

## Some Effective Training Designs

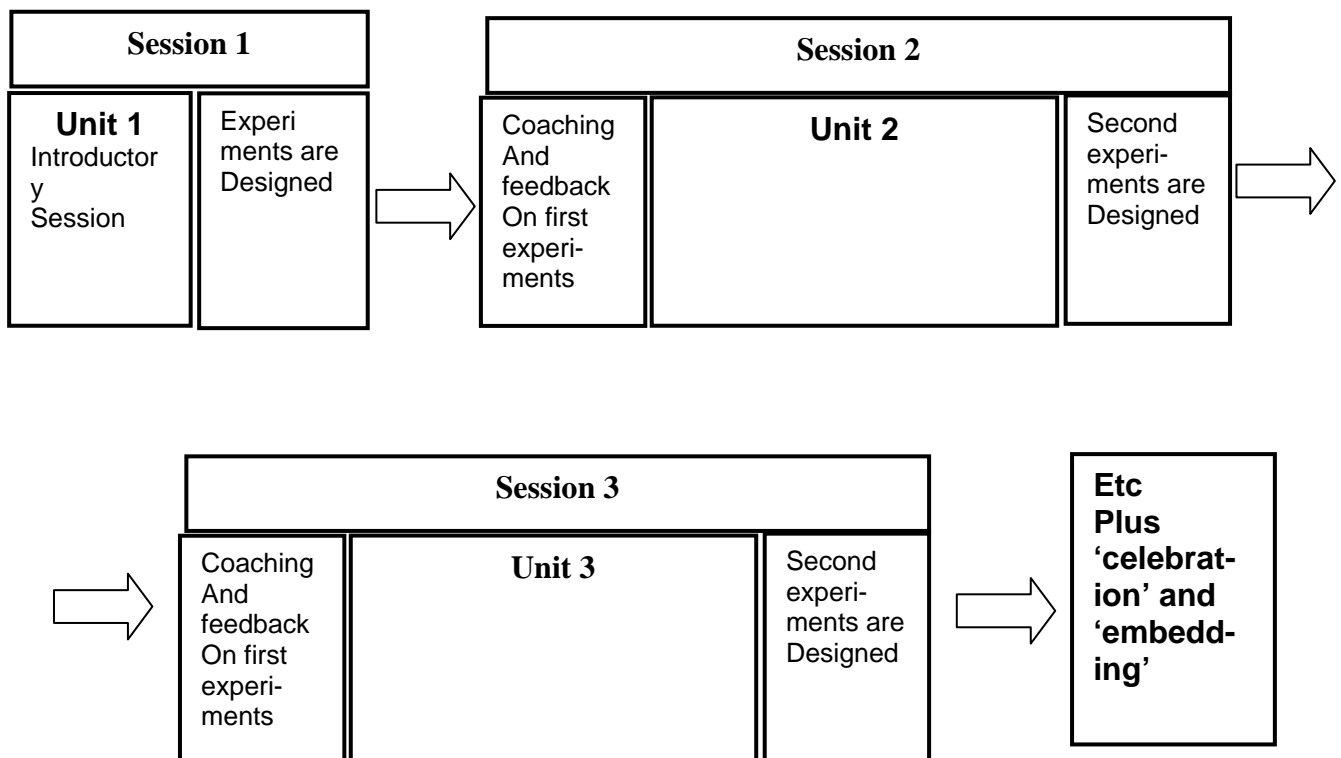
Whether you are interested in making use of the bare Joyce and Showers approach, or whether you want to go further and use the Five Step approach, you could adopt or adapt one or more of these models or strategies.

The designs were developed by colleges participating in the Differentiation: Train Trainers Programme. However, the designs could be used in many if not all training contexts, not just for staff training in differentiation.

### The Staff Training Course Approach

Rather than having a one-off training event, Katie McCombe decided to make use of a series of ten events into which opportunities for feedback and coaching were embedded. What follows is based on her design.

