

FACTORS INFLUENCING IN SELECTION OF EXTENSION TEACHING METHODS

A. Selection of Methods

1. The Audience

(a) *Individual and collective differences:* People vary greatly in their knowledge, attitudes, skills, their position in the “diffusion process”, and in the “adoption categories”, their educational training, age, income level, social status, religious beliefs etc. Some are progressively seeking change, others are slow to change. Some are “eye-minded” while others are “ear-minded”.

These individual and collective differences influence the teaching approach. For instance, people with little or no education, and low incomes may respond to personal visits and result demonstrations. The better educated and the more progressive elements of the population usually respond well to methods like group meetings and discussions, exhibits and written materials.

A man in “awareness stage” cannot straight away jump to “adoption stage” but can be gradually brought to the adoption stage by using suitable methods. For “late adopters” (conservatives), direct approach may not yield so good results as approaching through the “early adopters” and “informal leaders”.

(b) *Size of Audience:* It is also a factor influencing the choice of extension methods. For instance, group discussion cannot be used effectively when the number of participants exceeds thirty; method demonstration can be used for a relatively small audience, while lecture meetings can be used for large audiences.

2. The Teaching Objective (or nature of change aimed at). Do you want to bring about a change (i) in thinking or knowledge? (ii) In attitude or feeling? (iii) In action or skill? If you want merely to inform or influence a large number of people slightly, you should use mass media. If you want to influence a relatively small number of people to make maximum improvements resort to individual contact methods. If you want to change attitudes or arrive at a consensus of opinion, arrange group discussion or work through village leaders. If you want to teach a skill, use the method demonstration.

3. The Subject Matter Where the new practice is simple or familiar (i.e., similar to those already being followed) the news article, radio or circular letter will be effective, whereas complex or unfamiliar practices will require face-to-face contacts, written materials and audio-visual aids.

4. The Stage of Development of Extension Organisation in the initial stages of extension, result demonstrations will be necessary to gain confidence of farmers. But if extension work is already well established and the farmers have confidence in extension services, result

demonstrations may not be necessary and local illustrations of adoption by village leaders will suffice.

5. Size of Extension Staff In relation to the size of extension clientele: The larger the number of extension workers, the greater is the scope for direct or personal contact method.

6. The Availability of Certain Communication Media Such as newspapers, telephones, radio, internet etc., will also have a direct bearing on the extent to which these methods can be used.

7. The Relative Cost of the Method (i.e., the amount expended on extension teaching in relation to the extent of practices changed) is also an important consideration in their selection and use.

8. An Extension Worker's Familiarity with, and skill in the use of the several extension methods will also influence his choice and use of the methods.

B. Combination of Methods

Extension field studies conducted in U. S. A. over a long period of years show that people are influenced by extension education to make changes in behaviour in proportion to the number of different teaching methods with which they come in contact. As the number of methods of exposure to extension information increases from 1 to 9, the number of farm families changing behaviour increases from 35% to 98%. Therefore, if widespread response is desired, people must be exposed to teaching effort in several different ways. (i.e., repetition but in a variety of ways).

Similar results have been reported by researchers in India. For instance, Nagoke' concluded that combined use of several different methods is of the utmost importance in extension teaching. The adoption of practices was high when more than five methods were used as compared to single and two to five methods.

C. Using the Methods in Proper Sequence

To answer our teaching needs, our extension plans of work must include methods that,

- (a) enable our farmers to see, hear and do the thing to be learnt
- (b) enable us to reach large numbers of people and
- (c) create confidence – building situations.

Our completed plans should provide not only for doing each of these three things but must be so organized that the completed plan, as a unit, does all three of these things. For instance, a personal contact is made through an office call or farm visit. A leader is visited. A demonstration is established. A meeting is held to discuss the demonstration. The meeting is advertised by circular letters. A news story is written on the results of the demonstration as seen at the meeting. These happenings and results are broadcast over the radio. Pictures are taken and a "slide story" is shown at a meeting. One method helps another, and many of them are used in combination and sequence to repeat the story. Organized, followed-up teaching activity means more improvement in farm and home conditions.

