do not allow for cooking, demonstrate preparation and conclude with finished product prepared in advance.
- **Maintain eye contact** with the audience as much as possible.
- **Describe what you are doing** and why.

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## The Demonstration



- **Arrive early.** Arrange the demonstration area and seating for convenience and viability.
- **Be neat and clean** in appearance, especially your hands. Have good posture. Do not chew gum. Secure your hair away from your face. Keep your hands away from your face and hair during the demonstration. Protect your clothing with an apron.

**Begin with an interesting introduction** which includes the purpose of the demonstration. Be enthusiastic!

- **Speak loudly** enough to be heard by those in the back of the room. Pronounce words distinctly and use correct grammar.
- **Avoid attaching personal pronouns** to objects such as "my eggs" or "your milk."
- **Keep noise to a minimum** during the demonstration. Use a wire whisk for mixing when possible rather than a blender or mixer. Several thickness of toweling under an appliance will help deaden the noise. Use a spatula to scrape beaters and spoons rather than banging them against the bowl.

- **Other tips**
  - When transferring a mixture, hold the mixing bowl on the palm of your hand with fingertips around the side and your elbow close to your body to steady the bowl.
  - Make sure that all ingredients and equipment needed for the presentation are within your reach. Avoid turning your back to the audience.
  - A damp paper towel or cloth under a tray will prevent sliding.
  - If something goes wrong, explain why rather than trying to cover your mistake. Continue without making self-critical remarks. Be prepared with some filler comments in case a part of your demonstration takes longer than you planned.

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## Conclusion

- **Garnish and display** your product in an attractive manner.
- **Make a few concise statements** that summarize your main points and finish with a confident, interesting comment.
- **Clear demonstration area** and leave it clean.
- **AND REMEMBER, PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!**

# Values Discussion Guide

Teaching about values is important. Here are four exercises for discussion. Drawing conclusions will help clarify how values fit into the program assistant's job.

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## Exercise #1

It's fun to talk about values because the answers vary. For example:

If you had some "free" time, which of these would you do:

- A. Read a magazine?
- B. Go to an amusement park?
- C. Mop your kitchen floor?
- D. Other \_\_\_\_\_

If you won a contest prize of \$500, would you:

- A. Save it?
- B. Spend it for a trip?
- C. Invest it?
- D. Buy gifts for your children?
- E. Spend it for clothes
- F. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Notice that:

- Your answers may be different from answers of others.
- How everyone's answers depend on what seems **important to that person at this time**.
- We are talking about **VALUES**-- what we put first, or choose as being **important**.

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## Exercise #2

Program assistants may discuss the following situation and point out how people's choices show us their relative values:

A woman has just enough time to dress and go to a meeting. Suddenly she sees that her shoes need shining. If she stops to shine her shoes, she will be late for the meeting.

What does she value if she shines her shoes? If she does not shine her shoes? Examples: appearances, promptness

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## Exercise #3

Examples of values. (Ask program assistants to give examples and discuss.)

1. If a client placed a high value on cleanliness, name some things she would insist on doing in her home: (Examples: wash her hands before cooking, keep the floor mopped, use hot water for washing dishes, have screen at the windows.)
2. If a client placed a high value on **order in her house**, name some things she would insist be done in her home: (Examples: hang up clothes, keep kitchen table cleared, pick up paper, use a trash can.)
3. If a client placed a high value on safety, name some things she might do in her home:

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## Exercise #4

A group activity about family values:

1. Trainer agent can find magazine pictures to represent the sets of values listed later.
2. Prepare pictures for use on flannel board or a set for each two program assistants.
3. Give each program assistant a written list of values. (Use two different sets for variety.)
4. Ask each person or pair of program assistants to **match the values with the pictures and rank in order of importance** as she sees it.
5. Discuss how and why they ranked the values as they did.

### Set A--Pictures

Car  
Bill or receipt  
Young person with books  
House  
Food or meal

### Set B--Pictures

Mattress or bed  
Dishes or pans  
Glass or pitcher of milk  
Shelves  
Window with curtains

### Set A--Values (List)

Owning a home  
Three good meals a day  
No debts (keeping bills paid)  
Keeping the children in school  
Having a good car

### Set B--Values

Milk for health  
Equipment for cooking  
A place to put things  
Pretty windows  
Sleep and rest

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## Conclusion

Our values show in our homes. You will show the client some new values. The client may trust you enough and find these values satisfying enough to adopt them, too!

# Building Relationships with Clients

Although our attitudes are always showing, what we say counts too. Let's assume you make some statements from the left column during a group meeting. How do you think they affect the relationship between you and your client?

Fill in the blanks with a letter from the right-hand column. Each letter stands for a feeling the client may have because of your comment. You may select more than one response for each comment. Explain why she might feel this way. How else you might have made the remark? How do you influence the client's response?

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## If You Said:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. "I'd like to show you how I make the kind of cornbread my children brag about."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. "Next time I come I'll bring you an information sheet."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. "Isn't your husband working?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. "I noticed you are carrying a banana for a snack."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. "What is your favorite recipe-- the one you use most?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. "You have missed most of the classes."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. "Are you pregnant again?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. "Why don't you stop eating potato chips?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. "What do you think?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. "You need to feed your children better."

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## The Client May Respond With:

- a. Respect for you
- b. Respect for self
- c. Hope
- d. Interest
- e. Self-confidence
- f. Pride
- g. Cooperation
- h. Anger
- i. Confusion
- j. Uncertainty
- k. Apologies
- l. Fear
- m. Lack of self-respect
- n. Over-dependence
- o. Other

### Conclusion

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