



Training in a Tandem Handbook

A Planning Guide for Radio workshops
with Special Target Groups

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Socrates & Youth

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ABOUT USING THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook on training in a tandem is meant to be used as a guide during planning. It particularly aims at supporting community radio trainers who design workshops hoping to integrate marginalised social groups otherwise underrepresented in the media. It presents suggestions for training techniques that can be applied within various target groups.

The handbook can be implemented in three different ways while developing the “tandem” Cupertino between radio trainers and trainers linked to the target groups. It outlines: a preparatory workshop for tandem trainers, a method of mentoring the planning process, and a checklist approach to designing a project.

The preparatory workshop can be carried through by simply following the handbook. This type of workshop also helps to make the tandem concept more accessible, not just to radio trainers – but rather to anyone working with particular target groups.

The mentoring or coaching method will work best when the coach is familiar with the entire handbook before beginning to plan. Then, the most applicable sections can be extracted from the handbook during project development.

When applying this handbook by the checklist method, one of the trainers involved takes over the planning. In this case it is also recommended that this person read the entire handbook, then selecting those planning suggestions that seem most suitable to the project at hand and using them as checklists.

Whatever the method, the following topics should definitely be treated during planning: “differing motivations of trainers and future participants”, “foreseeable difficulties”, and “organisational framework”.

When checklisting, the section beginning with “planning in a tandem” can be applied. The “guidelines for tandem trainers” (in the chapter on “rough planning”) contains seminal ideas on developing a project that are later explained in greater detail (“detailed planning of the project”).

At the end of each chapter, note has been made of its relevance in the coaching or checklisting method.

In the appendix there is a list of questions meant for evaluating the experience of training in a tandem and drawing conclusions for further projects.

INTRODUCTION

Radio training and radio workshops serve to improve the access of new groups to community radio work. Most European community radio stations therefore schedule training events regularly and have developed their own workshop procedures and training programmes. Often, these standardised solutions are insufficient, when the aim is to integrate so-called ‘disadvantaged’ groups. People with special needs and life circumstances require training approaches that take their needs into account and respond appropriately. For individual radio trainers, it is not always feasible to develop suitable approaches on their own.

Training partnerships can be a solution here. These are training projects in which radio trainers cooperate with people already associated to the target group (this handbook calls them ‘target group trainers’). Within the scope of the Socrates Project “Creating Community Voices” the trainers at Orange 94,0 in Vienna pursued the question of how and under what circumstances these partnerships can function well.

The interprofessional teams formed to plan and implement training projects for a certain target group are subsequently called ‘tandems’. The term is intended programmatically: tandem suggesting two indispensable parts of a whole, implicating mutual trust and goals, and enabling dynamic interaction.

PREREQUISITES

A training project in a tandem is built upon two fundamental supports that are equally important for the success of the undertaking:

- The radio trainer is experienced in teaching radio skills. She or he has a good command of creative and technical elements of radio production and knows a variety of methods for teaching them.
- The target group trainer is experienced in developing training programmes, recreational or creative activities for the respective group. She or he is familiar with the interests, needs and living circumstances of the target group.

Training in a tandem can function well if:

- Both partners are fully involved in the planning, and the project is regarded as a mutual endeavour. Both present their working methods openly and thus can arrive at a common approach. It is clear to both partners who is competent and responsible for what tasks.
- Both partners have access to the necessary background information. (The radio trainer requires information about the group; the target group trainer needs information on the possible methods and aims of radio production work.)

Such a foundation can only be established through sufficient exchange during planning. This handbook attempts to structure this planning process. It contains working instructions for the tandem - a sequence of questions for mutual discussion prior to the implementation of the actual project.

METHODS OF APPLICATION

On the organisational level there are three possible ways to apply these tandem principles while planning training projects:

1. *Preparatory workshop for trainers*

If several training projects based on the tandem principle are being planned simultaneously, one workshop can be organised for radio and target group trainers involved in these projects. The workshop serves to prepare the forthcoming training projects, the content of the workshop being project planning. An appropriate facilitator for this workshop would be a radio trainer who is not involved in the actual training projects, ideally someone who has training experience with groups and/or interprofessional teams.

2. *Coaching*

The tandem is accompanied through the planning work by a coach, following the handbook. Later, during the project itself, the coach serves as a moderator for team meetings and post-project evaluation.

A suitable coach would be a radio trainer who is not involved in the actual project - ideally a person with experience in comparable training situations. She or he should structure the

planning process by moderating the meetings and asking well-directed questions, by pointing out contradictions and eliciting solutions to problems that may arise.