Combination of (Media mix) teaching Methods

Use of Audio-Visual Aids

There are numerous audio-visual aids that you could use in your lessons. This unit will focus will on selected audio-visual aids that are normally available in your school. Some of these aids could be made by you. However, the focus of this unit will not be on how to make these aids but on their use.

Need to use audio-visual aids in lessons

- a. To maintain a high level of interest in the lesson
- b. To get students to use the language, especially at the beginning stages
- c. To promote greater student participation
- d. They can be used at all levels of learning

Guidelines for using AV aids

1. Planning AV aids

Audiovisual aids--including overhead transparencies, flip charts, slides, chalkboards (and occasionally film and video)--can supply added impact and clarity to your, presentation. You can use A/-V to visually reinforce the points made verbally in your presentation, to summarize the points you will make, as well as those you have already made, and to visually clarify important concepts and analogies. Audiovisual aids not only help your target group follow your presentation, but they provide support to the presenter by helping to keep, you on track.

The key to preparing effective audiovisual aids is to remember that they are only aids. Their role is to add a visual dimension to the points that you made orally. They cannot make those points for you; they can only reinforce them. When you plan for audiovisual aids, follow these simple guidelines:

1. DO use them to summarize or show the sequence of content.
2. DO use them to visually interpret statistics by preparing charts and graphs that illustrate what you will say.
3. DO use them to illustrate and reinforce your support statements.
4. DO use them to add visual clarity to your concepts and ideas.
5. DO use them to focus the attention of the target group on key points.

6. DON'T project copies of printed or written text. Instead, summarize the information and show only the key points on the visual aids. If the group must read every word, use handouts for reading, either before or after your presentation.
7. DON'T put yourself in the role of aiding your visuals: A presentation is primarily an oral form of communication. If your only function is to read the information on your overheads or slides, the target group will become easily bored.
8. DON'T use copies of your transparencies as handouts. They reinforce what you are saying-- they don't say it for you. If you want your target group to remember what you meant, you'll need to provide written text in addition to any key point summaries or charts that you need for your transparencies.
9. DON'T use charts, graphs, or tables that contain more information than you want to provide. The group will have difficulty focusing on the point that you're trying to make.

2. Choosing appropriate media

You may wish to combine different types of media in a single presentation. The media used most often are overhead projection transparencies, flip charts, slides, blackboards, and handouts. You may occasionally use videotapes and/or films.

Plan to practice using several different media in this course. You will find that practicing will increase your comfort level, and therefore afford you the flexibility of choosing the most appropriate medium. In the future, use the following guidelines to help you choose the media best suited to your presentation

In selecting aids, take into account the following

- Practicability
- Attractiveness and interest; vividness
- Suitability
- Complexity
- Clarity
- Portability
- Serviceability
- Availability
- Location
- Preparation and presentation
- Time factor

3. Types of media and their uses

a. Overhead Transparencies

Used for displaying charts and graphs. High visibility for large groups. Showing summaries, sequences, relationships, and process steps.

b. Flip Charts

Used for small groups (under 20). Ad lib charting and graphing. Showing summaries and

sequences. Listing, recording, outlining. Developing charts. Instructions. Reinforcing group contributions.

c. Blackboards/Whiteboards

Spontaneous presentations. Listing/recording. When no other media is available.

d. Slides

Displaying high quality artwork. Displaying a series of photos. Demonstrating- a "hands-on" process. Creating a mood, or inspiring.

e. Videotapes and Films

Demonstrating a process. Creating a mood, or inspiring. Presenting* testimonials. Supplementing presentation ideas.

f. Written Handouts

Providing background information. "Sending home" your ideas. Reminder of follow-up activities. Providing a record of presentation. Weighting a variety of alternatives. Clarifying abstract or complex topics.

Over Head Transparencies

Overhead transparencies are inexpensive, easily prepared, and highly effective visual aids for target groups of five or more people. With smaller target groups, choose overhead transparencies as your primary A/V medium if the target group prefers a somewhat formal mode of communication. With small groups, overhead projection may tend to distance you from the target group and limit personal interaction. If you are presenting to a relatively informal group of less than five people, you may wish to use transparencies only to display charts and graphs.