Eight sessions on differentiation are devised, using the materials in this booklet. The contents of two other sessions are decided by the participants, but have the same aim to improve differentiation. The eight sessions are one to two hours long 'twilight classes', attended by the same participants throughout, and are held about every four weeks. To ensure everyone can attend despite their teaching commitments, more than one course is run in parallel on two different days of the week. Alternatively one course is run but it meets on different days each week so that most participants can make most of the sessions.



After an initial introductory meeting the sessions fall into this pattern:

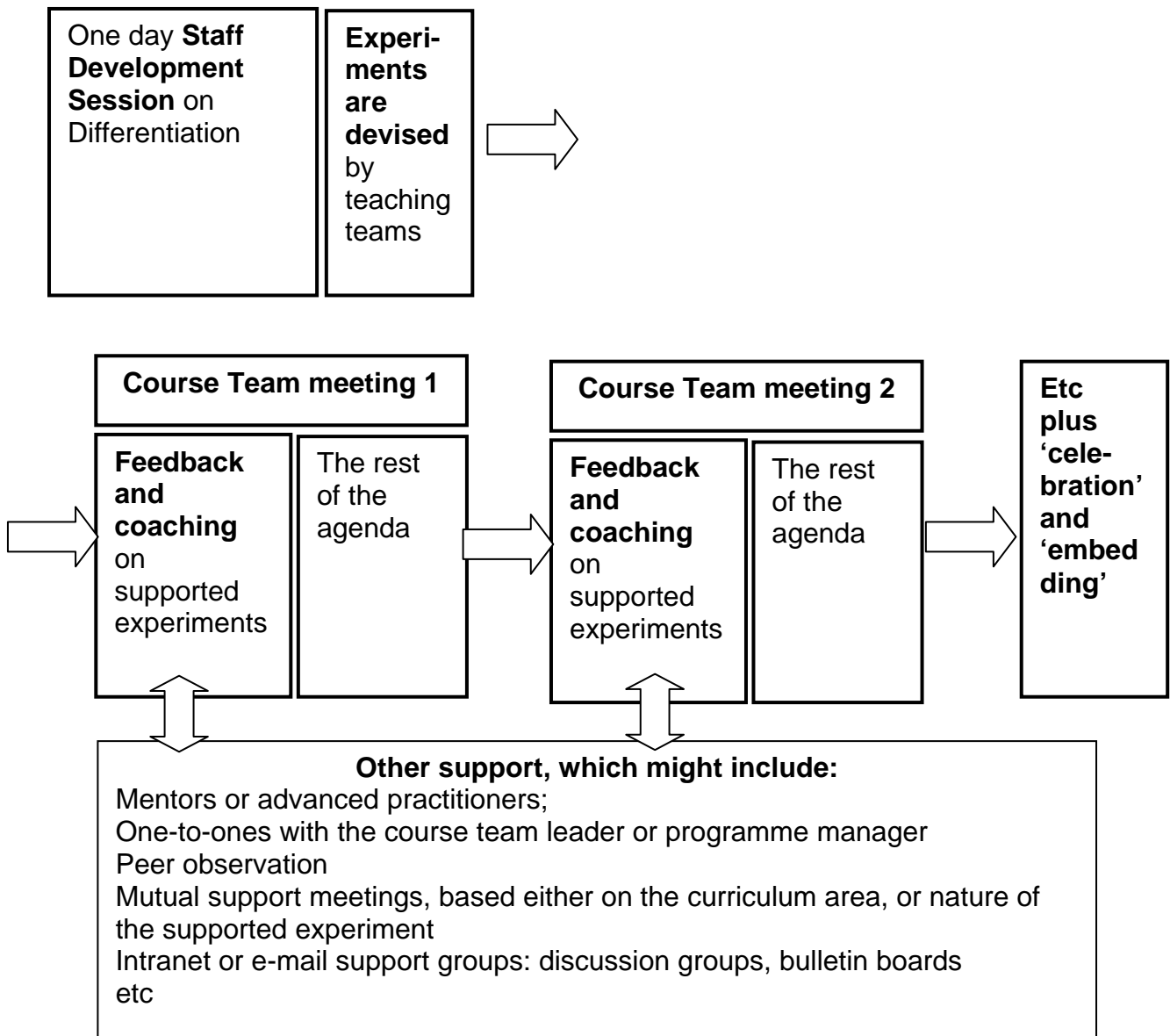
- At the end of the first and all subsequent sessions a concluding activity asks each participant to decide on an experiment that they wish to try, which implements the ideas covered in that session. These supported experiments are discussed with peers in small groups and the course leader facilitates where necessary.

