



GOALS & CONTENT

As with any training situation, setting goals and objectives is critical in a retreat setting. As a facilitator, you need to have a clear idea of what you want to accomplish during the retreat or off-site training experience. Consider looking at your training plan as follows:

COGNITIVE LEARNING:

What new information do your members need to possess when the training experience is completed? This may include: goals and objectives of the organization, group development, policies, and contextual topics related to organizational focus.

GROUP LEARNING:

How will the members feel differently about the group after experiencing the retreat together? This may include: team bonding, group communication, team initiatives, and experiencing fun in a non-pressured way.

SKILL LEARNING:

What new skills do you want your members to learn that will be applicable to their role in the group and their role external to the group? Examples include: task and time management, organizational skills, task delegation, confrontation skills, etc.

ATTITUDE LEARNING:

What attitude adjustment will take place as a result of this training time? This may include: interpersonal communication expectations, personal values, appropriate ways to communicate feelings, etc.

What Does All Of This Mean . . .

Put your goals in writing and then do a quick assessment (verbal or written) of your members. Be sure to incorporate their wishes in your planning. It is important to have a balance of the above principals in your curriculum plan. If you are heavy in one category (especially skill or cognitive learning) you may want to consider re-vamping your plan. Remember that the retention of specific information during a condensed training experience is not usually high. Retreats and off-site training experiences are most productive when the desired outcomes are focused on personal and group development. Creating an opportunity for members to have a memorable experience will solidify commitment to the group and enhance personal awareness. The bond that is created from an intense time together is something that is difficult to create one on one or in a meeting situation. An appropriately planned retreat will result in long term productivity. A retreat without a plan is destined to cause resentment (for time wasted) and negative attitudes from group members.