

## **Guide to Creating Interactive Sessions**

The following guide gives suggestions to assist you in creating interactive sessions that ensure you reach the physician learners.

### **Why interactive session?**

Interactive sessions are designed to transfer the focus from teacher-based lectures to learner-centric participation. Interactive sessions engage and encourage the participant to be active in their learning. They allow the learner to process new knowledge by connecting what they have just learned to their existing knowledge base. The average adult attention span is approximately 20 minutes. However, allowing the brain to break from lecture by participating in experiential learning extends concentration through practical application of new knowledge.

### **Elements of an Interactive Session**

#### **Where should I start?**

Backward design is the process of designing learning activities with the end in mind. Begin with your learning objectives (your goals for the session) and work backward to ensure your learner gets the knowledge you want them to have. This shifts the perspective from what the teacher wants to teach to what the learner needs to learn.

Step 1: Identify what your learners need to know (the big idea)

Step 2: Identify what evidence will show you they have learned (assessment)

Step 3: Identify what needs to be taught and select learning activities (activities)

#### **What is an anticipatory set?**

An anticipatory set is the initial hook that gets learners interested in your session and prepares their brains to learn about your topic. It should be directly related to your learning objectives and will give an overall direction to your session. This can be done by:

- Posing a question where participants share their answer with the person next to them
- Telling a story or anecdote
- Using shock or humor
- Sharing a related news item
- Modeling through role-playing
- Visualization

Example: "Share one thing you know about the topic and one question you have about the topic with the person next to you."

#### **What are take-home points?**

Take-home points allow you to reinforce the importance of changing behavior at the participants' practices. You can do this by having attendees write three to five take-home points on note cards indicating behaviors they will change or incorporate. Have them turn to a partner and discuss their take-home points with one another to reinforce their commitment. Ask them to post their note cards where they can see them in their offices.

#### **How do I pull large groups back together?**

The biggest issue you most likely will run into when doing interactive sessions is how to pull a large group back together. The key is setting up your audience with a plan right from the start of your session by doing the following:

- After describing how your session is interactive, explain that it will be a challenge to pull everyone together in a room this size, so ask for their cooperation and agreement to a count-down plan.
- Explain that you will give them a one-minute warning and a 30-second warning to wrap up, then you will verbally count down and use your hand to visually count down to five.
- Ask for the help of the timekeepers to be responsible for pulling each table back together.

There are times when this may not work the first time. Announce that you will try it again and count back again. If this still does not work, walk over to the table and use your physical presence to pull them back.

### How do I prepare my audience?

Give the members at each table a role (facilitator, timekeeper, recorder, and spokesperson). This can be fun if you choose a random way for them to self-select. For example: "The facilitator will be the one whose birthday is closest to today. Out of who is left, the timekeeper will be the one who has been in practice the longest. Of those remaining, the recorder will be the one who has the most unique hobby. Finally, the spokesperson will be the one who had to travel the farthest." This also serves as a quick team builder so members can feel more comfortable working with one another.

- **Facilitator** – guides discussion and pulls the group back together when they get off task.
- **Timekeeper** – tracks time against what needs to be accomplished. Pulls the table back together for the facilitator.
- **Recorder** – documents the work of the group.
- **Spokesperson** – represents the group by presenting its findings.

### How should I formulate questions?

The following are a few question stems for you to adapt that will help learners process new information:

- What is the nature of \_\_\_\_\_?
- Why is \_\_\_\_\_ happening?
- Explain why \_\_\_\_\_?
- Explain how \_\_\_\_\_?
- Why is \_\_\_\_\_ important?
- What would happen if \_\_\_\_\_?
- Compare and contrast \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Compare \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with regards to \_\_\_\_\_.
- How does \_\_\_\_\_ apply to everyday life?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is the counter-argument for \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is the best \_\_\_\_\_, and why?
- Why is \_\_\_\_\_ happening?
- What is the solution to the problem of \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is a new example of \_\_\_\_\_?
- How could \_\_\_\_\_ be used to \_\_\_\_\_?
- What do you think causes \_\_\_\_\_, and why?
- What are the implications of \_\_\_\_\_?
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: "\_\_\_\_\_", and why?
- What evidence is there to support your answer?

- What is \_\_\_ analogous to?
- What is another way to look at \_\_\_?
- How does \_\_\_ affect \_\_\_?
- What does \_\_\_ mean?
- How does \_\_\_ tie in with what we learned before?
- Describe \_\_\_ in your own words.
- Summarize \_\_\_ in your own words.

## **Turning Lectures into Interactive Sessions**

The following are just a few ways to turn your lecture into an interactive session.

### **Audience Response System (ARS)**

An Audience Response System allows session attendees to vote on a topic or answer a question using a wireless remote control keypad. A receiver connected to the presenter's computer picks up each remote's response. After a set time or when all participants have answered, the system ends the polling and tabulates the results. The results are displayed for everyone to see.

### **Small Group Session**

A classroom setting where participants in groups of 5-8 sit at tables and process new learning together.

#### **Small Group Blueprint:**

Anticipatory Set	Mini-lecture	Learning Activity	Mini-lecture	Learning Activity	Closing Overview	Take-home Points	Q&A
5 min.	15 min.	5 min.	15 min.	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.

**Anticipatory Set** – The initial hook that gets learners thinking (see description above).

**Mini-lecture #1**– Presenting your information that is tied to the learning objectives.

**Learning Activity #1** - Between each mini-lecture, the participants need a mental break to process the information they just learned. This can be done in pairs or triads by one of the following:

- Posing a question or problem and having them solve the issue
- Sharing a clinical case they have experienced
- Showing a slide and having them diagnose the issue

**Mini-lecture #2** – Provide your next set of new knowledge tied to the learning objectives.

**Learning Activity #2** – Activity to process new information from mini-lecture #2.

**Closing Overview** – Ties the presentation together by reviewing what they just learned using the learning objectives and shows what they did in order to reinforce learning.

**Take-Home Points** – Ask participants to translate 3-5 points they have learned into actions or behaviors they will incorporate into their practice by writing them on a note card and sharing their points with the person next to them.

**Question and Answer Session** – Allows the learner to further process questions. This can also be used as flexible time where you can adjust your session as needed, but please allow some time for questions.

## Other Methods of Interaction

### Think-Pair-Share

With think-pair-share, you pose an open-ended question on a slide and give participants one minute to think about the question. This is important because it gives learners a chance to retrieve information from long-term memory in order to formulate an answer. In pairs or in triads, let participants discuss their ideas about the question for several minutes. This allows learners to discover what they do and do not know while constructing an answer, something that typically does not happen in a lecture format. After several minutes you can survey two or three groups for their answers or take a group vote.

### Complete or Support a Statement

Show a slide of a statement. Working in pairs or triads, have participants complete or support a statement within one minute.

Example of “complete a statement”:

“People can apply their learning better when the presenter...”

Example of “support a statement”:

“All persons who are age-appropriate should receive a flu shot because...”

### Compare and Contrast

Show a slide of two issues, such as two different skin rashes, and have the pairs/triads compare and contrast the two issues. Ask them to list three similarities and list three differences within two minutes.

### Re-order the Steps

Show a slide that lists steps used in diagnosis or treatment out of order and ask the group to reorder them correctly within one minute. You can have the whole group share out loud.