- At the beginning of the next course meeting participants explain what they did, and the outcomes of this. They then receive feedback on the extent to which the supported experiment implemented best practice effectively, and coaching on how to improve and overcome difficulties etc. Again the course leader can facilitate. Participants are asked to bring relevant material such as, the new assignments or worksheets they have designed, student's work, student evaluations etc.

It may be possible to accredit such a course with a local university towards Continual Professional Development Modules.

It may be possible to combine such an approach with other described below.

### The Staff Development Day approach



A one-day staff development event is attended by teachers, and by their course team leaders, and programme managers. This could either be a series of workshop choices, or a large whole-group session. This is a traditional training day event with a mix of didactic input and learner activity which includes models of good practice. However, at the end of this day course teams meet to agree how the ideas and principles presented could be implemented. Supported experiments are agreed and divided up amongst the team. All members of the team have at least one experiment or other action point to carry out.

Some supported experiments may be carried out by all team members, for example improvements in questioning technique. Other experiments may be allocated to an individual who will experiment and develop a strategy for the whole team, for example the use of self assessment on the National Diploma. Such team supported experiments could be shared out so that all members of the team have one. Clearly Programme Managers and Course Team Leaders should not be exempt from such experimentation, indeed they should be showing the way - like a true leader!

### **The Supported Experiments Approach**

The other approaches above all make use of supported experiments, but they can be used alone. Aside from their clear advantages from the 'Joyce and Showers' point of view they have a number of other advantages.

What is a supported experiment? It is a pilot or trial of a teaching strategy, often based on an idea or principle presented in a staff training event. This may include strategies that have been suggested specifically, or an idea developed by an individual or by their team. The experiments are tried, adapted, and then repeated until the students and the member of staff are both used to the new approach. Then the experimenter decides whether the approach they have developed has worked, or has been shown not to work in that context. They are in effect mini Action Research projects.

#### Why use supported experiments?

- They model and develop a culture of continuous improvement without resorting to a deficit model.
- They provide the blame-free support needed to encourage risk-taking and development.
- They prevent teaching skills from 'plateauing' and becoming stale.
- They encourage the development of teaching strategies that respond to known difficulties
- They are inspiring for staff, and meet the professional expectation of keeping up to date and continually improving.

Who should carry out supported experiments, and when? Everyone who teaches, should do at least one a year, especially the leaders of teaching teams, so that they model continuous improvement to their team.

#### **How to use Supported Experiments.**

A teaching team leader or other curriculum manager introduces the idea of supported experiments, after having tried a few of their own. Teachers are asked to devise or choose an experiment in discussion with their manager. Ideas for experiments may come from:

- Teachers or the teams own ideas
- Feedback from lesson observation
- Best Practice Networks
- Ideas presented earlier in this document
- Any book on pedagogy, see the examples in the references at the end of this publication
- conferences and workshops
- best practice amongst staff in your own department, or elsewhere in the college
- read up about best practice models e.g. Paul Martinez “Raising Achievement: Strategies that work” FEDA (LSDA) and other books in the library e.g. Geoff Petty’s “Teaching Today”
- Visit LSDA Best Practice Network meetings (see their website)
- Visit another college, or another department in this college, which is known to have good practice.
- Make use of the Quality Information & Advice service from AoC (see the AoC website)
- Visit an event run by a Beacon College.
- ‘Swap Shops’ where staff bring example(s) of good practice to a session where they also hear about examples from others. These may be run during Staff Development Days, but you can obviously run your own. (They need not take long and are best if they concentrate on a given theme or aspect of teaching and learning.)
- Ideas from students.
- Get other ideas on best practice from the internet. The last two sites listed here are good indexes to search for strategies etc.