3. Checklist

The trainers forming a tandem use the handbook as a checklist for their planning.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE THREE METHODS

The key factor for choosing a method is its practicability within the everyday situation of a community radio station, whose resources are usually limited. More extensive planning will improve content and results, but involve more personnel and organisational effort.

A preparatory workshop for trainers is a particularly suitable method in cases where a community radio would like to introduce the tandem concept and establish it as a new working technique. The trainers involved cultivate an intensive exchange and discuss the diverse ideas that emerge in the course of the preparatory workshop. This can be perceived as very motivating and productive by the participants.

At the same time, this variant involves a lot of time and organisation. The basic prerequisite would be that several training projects operating on the tandem principle are being planned at the same time. Another condition that must be fulfilled: All tandem trainers must participate in the preparatory workshop, since the tandems can only plan successfully if they do this together.

The checklist method requires the least effort. The radio trainer and the target group trainer who form a tandem work together during the planning and preparation, arranging meetings directly with one another. However, they lack the support of an external partner to make corrections or arbitrate conflicts. Therefore, this method requires critical reflection on the part of the trainers about their own work. It is most likely to succeed if the tandem partners have previous experience in similar projects.

Coaching is a good compromise between methods. The effort involved in organisation and planning is greater than with the checklist technique (a third person, the coach, must be present at all project meetings), but in this way some of the major drawbacks of mere checklisting can be avoided.

MAKING TANDEMS WORK

A preparatory workshop for trainers

In the following section, the concept of a 2-day workshop for trainers is introduced. Additionally, a suggestion is made about how the same content and questions can be handled when using the coaching or checklist methods.

The time allocations for the 2-day trainers' workshop are based on a group size of 6 persons (3 tandems, i.e. 3 training projects that are being planned within this preparatory workshop). For the coaching and the checklist variants, exact time allocations are not given. However, a realistic assumption would be 2 long planning meetings of at least 3 hours each. Of course it never hurts to have more time at your disposal.

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP (10 MINUTES)

AIM:

Familiarise participants with the aims and concept of the workshop.

PROCEDURE:

- Short introductory speech by the workshop facilitator followed by the opportunity for participants to ask questions.
- Explain and clarify the idea of training in a tandem.

CONTENT:

Content is the planning of workshops and training projects for special target groups.

WORKSHOP AIM:

The development of applicable training concepts for the respective target group.

METHOD:

Ideas are developed step-by-step in groups of two (tandems), then presented and discussed in the whole group.

ROLE OF THE WORKSHOP FACILITATOR:

Distribution of work tasks, moderation of group discussion, support during work in small groups.

COACHING:

The coach introduces him/herself and explains his/her role in the planning process.

CHECKLIST:

Inapplicable

2. INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS (20 MINUTES)

AIM:

- Getting to know one another
- Initial exchange on professional experience (serves as a basis for adequate division of labour and responsibilities)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Each person introduces him/herself briefly.
- Mention is made of each person's previous experience as a trainer.

PROCEDURE:

Informal round-table situation. Other participants and the group facilitator can ask questions.

COACHING/CHECKLIST:

Informal meeting

3. WARMING UP - EXERCISES: TWO SUGGESTIONS

AIM:

- This serves as an ‘ice-breaker’ in getting to know one another.
- Beginning with negative background gives the participants the opportunity to reflect on their own experience. Exchanging notes on “what can go wrong” and recognising one’s own previous mistakes can contribute to forming mutual trust in the project partnership.

OPTION A: INSTANT RADIO PLAY

‘WORKSHOP-NIGHTMARES & NIGHTMARE-WORKSHOPS’ (90 MINUTES)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Each person adopts the role of the most exasperating workshop participant they have ever encountered. “Imagine all the worst workshop participants getting together in one bunch and interacting like no tomorrow!”

PROCEDURE:

- Distribution of roles
- Agreement on “plot” or story
- Recording
- Listening to the recording
- Reflection and discussion

IMPLEMENTATION:

In exercises like the one described above, there is a tendency to lose track of time. The workshop facilitator sees to it that the plot is very condensed – one to three scenes is enough. It

is important to emphasise that the point is not to deliver a perfect product, but to focus on the content of the game.

Technically, a direct recording with one microphone is recommended, since this involves no subsequent mixing and is therefore quick. Simply record the scenes with a portable interview unit. If background noise is planned, just produce it live in the same room, and if music or “atmospherics” off other recorded tracks are desired, play them into the single microphone by running them off a boom-box (“ghetto blaster”) in the background. Since there isn’t time to select music and other sounds, the facilitator should have some CDs on hand that he or she knows well, thus being able to offer suitable short takes without delay.