If costs very little to add color to your charts and graphs, using special transparency markers and adhesive color film. In fact, some ordinary markers will work perfectly on transparency film.

You can use overhead projections in full light in any size room. There are three simple guidelines for preparing effective transparencies: Visibility, clarity, and simplicity

Visibility

Lettering should be neat and at least a quarter inch high. You should be able to read the original at a distance of seven feet. Computers make very effective, highly visible transparencies. If a computer is not available, use a typewriter equipped with a special "Orator" typeface, or a special lettering system designed for overhead transparencies, or "rub-off" lettering (available at any art supply store) to provide readable lettering. If you must hand-print, be sure that your printing is neat and even. Use all capital letters, and write with a black, felt-tipped pen.

Clarity

Everything displayed on an overhead transparency should be instantly recognized by the target group. Label all elements of your charts and graphs. Use color or shading to emphasize and clarify key elements. Be sure to title every transparency.

Simplicity

Try to limit each original to one point or comparison. Use a maximum of six or seven words per line. No more than six lines should be included in a single transparency. Use a horizontal format whenever possible so that the projected image will fit the shape of most standard screens.

Flip charts and boards

Flip charts are often the ideal visual aid for small target groups. You can prepare your chart pages in advance for maximum clarity and impact. The flip chart can also be used to "ad lib," or give the appearance of spontaneity. Prepared flip charts can be used to show pre-drawn charts, graphs, and diagrams, or you can draw them "on the spot."

Chalkboards may be used in the same ways as flip charts. But the space they provide is more limited and the medium is less permanent.

If possible, draw important charts on chalkboards before the presentation and mask them with paper. Be sure to consider what information you will be able to erase during the presentation and what you will save for reference at a later point.

The guidelines for preparing effective flip charts and boards include the following:

1. Always title each page (or diagram).
2. Print clearly. For maximum visibility, letters should be at least one inch high for each ten feet of distance from viewers.
3. Use pictures, diagrams, and symbols whenever possible.
4. Skip a sheet between prepared flip pages to avoid "bleed through."
5. Leave room for "ad lib" flip pages (plan when you'll ad lib).
6. If you plan to ad lib, make sure you have at least two markers with you--one will always run out of ink.

Slides, Video and Films

Slides, videotapes, and films are included in the same category because they all require professional preparation. These media can have a very dramatic effect if properly selected. However, unless you are using media that is available through the company library or training center (or your public library), all three of these media types are expensive. Slides may occasionally be in your budget, but very few people have the budget to produce quality videotapes or, even more expensive, films to supplement a presentation. If you can afford to use slides, video, or film in your presentation, be sure the media you select reinforce and enhance

what you have to say, and that the media do not contradict your presentation points. The guidelines for using slides, tapes, and films include the following:

1. Check the room layout and locate light switches and dimmers. Films and slides must be shown in a darkened room.
2. Make sure the media are up to date, unless you intend to contrast old and new.
3. Make sure that the images (and sound) are clear--free of static and other interference.
4. Know how to use the equipment--or enlist the aid of a projection assistant for your rehearsal and delivery.
5. Make sure that the media are compelling and interesting to the target group.
6. If you are using slides, check to make sure that they are all in order and facing in the right direction (not upside down).
7. Check your equipment. Make sure it can project the media you want to use, in the manner that you want to use it. Verify that it is in good working condition and that all cables, wires, plugs, etc., are in place and ready to go.
8. Load and advance the tape or film to the starting point before the meeting begins. Check sound levels and image clarity.
9. Plan what you will do if the equipment breaks down.

Written Handouts

When providing written text, remember that you won't be there to explain or remind the target group of what you mean. Written communications should be as brief as possible, but they must also be meaningful to the reader, whether they are read a week before your presentation or a year after. They should always be:

Clear

Written in language that the target group can easily understand and follow.

Relevant

Do not simply provide data. Explain why the information should be read and what it means. Explanations should not repeat your entire presentation, but should capsule it.

Specific

Do not give your target group a mass of reading material that they do not need. Make sure that all documentation is absolutely necessary.