[www.rqa.org.uk](http://www.rqa.org.uk)

[www.lsagency.org.uk](http://www.lsagency.org.uk)

[www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk)

[www.ferl.org.uk](http://www.ferl.org.uk)

<http://www.educationindex.com/index.html>

<http://ericir.syr.edu/>

etc!

A useful reference is a booklet by Steve Sawbridge for LSDA called [www.raisingachievement.org.uk](http://www.raisingachievement.org.uk) internet research resources on raising achievement in post-compulsory education.

Or use search engines etc to find your own useful sites

- attend LSDA best practice network meetings etc (see [www.lsda.org.uk](http://www.lsda.org.uk))
- visit other colleges e.g. Beacon Colleges
- Get a Quality Improvement Team consultant or other consultant to help with strategies etc

# Some strategies managers can use to encourage supported experiments

## 16 ways for managers to improve the teaching of their teaching teams

These ideas were developed at Leicester College by a team of Course Team Leaders led Jackie Rossa, with Geoff Petty as consultant. Having experienced a series of Geoff's staff development sessions the Course Team Leaders wanted to disseminate some teaching strategies to their teaching team, and to encourage them to experiment generally, but especially with new teaching methods known to work better than average.

You will need some concise descriptions of teaching strategies with a good research record to make use of most of the following methods. For example Teaching Without Talking on the active learning page of <http://geoffpetty.moonfruit.com>.

- '23 ways for Teaching without Talking' or 'Formative Teaching of Skills'
- Action Research Proposals from the same moonfruit site such as 'Tests and Quizzes to Find Faults and Fix'
- 'Teaching Today' Geoffrey Petty Nelson Thornes
- Suggestions from your staff
- Any other set of practical and effective teaching strategies that is concisely presented.

### 1. **The first ten minutes**

Reserve the first ten minutes of every meeting of your teaching team or department to learning and teaching. You could for example explain a new teaching method, or share good practice etc. This puts learning high on the agenda – literally, and makes sure it doesn't get squeezed off.

Consider asking team members to take it in turns to run these ten-minute sessions. Some of the following strategies could be carried out in these ten minutes, for example the next one 'Have a Go'.

Most meeting time is often used to disseminate information, but this could often be done more effectively in other ways. If you disseminate information by pigeonholes or e-mail, and require that people read this before your meetings you might be able to save meeting time to discuss learning. (Alternatively you could disseminate the information using the 'teaching without talking teaching methods and then discuss the method used!) Meeting time is precious – it could not be better spent than by talking about learning and teaching!?

### 2. **Have a go!**

Explain a new teaching method. Or better still, use a new teaching method e.g. 'Jigsaw' from 'Teaching Without Talking' to explain other teaching methods, or to communicate vital new information to the meeting. Once the team have learned using the new method, or you have simply explained it, ask them to try it out with their classes. Agree a date by when they can have used it, and then share experiences on how it went.

### 3. **Piloting**

The *team leader* tries a new teaching strategy and then tells their team about it. "I've tried getting my students to self-assess their assignments and look what

happened” The leader shares what worked, and what didn’t. They ask for advice on how to do it better next time. Then they try the strategy again, taking the teams advice on how to do a better job. Once the leader has done this a few times others usually volunteer to try other strategies on behalf of the team and to report back their experiences. If there are no volunteers you could ask for them. They may need a collection of likely teaching strategies to try.

#### 4. **Swapshop**

Each team member brings one thing they do that really works to the team meeting (anything!). Everyone has to take one thing away and try it with their classes, and then feed back their experiences to the next meeting

#### 5. **Cross team dissemination**

This is the same as the swap shop, only two teams meet to share their different approaches. It could have a particular focus, such as Key Skills, or could be very general. The two teams do not necessarily need to be in similar curriculum areas.