When listening to and discussing the recording, the focus should not be on the product itself but rather on the group process: How did the actors feel in their roles as destructive or hard-nosed members of the group, how did they perceive the others?

Technical requirements:

Portable recording unit with external microphone, boom-box, music and/or sound CDs.

OPTION B: ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION (40 MINUTES)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Hold a studio discussion (something like a talk show) on the topic of “Working with groups – like walking a tightrope”. The purpose is to exchange experiences about the obstacles that a trainer might come up against.

PROCEDURE:

With the help of a tape recorder, a mixing console and several microphones, a studio discussion situation is simulated. One of the group members serves as “host” and moderator. Before the actual recording, there is a preliminary discussion, and afterwards an evaluation.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The workshop facilitator should pay attention that the participants don’t stumble over exaggerated expectations in regard to content or depth. The purpose of this exercise is merely to

extend the discussion begun in the introductory round into a framework associated with radio forms, feeling, and fun. If the group has problems with the preliminary discussion or in structuring the “talk”, the workshop facilitator can help with suggestions. However, the facilitator should allow the trainers to come up with their own ideas before bringing any in.

Which option to choose?

The facilitator decides on one of the options according to his or her estimation of the group.

- Option A creates a good atmosphere but demands that participants be ‘sporting’.
- Option B is not as extravagant, some participants will find it easier to get involved.

COACHING/CHECKLIST:

Inapplicable

4. BRIEFING ON THE ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

TARGET GROUP TRAINER (30 MINUTES)

AIM:

Throughout the workshop, the various tandems present their planning stages to the whole group for discussion. It is essential to success that the other tandems and the facilitator give them feedback. In order to do this, all participants must be informed about the context of the individual projects.

INSTRUCTIONS:

The following questions should be answered: Which target group is the organisation working with; which aims is it pursuing; what are the focal points; have there been other activities comparable to a radio workshop; did they get off the ground?

PROCEDURE:

The target group trainers introduce their organisations (one after the other). After each presentation there should be enough time for questions.

RADIO TRAINERS (10 MINUTES)

AIM:

To provide information on the radio organisation for target group trainers.

INSTRUCTIONS:

One of the radio trainers reports on the radio project, particularly on training activities.

COACHING/CHECKLIST:

The representatives of both organisations introduce themselves and their way of working.

5. TEAMING UP (5 MINUTES)

AIM:

Introduce the tandems teams to working together.

PROCEDURE:

The workshop facilitator groups the participants into their tandem teams and explains that work will continue in these smaller groups until the end of the project.

EXPLANATION:

The preparatory workshop is preceded by considerable organisation work. The radio person responsible for training has contacted partner organisations and communicated with the potential target group trainers beforehand. The radio trainers involved should therefore be well informed about the project scheme and may perhaps have shown interest in working with a particular target group. In many cases they are already in contact with a partner organisation. Thus it is generally decided prior to the preparatory workshop which trainers will be forming tandems.

In theory, of course, the teaming decision could be postponed until this point, forming the tandems during the workshop. If this alternative is chosen, the facilitator should see that objective factors serve as a basis for the decision (e.g. past experience or focal points in the work of the radio trainers). Also, this item will then require more time.

COACHING/CHECKLIST:

Inapplicable

6. DIFFERING MOTIVATIONS OF TRAINERS AND FUTURE PARTICIPANTS (45 MINUTES)

AIM:

A successful planning process begins with an examination of the participants' motives. For well-reflected work together, it is important that trainers first reflect on their own motivation and share this with their partner. In this way, tandems can recognise their divergent approaches and find a common denominator while still in the planning phase. The motivation of the target group forms the starting point for the actual project. Trainers attempt to design the training so that it corresponds to what the target group might want or need. Finally, a comparison of the trainers' own motives and the (assumed) motivation of the target group is undertaken. How can the differing interests be taken into account?

INSTRUCTIONS:

Each tandem prepares a poster, listing on one side the reasons why they are offering radio training to their target group (or: “Why does radio work with this group make sense to me?”). On the other side, they list the reasons why (they think) the target group might consent to participating in the radio project.

