

Food Security and Nutrition Network

March Knowledge Management TF Meeting

March 10, 2016 11:00-12:30 EST

- *Presenter:* Aina Irbe, ACDI/VOCA
- Jenny Coneff, CaLP
- Kristi Pearson, World Vision
- Deborah Hamilton, Fintrac
- Mary Duncan, Fintrac
- Ellen Piepgras, Land O'Lakes International Development
- Shelia Jackson, CORE/TOPS
- Yemisi Songo-Williams, CORE/TOPS
- Michelle Shapiro, CORE/TOPS

I. Presentation on Engaging Adult Learners

Aina Irbe, Senior Director of Learning Technologies, ACDI/VOCA

Aina started her presentation by defining an adult learner as anyone over the age of 18 who is a non-traditional student (not currently enrolled in formal schooling). There are many different motivations to learn as an adult, from general self-improvement to career advancement.

Motivation for adult learners is very much about the individual – “What’s in it for me?” For learning to take place, people need a desire to learn and/or need to learn (required learning – ethics training at work, for example), an opportunity to learn by doing (immediately applying what you learn), opportunity to learn at their own pace, opportunity to solve realistic challenges (how does this relate to me in my job?), and options on how to learn.

Aina asked the group what challenges people have seen for motivating adult learners. Answers included boring presentations that aren’t interactive, short attention spans, people being too busy, and people being overwhelmed by all the many options out there for learning.

Common challenges to adult learning fit into three categories:

- Individual:
 - Culture - People learn differently in different cultures.
 - Language – Information can get lost in translation.
 - Learning styles – audio learners vs visual learners, etc.
- Situational:
 - Limited access to technology/Internet in the field
 - Need enough time to train/learn
 - Geographic limitations
- Training-specific:
 - Status - mandatory or self-motivated?
 - Type of training – In-person vs online?
 - Communication about the training/importance of the training

The easy-to-implement solutions to these adult learning challenges also fit into three categories – the Three C's:

- Communication:
 - You need a system to keep learners engaged and supported. Keep in mind you'll need to wear many hats and/or involve many departments, including marketing and IT.
 - Tips - Provide multiple means of messaging, be timely, and make each learner feel attended to.

- Content:
 - Consider the [ADDIE](#) model:
 - Analyze
 - Design
 - Deliver methods
 - Implement
 - Evaluation (Follow up)
 - Tips for creating content:
 - Use storytelling/narrative, games, etc. to make it more interesting.
 - Example: <http://insidengo.org/resources/hpt/>
 - Provide content and training in multiple formats – online vs. offline, blended, different languages, etc.
 - Integrate MOOCs
 - Use [Universal Design for Learning](#) principles
 - Make it personal with case studies and guided content.
 - Tell people how to apply the content – don't make them figure it.

- Collaboration:
 - Implement informal learning communities so people can share and learn from each other, reinforcing messages.
 - Groups can be organization-wide, or smaller related to job requirements.
 - Making people comfortable is key to getting them to collaborate.
 - You can set up communities around training if time permits so people can further discuss what they have learned.
 - Keep in mind the 1-9-90 rule of communities (1% create content, 9% edit content, 90% view content)
 - Use the [Kirkpatrick Model](#) to measure effectiveness.

II. Q&A

1. What kind of systems are in place at ACIDI/VOCA to see that learning needs are identified and responded to?

- That is the role of the learning champions, who are staff members appointed on each project who are the main contact for the learning and development team. It's not officially part of their job description, but they meet regularly with the learning and development staff to make sure their own team's learning needs are met.

2. Does ACIDI/VOCA have an online platform where staff can access courses or training after they are provided?

- There is a learning management system online where staff can log in and take courses as many times as they want.

3. What is a good duration for content/training? Is there a best practice as you chunk content?
- It depends on the content itself. Adults can absorb information in a classroom in 50-minute chunks. Smaller chunks are better, and using video and other interactive/multimedia tools helps. If you use PowerPoint don't spend more than three minutes on one slide.
4. Are there clear signals from senior leadership at ACDI/VOCA that staff can or should set aside time to adapt skills, train up, etc.?
- It's an ongoing process to keep leadership and staff involved. It's important to keep up the communication, even if it feels like nagging sometimes. Work to get leadership to praise people who complete certificates on their own.
5. Do you need to show some kind of return on investment in order to receive funding, staff, or even interest? If so, how do you represent either effectiveness for staff or make attempts to quantify impact for the organization or individual projects?
- In training, ROI can be elusive. The number of people who take training is not a valid number. It is more costly to do follow up and evaluation, which can last up to a year after a training. Try setting up simple benchmarks and check up on them. For example, how many people are logging in and using the courses?

More questions for Aina? Email her at airbe@acdivoca.org.

III. Updates and Other Announcements

- Resources from the March 3 – 5 workshop on creating a Knowledge Management Strategy will be posted soon at <http://fsnnetwork.org>.
- The next Knowledge Management Task Force Meeting is tentatively for April 28. This will be a joint meeting between KM and the Monitoring & Evaluation Task Force.
- Reviving discussions online at fsnnetwork.org. Will let you know when they are up and running.