Sample Training Skills Case Study:
The Case of the Confused Trainer

Participant Guide

Directions

Read and study this case study individually. When the others in your group have finished reading, answer the questions. When all groups have finished, we will discuss the case study and the answers each group developed.

Case

James recently was asked by his supervisor to plan and conduct an IUD clinical training course. He was a very proficient service provider and the supervisor felt that he would do a good job since he recently had attended a clinical training skills course.

The next few weeks were very busy. James observed another trainer delivering a Norplant implants training course, read through the IUD reference manual several times, looked through materials from previous IUD courses conducted by the other trainers and tried to think of some creative activities he could include in the course.

James sat down with the reference manual and started to plan for his course. He knew that he would need some notes, so he developed a set of trainer’s notes. He even put some of his notes on a handout to give to those he would be training. James knew that it was important that he be clear, so he planned to read his notes in a clear voice. He also planned to stop periodically and ask if the participants had any questions.

During his first session, James noticed that the participants were not paying attention to his presentation. There were no questions being asked and the participants looked bored. After the presentation the participants left the room for a break. James had a feeling that his first presentation was a failure. He wondered if agreeing to deliver the course was a good decision.

Questions

1. What was the problem?
2. What did James do well?
3. What should James have done to prevent these problems?
4. Who else could have prevented this problem? How?

Instructor Guide

1. The problem from the perspective of the participants is that the trainer is reading to them with little or no interaction. This is usually very boring, it is not interactive and it creates a very negative learning climate.
2. James did a number of things correctly. He observed another trainer, studied the reference manual to make sure he understood the information, looked at materials from previous courses and prepared trainer’s notes.

3. James could have prevented his problems by reviewing the course outline which appears in the trainer’s notebook. Following the suggestions in the course outline, James could have better planned for each session and incorporated a variety of learning activities. He could have made notes in his copy of the reference manual and/or put his notes on the flipchart or overhead transparencies. These notes should include planned questions, key points to stress, reminders to use audiovisuals, etc. By having these notes, James could have moved around the room and interacted with the participants as opposed to standing in one spot reading his notes from a piece of paper.

4. This appears to be the first course James has conducted since attending the CTS course to learn to become a trainer. Ideally, the advanced or master trainer who conducted the CTS course should be there to observe or cotrain with James during this first critical course. James or his supervisor should have contacted the advanced or master trainer to discuss options for supporting James.