PROCEDURE:

A work in tandems, then discussion and evaluation with the whole group.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Questions for evaluation:

- Do the trainers’ motivations differ significantly, and if so, why?
- How realistic, how attainable are the trainers’ goals?
- Comparison of trainers’ motivation with the assumed motivation of the group;
- Where are there mutual interests, where major incongruencies? Why are there differences?
How do trainers deal with the situation?
- The assumed motivation of the group is a very good starting point at the beginning of a project; Is sufficient information available?
- Are the target groups particularly difficult to motivate?

In this exercise, distinctions between radio trainers and target group trainers often emerge. Radio trainers tend to approach projects with specific target groups as ‘correcting deficiencies’: Certain groups are underrepresented and should be drawn into community radio so that it can better fulfil its function as a complement to mainstream media. Target group trainers generally concentrate more on the group and the benefit it can get from this project (enhancement of self-esteem through successful endeavour, discovering new recreational activities...). This explains why it is of such extreme importance to involve target group trainers in the tandem - this point should be emphasised and explained during the evaluation discussion. The assumptions about participants’ motivation are based on the experience of target group trainers. Radio trainers can relate, from their own perspective, what elements generally motivate people to work in community radio. Together, they can then reflect on which of these aspects could apply to their ‘own’ target group.

COACHING/CHECKLIST:

The exchange of information and the discussion should have the same content.

7. FORESEEABLE DIFFICULTIES IN RADIO WORK WITH A PARTICULAR TARGET GROUP (20 MINUTES)

AIM:

Every target group has particular needs, and working with various groups can lead to specific difficulties. In this exercise, foreseeable problems are articulated and made note of. Thus, the tandem trainers can keep them in mind while proceeding with planning the project.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Possible difficulties that could emerge while working with the respective target groups are 'collected'. This is done together by all participants, for each of the tandems.

PROCEDURE:

The facilitator moderates the group discussion with all participants. Difficulties that can be anticipated with the target groups are listed on a poster. The target group trainer representing a group has the power of veto: Therefore, suggestions which he or she judges to be mere prejudice are NOT documented.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Planning workshops for specific groups is like walking a tightrope when it comes to dealing with stereotyped expectations. On the one hand it's necessary to avoid oversimplification (xxx equals yyy). On the other hand, particularities of target groups should not be treated as taboos.

COACHING/CHECKLIST:

The radio trainer makes notes on his/her reservations about the work with the respective target group, these are commented on by the target group trainer.

As an example for *foreseeable difficulties*, here are the results of this exercise in a preparatory workshop for trainers organised by Orange 94.0:

Senior citizens

- A very heterogeneous group
- Timid about using technical equipment
- Self-organisation may not function well
- They may lose track easily

Apprentices

- Not comfortable with written tasks
- Rigid group structures, hierarchies, and dynamics
- Self-organisation may not function well
- Low tolerance for frustration
- (Boredom, repetition)

Homeless

- Insecurity, fear, inhibitions
- Alcohol, drugs (may disappear for some time)
- Low tolerance for frustration

8. ORGANISATIONAL FRAMEWORK (1 HOUR)

AIM:

The concrete planning of the project must be developed on the basis of the available facilities. When the framework is clear, the planning of content can be taken up. Group size, given setting (rooms), available equipment and the like set limit to what will be possible or impossible.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Using poster 1 (see below), tandems describe the framework of their project. It should be made clear which questions remain to be answered.

PROCEDURE:

Work in tandems, presentation and discussion with the whole group.

IMPLEMENTATION:

During the presentation and discussion of results with the entire group, the following points should be considered:

- Are important questions unanswered that could make the concrete planning more difficult?
- What difficulties result from the framework?
(e.g. group is too large, not enough time...)
- Is it possible to solve these problems or is it necessary to accept them and take them into account during planning?

Detailed information is exchanged by the tandem partners. The target group trainer answers questions concerning the group. The radio trainer contributes details on the resources (equipment, rooms). Data is gathered on financing, trainer resources and available time slots.

COACHING/CHECKLIST:

The same questions should be tackled.

Poster 1

Factors determining framework**Target group**

- ✓ group size
- ✓ age
- ✓ gender
- ✓ do they know one another already?
- ✓ basic technical knowledge and creative experience
- ✓ level of education
- ✓ background in comparable media projects
- ✓ special skills and interests
- ✓ when do they have time for the project?
- ✓ how much time do they have for the project?

Trainers

- ✓ When do they have time for the project?
- ✓ How much time do they have for the project?
- ✓ Skills: "Is it necessary/feasible to expand the tandem to include addition trainers from the target group or the radio?"

