

# *Closing Ideas* Facilitation tips, tools and techniques

Effective adult educators use small group methods to maximize each learner's potential and involve participants in their own learning processes. Learning opportunities start before people enter the door, and continue when they arrive for the workshop or meeting, during the learning session and right up until they leave. This information sheet focuses on the end of the workshop or group session. Remember, learners tend to remember primacy (what happens first), recency (what happens last), and the unusual.

## *What is a closing?*

An effective closing contains one or more of the following elements: a sense of value or meaning, action planning, a sense of accomplishment or movement and completeness.

## *Do mini-closings work if I cover different topics in the workshop?*

Similarly to the use of mini-openings, if you have different components in a workshop, and use different mini-openings to introduce each piece of content, the mini-closing can occur after members complete the learning task for each component.

## *Consider implementing one of these three closings in your next workshop:*

### **CLOSING 1: 1:4**

1. Ask learners to draw four columns on a sheet of blank paper.
2. Ask learners to add the heading 'Fact' at the top of column 1, 'Question' at the top of column 2, 'Aha!' at the top of column 3 and 'Action' at the top of column 4.
3. Ask learners to reflect upon the content they have just uncovered and in:
  - a. column 1 write one fact that they now know that they didn't know before;
  - b. column 2 write one question they still have (if they still have a question);
  - c. column 3 write one 'Aha!' moment—one or more new ideas they now have; and
  - d. column 4 write what action(s) they will take as a result of their new discoveries.
4. Ask learners to form teams of two or three and share the 1:4 sheets, adding anything they feel they missed that their partners have shared with them.

### **CLOSING 2: VALUE FOR ME**

1. Ask learners to take two minutes and jot down what they found most valuable from the (current piece of) content and where they could use this content in their everyday work.
2. Ask learners to form pairs with someone not next to them.
3. Ask learners to share with their partners what they found useful and how they will use it.
4. Ask a few pairs to share their ideas with the rest of the group.

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### CLOSING 3: SLOGAN

1. Ask learners to form small groups of three to five.
2. Ask learners to identify what will be of most benefit for them back in the workplace from what they just learned. Have each person share their thoughts in their small group.
3. Ask learners to spend seven minutes and compose a slogan that sums up all the group members' key ideas.
4. Ask each team to stand up and say out loud their slogan for the rest of the group. (You might want to facilitate a round of applause for each slogan.) You could also ask learners to write these slogans on flip chart paper and post them up around the room as a constant reminder for the rest of the group.

## *Guiding Principles*

*An effective closing has:*

### 1. A sense of value

Learners can identify what is valuable to their working day (time saving, elimination of the possibility of legal action against them, the possibility of pay increase or good appraisals etc).

### 2. Meaningful content

It's relevant to learners' real work situations.

### 3. Action planning

Time to allow learners to decide where and how they will use this new content AND write it down.

### 4. A sense of movement

Learners have changed as a result of their new knowledge; they have traveled a worthwhile learning journey.

### 5. Completeness

Learners have what they need, and there are no loose ends.

Remember effective openers bring learners mentally into the workshop, connect them with others and the content. Effective closings connect the learners with what new knowledge or awareness they have gained while continuing to connect the participants with each other and the content. If learners acknowledge and celebrate what they leave with and acknowledge how useful it is for them, the likelihood increases that it will be transferred into practice.

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