Moving from teacher to trainer (MTT1)

Resource 3: Understandig the needs of your audience

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**Key Point 1: As much advance information as possible is crucial.**

Although audiences are all very different they all have a common purpose. Trainers are acutely aware that teachers who attend training sessions will want to leave the session with new and valuable information, and feeling confident about what they can do better or differently once they are back in school.

Advance information about the group is extremely helpful when planning the actual content and delivery of sessions. How you get hold of this information tends to depend on where the session is being held. If the session is held in a school and involves staff from only one or a limited number of schools it is worth having a conversation in advance with the headteacher or with the person who made the initial contact with you to run the session.

1. Always remember to liaise with the person who initially contacted you to provide training.

2. If delegates have filled in an application form, what kind of information will this give you about their experience and needs?

Here are some questions to look at when thinking about each particular audience:

* How many participants will there be?
* How long have they been teaching?
* Which languages do they teach?
* Do they teach any other subjects?
* What are their roles e.g. HoD?
* What kind of resources are they using?
* What kind of school do they teach in?

If you can get brief answers to most of these questions then you will have a profile of the group and you can start thinking through the likely dynamics. This will provide an excellent background to planning the content and delivery of your sessions.

**Key Point 2: What happens in advance of and immediately prior to the session can influence how participants feel about each other, how the session develops and whether or not participants will want to come back for further training.**

Participants feel valued when welcomed to the session as they arrive in the room. If they are wearing name badges this is an excellent opportunity to learn names and where they come from. Just a few words of recognition can help build up trust and mutual respect and this is often helpful during the session, e.g. ‘I remember we were talking about the fact that your school has single-sex classes*.*’ ‘You mentioned that you had really enjoyed using this newspaper article, didn’t you?’ It helps to create a supportive and more intimate atmosphere. If the session is a twilight session, then participants are often quite stressed and rushed, so try not to bombard them with questions but make sure that the room is calm and welcoming, and gives out the message that this will be a friendly but at the same time useful and challenging session.