Financing

Trainers' payment, rent for rooms, rent for equipment, costs of materials

Time frame

The time available for the project depends on the amount of time participants and trainers can invest, on the need to finance the payment of trainers, and on possible deadlines, such as a presentation date by which the project should be completed.

Rooms

How many rooms are required?

Equipment

What technical equipment is necessary?

PLANNING IN A TANDEM

I. ROUGH PLANNING

AIM:

An outline of the project evolves, divided into four workshop phases:

- ① Introduction ② Production ③ Reflection ④ Presentation.**

First, it is important to state aims for these work phases. Special attention should be given to the introduction, since it creates the basis for a successful project.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Make a rough draft for all four phases of the workshop.

PROCEDURE:

- Guidelines for tandem trainers - opening statement of facilitator on goals and approaches, see following pages (45 minutes)
- Work in tandems (90 minutes)
- Presentation and discussion with the entire group (45 minutes)

The guidelines for tandem trainers serve as an aid in planning. At the same time, the target group trainers learn about the way radio workshops are organised and what questions or decisions may come up within the course. In this opening presentation, the facilitator should avoid using normative terms, and concentrate on raising questions, rather than answering them. The intention is to present options and name some of their advantages and disadvantages, so that the tandems can decide how to proceed in working with their respective groups.

To reach such mutual decisions, both tandem partners must share their previous experience. The radio trainers talk about courses he or she has given, reflecting on more or less successful approaches taken.

A great deal of flexibility is demanded of the radio trainer, who should consciously avoid an ‘I-always-do-things-this-way’ attitude. The target group trainer should give an estimation of the target group members – their expectations and needs, what challenges they can deal with. The facilitator follows the discussion in the tandem teams and serves as a moderator when necessary.

Rough planning thus involves a series of decisions on the part of the tandem teams about how to design their project. When they present their results to the entire group, the facilitator should inquire about the reasons for their decisions.

In this manner, the different tandem teams are able to compare their planning at this stage. Due to the wide variety of practical possibilities, there may already be major differences between the projects. The main question remains whether the planning framework corresponds to the group characteristics that have been postulated (see "Motivation" and "Foreseeable Difficulties" further above).

It is essential to allow enough time for discussion in the entire group.

COACHING:

The tandem team discusses various ways to organise their project and drafts a rough schedule.

The coach points out what might be missing and generally adopts the role of “devil’s advocate” or “doubting Thomas”, persistently questioning the individual work steps that are planned.

CHECKLIST:

The tandem partners draft a rough schedule for their project, taking the suggestions found in the “Guidelines for tandem trainers” into account.

GUIDELINES FOR TANDEM TRAINERS

❶ INTRODUCTION:

(using Poster 2 – what the introduction can achieve)

Aims of the introductory phase: In the introduction, the group is consolidated, the participants are motivated, inhibitions are reduced, and basic knowledge is acquired. The success of the whole project depends on the introduction. However, usually the time available for this phase is limited. Tandem trainers should consider what introductory elements are of particular importance for their group.

Motivation: A poorly motivated group will profit most from an introduction that is lively and rewarding. Beginning exercises also serve as ‘appetisers’. The actual production to follow later will demand a great deal of perseverance and endurance within the group. Tangible results often don’t appear for days or weeks - depending on the time plan for production sessions.

Interpersonal aspects: Participants who don’t know one another already will need numerous opportunities to ‘tune in’ to working together in groups. Radio exercises are quite suitable for the process of getting to know one another - specific ‘icebreakers’ are usually not necessary.

Reducing inhibitions: Participants hesitant about using technical equipment should be encouraged to play around with it. Introductory exercises give them the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the equipment gradually and playfully. Speaking into the microphone or listening to their own voice is often unaccustomed, even unpleasant for newcomers. In various introductory games, they can try things out, confident that the recordings are just for practice and will not be used outside of the training situation. Group reflection on these early attempts is essential.

Acquiring basic knowledge: Often, participants make the usual technical mistakes during introductory exercises (recording levels too high or too low, improper use of the microphone, forgetting to release the ‘pause’ button, and so on). After that, they are aware of such problems and can avoid them during actual production. Also, technical ‘failure’ is not as difficult for participants to deal with if they know

that it was ‘just an exercise’.

Introductory exercises should be chosen in accord with productions planned later in the workshop. If a radio play is on the agenda, special attention should be given to sounds, stories, and voice experiments. In projects where many interviews will be taking place, it would be suitable to practice asking questions and listening closely to answers, along with handling the portable recording unit.

Generally speaking, a project should be designed on the basis of the production that is planned and not as a continuation of the introduction!