#### 6. **Action Research**

There are Action Research Proposals available on the action research page of Geoff Petty’s website address given below. These are short summaries of best practice in areas of key importance for achievement, derived from research reviews on the topic concerned. Action research follows on naturally from 2 to 5 above. <http://geoffpetty.moonfruit.com>

#### 7. **‘Discussion’**

The team discusses the teaching and learning problems they have on their courses. The leader asks for solutions. This is a very natural process and staff really appreciate the time spent on it. Try not to let it turn into a whinge session, though a whinge can sometimes be therapeutic! Try to keep the focus on how to do better in the future. Many teams do this informally over coffee, which may or may not be better than formalising the process by giving meeting time to it.

One approach is for team leaders to take it in turns to identify two or three issues that cause them difficulties, how they address them, and then ask the others at the meeting for ideas.

#### 8. **Guerrilla Staff Development**

**Good News version:** Stop people in the corridor, loo, or staff-room, and tell them about a teaching strategy that someone else, or you, are making a success of. It works particularly well if this strategy is being used by someone else on their team.

**Bad News version:** Again stop someone, but this time complain about a difficulty you have been having with your teaching, and ask for advice, ‘how do you overcome that problem?’. This approach encourages a blame-free culture and gives people permission to say what they have difficulty with. After four Bad News ear-bashings, you can ask the team member if they have any problems, or whether they are as perfect as they appear!

#### 9. **Let’s admit our failures together**

Informally as part of conversation or during a meeting, the leader of the team admits to difficulties, and to not knowing what they should have known either now, or in the recent past. He or she may also own up to something he/she doesn’t understand or can’t do now, and ask for help. Eventually others may also ask for help. If not after they have had four ear-bashings about your failures you could ask them about theirs.

## **9. Peer observation**

This is observing to learn, not to criticise. The team observe each other teaching, but the focus is on what we can learn from the observation, not on judging the performance. What went well? What strategies did the teacher use that others could use? The observer could be asked to bring these positive points to the meeting.

## **10. Active scheme of work**

The team discuss their different ways of teaching a specific topic on their scheme of work in turn. They agree the best way(s) and these are recorded on the Active Scheme of Work. This encourages team members to share handouts and other resources as well as activities and ideas, and to use the best active learning methods for each topic. See the document on this, if you don't have it it is available on the moonfruit site mentioned at the top of this document.

## **11. Proactive action planning**

Most teams action plan reactively, that is they identify known difficulties and then tackle these. Proactive action planning means also adopting strategies that work well, regardless of difficulties. Such strategies can be found from the literature, best practice networks etc. The most appropriate, or most effective are chosen and included on the action plan. You may have other materials on Proactive Action Planning in your pack.

## **12. Video teaching**

Modern video cameras are discreet, easy to use, and don't require high lighting levels. You can borrow them easily in any college and set it up on a shelf or tripod at the back of the room and video one of your lessons. There is no need for anyone else to see the video if you don't want them to. Videos give you an opportunity to see your teaching from the student's point of view. Arghhh!

## **13. Ask the students**

Devise an evaluation form and ask the students to fill this in anonymously every month or two. It could be very simple such as:

*"The following is a list of teaching strategies I have used in the last four weeks, tick the ones you like best and cross the ones you like least, giving your reasons if you want to"*

*"Give three things you like about my lessons."*

*"Give two things that would improve my lessons."*

## **14. Developmental Observation**

An observation is made, not with the intention of grading, but with the intention of improving the teaching. Developmental points are drawn up. The teacher explains what they feel they need support on. The observer identifies the good practice they have seen in order to pass this on to other teachers in the team.

## **15. Personal Development Plan**

Perhaps after peer or developmental observations, the teacher draws up a Personal Development Plan. This is reviewed as part of appraisal.

## **16. Weekly supported experiments**

Members of a teaching team each carry out one supported experiment a week for the term, and report back on how it went at meetings. The

supported experiment could be a new teaching method, an assessment proforma, etc.

This works best after a staff development session where possible supported experiments are suggested. Alternatively Geoff's moonfruit site (active learning page) could be used to get ideas for what to try.

The supported experiment might need to be tried more than once in different ways to make it work of course, these 'second goes' may sometimes 'count' as the weekly supported experiment.