

Training Issues

The most challenging part of training others is translating what you know and have experienced for the maturity and experience level of those you are training. It requires us to think clearly about the group we are training and the circumstances they will be teaching in, and figure out what they will need to succeed. This includes verbalizing your own assumptions on the topic. This will help you add to or adjust the training you have received to fit the audience you will be training.

For example, the Urbana NISSET class was comprised of IVCF staff. Bob and Lindsay did not make the point in their training that a Bible study leader shouldn't talk too much or answer their own questions if the group is silent for a few moments. These things are already assumptions of everyone in the room. They were modeled but never made explicit. Good trainers figure out what they must make explicit. In training students it is good to make explicit: the value of inductivity, the value of good process rather than just arriving at right answers, the authority of the Bible and the mooring of authorial intent.

If the training you are doing is a shift or change in something they are already familiar with, think through what is different than what they are used to. For example, this communal discovery method is different than Mark manuscript in that the group isn't pressed to come to consensus when answering their questions and participants aren't censured for speaking outside the text. It will help student leaders to understand why the rules they are used to are different in this context. (Communal discovery is a good entry level Bible study; the rules of manuscript study, though useful in more rigorous studies, do not help create the safe exploratory atmosphere that we want to create for folks new to our groups or to studying the Bible.)

An effective way to train is to show and then tell, particularly if the telling is done inductively. In our class we modeled the communal discovery method of Bible study, then we debriefed the experience. Within the debriefing, we had particular training elements that we wanted to highlight. The group discovered elements of teaching by reflecting on what they had experienced in the Bible study, and then the teacher commented on and explained how those elements functioned.

Any training experience should include vision/goal, motivation, skills, and logistics. In preparing for a training session, think about what you want communicated in each of those four areas and then how you can lead your group into understanding those elements.

E.g. Urbana Bible Study Training at NISSET:

	<u>What</u>	<u>How</u>
<u>Vision/Goal</u>	increase quality of Bible study on campus and at Urbana fall in love with scripture have a transformative	history of IVCF personal testimonies of participants and teachers vision and goal stated

	encounter with Jesus	experience of good Bible study
<u>Motivation</u> (desire and energy to pursue a goal)	joy need potential results opportunity	history of IVCF personal testimonies stories talk on the power of the Word prayer and repentance
<u>Skills</u>	working with learners' questions entering the text writing good questions summarizing application art of teaching listening working with group dynamics pacing	modeling debriefing practice evaluation explicit teaching handouts
<u>Logistics</u>	where will they get the manuscripts? Urbana details place of the Bible study in the flow of a day at Urbana	answering questions explicit instructions hand outs

It will serve those you train if you prepare them for difficulties they might encounter (just as Jesus told his disciples how to handle rejection while they were out on a ministry trip). Some difficulties that a Urbana Bible study leader may encounter are: if no one talks, if someone talks too much, if an argument breaks out, if a question that you don't know how to answer comes up, if someone in the group breaks down emotionally, if something heretical is said. Of course, our goal is to help the students be confident and to have a good experience leading. We must balance preparing them for difficulties without causing them fear. Often, those in a training session will ask about the things they anticipate being difficult and we can address them through Q & A without creating heaviness.

Finally, it is helpful to give those we train the permission to make mid-course adjustments in their teaching. New teachers tend to try to reproduce what they have seen exactly. When in the midst of actually leading, they may not allow themselves to flex with the particular situation. Explicitly telling them that their study doesn't need to look exactly like our training session model and verbalizing mid-course adjustments you made in your teaching (of which they would be unaware) will serve them. All of this is an element of the art of teaching.