Poster 2:**What an introduction can achieve***Interpersonal aspects*

- ✓ **Getting to know one another**
- ✓ Group formation
- ✓ Who wants to/is able to work together with whom?
- ✓ Getting to know trainers
- ✓ Creating an atmosphere of mutual trust

Motivation

Radio in small portions
= quick results =
Fun and motivation = wanting to do more

Reducing initial fears

- ✓ **about technical equipment**
- ✓ **about creative work**
- ✓ about hearing one's own voice

Acquiring basic knowledge

- ✓ **Recording technique**
- ✓ **Interview technique**
- ✓ **Narrating**
- ✓ **Finding and inventing topics**
- ✓ **Making up stories**

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES SUITABLE IN THE INTRODUCTORY PHASE

Radio biographies: Participants relate their own listening habits and preferences, and how they have changed in the course of the years. They consider what value radio as a medium has for them and what a role it plays in their daily lives. They can also report on memories of childhood and youth associated with radio. This exercise can be done with a partner or in a small group, the results can be recorded or written down. It is also possible that the group describe itself statistically (how many persons listen to which radio station, how many hours a day, etc.) and compare their results with official media statistics. Radio biographies are very suitable for creating an atmosphere of mutual trust in the group through the discovery of common preferences. Also, in this way the project can directly connect to the preferences of participants: their starting level is its starting point.

Various forms of interview exercises: Participants can interview one another in pairs or in small groups. Either the facilitator suggests a topic, or the participants choose one themselves. In the interviews they can speak authentically or adopt fictitious roles.

Important: strict limits on time! No interview may be longer than 5 minutes, otherwise the whole group won't be able to listen to and discuss all of them!

On-the-spot reporting: The task of a radio reporter is to make what he or she sees (and smells and feels) audible. The topic doesn't necessarily have to be sensational. On-the-spot reporting can describe the atmosphere on a half-empty evening street, at a playground, in a crowded shopping area, or in a park with birds warbling in the background. Also, fictitious reports can be made up on the basis of photographs, slides or video clips.

Vox-pops: The short opinion survey or vox-pop is the most popular form of radio production among beginners - sometimes to the dismay of trainers, since editing surveys takes a tremendous amount of time. Nonetheless, a survey exercise at the outset of a project gives participants the opportunity to walk around town with a recording unit and strike up conversation with complete strangers "like a real radio reporter": this can motivate participants.

If the pause-button is used for ‘editing’ (the question is taped only once at the beginning, after that only answers to the question are recorded), results emerge quickly. When playing back the surveys, the topic of editing should be touched upon. The results would be even better listening if repetition or meaningless answers had been removed by editing.

Indoor-radio: Indoor-radio is a short-term radio programme (closed circuit) for a relatively small audience - the workshop participants. It requires that a small live-studio put out a signal going to speakers in another room for listening. Participants take turns being studio producers and listeners. They moderate, interview people and are interviewed themselves. This exercise keys people into radio very well and usually enthuses participants. However, it involves a great deal of technical effort. Indoor-radio also tends to be long-winded if the programme lasts too long. Often, stereotyped role models crop up when participants imitate familiar styles of moderating and speaking.

Playing with sounds and voices:

(A) “And now, the weather” – imitating different radio voices:

Radio voices sound entirely different from one another, depending on the type of radio show they occur in. Newscasters sound factual and unemotional, DJs sound trendy, sports reporters sometime scream with excitement, and night-time radio hosts will “soft-talk” their listeners. The participants should voice short text passages, attempting to simulate different broadcasting atmospheres. If the same text is used for different voicings, the results can be very amusing.

(B) “Just do it!” – short improvisations or collages:

Using any available text fragments (newspaper articles, product instructions, poems, lists, children’s books, or whatever), the participants develop short improvisational pieces. The trainer can make some suggestions on ways to experiment. How can a text be presented to make it sound like a completely different piece? What happens when you combine several texts? How can a voice be distorted without using technical effects?

(C) Jingle-factory:

A new radio station is going on the air. The participants are to give it a name and produce jingles for it. They may use only their own voices (speaking, singing, humming) and noises that they can make themselves.

(D) Mini radio play without text:

Small groups each record a series of 5 to 10 sounds that tell a story. When the takes are played back, the other participants try to guess what they are about. It's more fun if the stories and the sounds used occasionally have double meanings.

(E) Newscast without words:

Small groups present up-to-date news using only sounds (e.g. political negotiations, earthquake in X, N wins the world cup in soccer, and so on). The other participants try to guess what the items are about.

② PRODUCTION

(explain with reference to poster 3 – Planning production)

Poster 3

Planning production

Forms of presentation

Is a certain form of presentation planned, or dictated by the situation?

If not, how will the participants be familiarised with typical presentation form in radio?

Topics

Has a topic already been set?

If not, how will the group decide on their topic(s)?

Assigning production tasks

Will each participant proceed through all work steps, or will there be a division of labour?

Relevance of technical skills

What technical abilities are the participants expected to acquire in the course of the workshop?

How and when will technical units be incorporated into training?

The tandem needn't decide for the group what it is going to produce. This depends on the trainers' impression of the group: some require more guidance, others less. In any case, agreement should be reached about explicit productions to be realised. The trainers moderate the discussion on topics and forms of presentation and in this way - more or less deliberately - influence the decisions participants arrive at. It is better to be aware of this fact in advance and to play this role consciously.

Forms of presentation: Participants often have very vague ideas about forms of presentation and broadcasting (perhaps they will only be able to describe music shows, call-ins or news on the hour) – thus they have difficulty deciding what they would like to produce. Therefore, an essential element in the process of choosing topics and forms would be a trainer's (well prepared) run-down on typical radio genres.

Whether or not to illustrate forms of presentation by playing back actual broadcasts, is an ambivalent question. This decision should be made by the tandem team. Examples make explanations easier to understand. Well-chosen examples can trigger discussion on listening habits and preferences or on ways of making a deliberate statement through a specific mode of presentation. However, the examples a trainer presents used can have a tremendous influence on what the group decides to do. It is up to the target group trainer to judge how theoretical a treatment of presentation forms is suitable for the group.

In some cases, it makes sense to suggest a particular form of presentation, or to decide in advance upon one. However, trainers should have good reasons for determining, during the planning phase, that a certain form will be most suitable for a specific group. In this case, the workshop would no longer be called 'radio', but rather 'radio play, reporting, or feature' workshop, to name only a few.

Topic: There is the option of letting the group choose its own topic(s) or having trainers set the topic. Making the choice themselves gives the participants more leeway. Suggesting a topic that is well thought through, suited to the interests of the group, and accepted by all can, however, be very stimulating.

Journalistic topics focus on the outer world. Participants learn to gather information from different sources and work with it. Here, tandem trainers must insist that the topic be clear-cut – beginners often want to do everything at once.

There may be other topics that these particular participants have a lot to say about. Sometimes, their personal involvement and subjective standpoint are the very things that make for an interesting broadcast – especially because these are groups who usually have no opportunity to present their own perspectives in mainstream media. In many cases, the attention of participants must be drawn to these topics. As obvious as it may seem: the fact that everyday life and experience could be interesting for listeners usually has to be pointed out.

Assigning production tasks: Is it the aim of the project that each participant learn specific techniques and work steps, or is a division of labour possible? “Everyone goes through all work steps” serves, in terms of media pedagogy, to give each participant insight into the entire process of production. Dividing labour, on the other hand, is generally more efficient. If separate tasks are to be done by different people, personal preferences must be taken into account. This reinforces their strong points, but precludes the possibility that they might surprise themselves - by succeeding at an activity they would normally not even attempt.

Relevance of technical skills: How much importance is to be placed on technical matters, how much on content and expression? This is a question of priorities. If the goal is mastering certain technical skills, then sufficient time must be allotted for practice and experimentation. Often, the equipment gives the participants an incentive and sparks their interest, while content later becomes more important.

③ REFLECTION:

At the end of the project, the whole group gathers to listen to the production(s).

In a round-table discussion, the group reflects on the following questions:

- Is the material that was produced successful in terms of content? Does it get the information or message across?
- How is the technical quality of the production? Are there audible weaknesses, and what skills remain to be learned?
- How did the participants perceive the production process: what interested them, what did they enjoy, which work steps were strenuous or difficult?
- How did they feel in the group? Were they content with the way tasks were divided among the group, and with their own tasks?
- How did they perceive the tandem trainers? What would they have liked to be different?

A global question like “how was it for you?” usually evokes answers that are just as generalised. It is important to moderate the feedback discussion, encouraging participants to be as specific as possible. A round-table conversation involving the whole group gives participants a chance to exchange on their experience and put it in relation to everyone else’s. Written feedback will often be more thoughtful and more critical. One advantageous way of combining the two methods: the trainers put up empty posters for feedback, then leave the room for a given time so that participants can jot down remarks and suggestions.

Large groups can be divided for such round-table talks. If production has taken place in smaller groups, these can discuss their own work process, whereas reflection on the results of production should be undertaken with the entire group present.

④ PRESENTATION:

The end products of a radio workshop are usually presented in a broadcasted programme, which might be live or pre-recorded. (In most cases, workshops generate a finished product ready to be broadcast. If the goal was set on live broadcasting, then the workshop serves for preparation and practice.) It is

recommended that an (additional) presentation be planned for invited guests – family, friends and acquaintances, enabling direct feedback from listeners.

II. DETAILED PLANNING OF THE PROJECT

AIM:

Employing the insights gained in the preparatory workshop to develop a detailed, feasible plan for working with the target group

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preparation period:

To complete planning, the following questions should be addressed:

- What remains to be done? (contact the group, agree on dates for sessions, reserve equipment, arrange transportation, and the like)
- Is the tandem (of two) sufficient, or would it be sensible to recruit another?
- target group trainer and/or
- radio trainer?
- Will the target group trainers need technical skills?
- If so, which particular skills?
- How will they acquire them? (consider training session)
- Make a schedule for the remaining preparations

2. Workshop:

- The rough planning is now refined and worked out into individual items, so that a detailed schedule containing procedures and time frames is developed.

It is necessary to determine how much time will be available for individual workshop units, such as getting to know one another, introductory radio exercises, technical or creative input, forming groups and choosing topics. The production process should be divided into single, well-defined work steps with intermediate goals that can be clearly stated: It would show, for example, that on day N, the group should be in work stage X if they are to complete their project on time.

3. Working together in a tandem:

A clear assignment of tasks and responsibilities should make apparent which tandem member will be doing what jobs during the preparation phase and the workshop itself. There should be full agreement about 'who is in charge of what'. The team should plan on mutual reflection of their work in intermediate sessions as well as a final feedback round.

PROCEDURE:

Trainers follow the task instructions above (20 minutes)

Small groups work out their own projects in detail (2 hours)

All present schedules and discuss them with the entire group (1hour)

The facilitator is available to assist the small planning groups if that is indicated.

COACHING/CHECKLIST:

The tandem partners design a detailed plan for their project. They can use the questions listed above to help structure the task. If a coach is involved, he or she takes on the role of the facilitator.

FEEDBACK ON THE PREPARATORY WORKSHOP

AIM:

To gather feedback on the 2-day preparatory workshop for trainers and bring it to a close

INSTRUCTIONS:

The trainers who participated relate how they experienced the planning workshop (structure, procedure, work tasks, co-operating with their tandem partner and the facilitator, results). The facilitator reviews the 2 days and their results from his or her point of view.

PROCEDURE:

“Flash round”, group discussion. In addition, participating trainers are requested to submit written feedback to the facilitator after a few days.

COACHING:

The tandem partners reflect on their progress up to this point and give the coach feedback on how they see his or her contribution. The coach evaluates the planning process seen from his or her perspective.

CHECKLIST:

The tandem team reflects on its Cupertino up to this point.

APPENDIX:

LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION BY TRAINERS AFTER THE PROJECT

TARGET GROUP

- How was the motivation in the group? What difficulties came up?
- Were your assumptions about the target group correct?

PREPARATORY WORK

- Did questions come up during preparation that had not been covered in planning?
- Did questions come up during the project that had not been covered in planning?

PROJECT

Introductory phase:

- What worked well, what didn't work?
- Were changes in the work plan necessary, and why?
- What did the introduction achieve / fail to achieve? Why did it fail?
- Compared to the outset, was the group different after the introduction?

Production:

- What worked well, what didn't work?
- Were changes in the work plan necessary, and why?
- Were you able to keep the time schedule?
- How successful was the division of labour among participants?
- Were they able to / did they want to get personally involved?

Final product:

- What did the group members think of their own results (content and technical quality)?
- What did you as trainers think of the production (content and technical quality)?

- What relevance did the production have for the group?

The group:

- How was the working atmosphere in the group?
- Group dynamics: what went well, where were there difficulties?
- What kind of feedback did the group give?
- Was it sufficient?
- What do you as trainers think was left unsaid?

The tandem:

- Did the division of labour work out as planned?
- How did you get along with one another?
- What would have helped you to work (even) better as a team?

PROJECT AIMS / MOTIVATION

- What goals did the project fulfil?
- What goals were not achieved, and why not?
- On the basis of this experience, next time we'll ...
- Is there demand for / interest in the possibility of pursuing follow-up projects?