



**GUIDE TO
MANAGING CHANGE
FOR
URBAN MANAGERS
AND TRAINERS**

**HS/151/89E
ISBN: 92-1-131 0077-6**

FOREWORD

Effective urban management is needed all over the world, but scarcity of resources and a rapid rate of urban growth make this need most pressing in developing countries. Rapid change and the necessity of "doing more with less" require especially competent urban managers. To assist member countries in responding to this challenge, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has been offering, during the past decade, a variety of training programmes directed at closing the principal skill gaps and at promoting new approaches, methods and techniques.

Subjects covered by these programmes, usually implemented jointly with national training institutions and with assistance of agencies such as Economic Development Institute (EDI) of the World Bank or the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), can be divided into two main groups: (a) specific techniques and methods in areas such as urban local government revenue generation, budgeting, expenditure control or project preparation; and (b) general management and organizational development skills needed by urban managers. Strengthening of training in both areas is urgently needed, but the lack of training materials seems to be particularly pressing in the second - general management and organizational development for urban managers. This publication is an attempt to fill this gap.

The Guide to Managing Change for Managers and Trainers have been developed by Dr. Fred Fisher, Director, International Development Institute for Organization and Management (IDIOM), in collaboration with the training staff of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). Dr. Fisher has had many years of experience as a city manager, training executive, management adviser and university professor. The Guide has been tested during training courses in Africa and Asia directed by Dr. Fisher for UNCHS (Habitat) in collaboration with USAID and EDI.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	4
PART I	6
Initiating the learning experience	6
The urban management challenge	8
Organization change	10
Personal and organizational effectiveness	14
ACTION RESEARCH AND PLANNING	16
Building a problem-solving relationship	22
Problem identification	27
Analysing the problem	31
Planning a course of action	37
Experimentation and redesign, implementation, evaluation	46
Group effectiveness	49
PART II	51
The urban manager: evolving roles	51
Strategic planning	62
Culture and management	78
Power, influence and personal empowerment	88
Managing change: the leadership dimension	96
Part III	104
Planning re-entry	104

INTRODUCTION

This *Guide for Managing Change*, as you can see from the cover, is directed to two distinct audiences, urban managers and trainers. No, it's not a mistake. We believe both of these professionals can benefit from reading and using this Guide. It is designed and written to help others learn about the management process and to develop skills in applying the overall strategy and individual tactics to problems and opportunities in organization and community settings. Given these objectives, the Guide is a valuable addition to tool kits of both local government managers and trainers.

Since the use of this Guide by trainers is more obvious than its use by managers, let's look first at how it might be used by managers. Senior managers are in a key position to help their subordinate management staff members learn through doing. When middle managers and supervisors are allowed to carry out their roles and responsibilities without the benefit of systematic learning about what they are doing, how they are doing it, and the consequences of their actions, they are denied the opportunity to experience personal and professional growth - and to contribute more effectively to the goals and objectives of the organization. "But", you ask, "how can this Guide help me, as a local government manager, carry out a training role in my organization?"

First, you and your management team can use the Guide as a resource for learning more about the management process, more specifically, how you can manage the change process within your own organization. This can be as simple as convening a weekly staff meeting where you conduct a guided discussion about the various steps in the change process as outlined in the Guide.

From my own perspective of someone who has been both a local government manager and trainer, this discussion approach is a bit too passive. More interesting and productive is the use of the Guide to engage in team building, problem solving, project planning or organizational development opportunities. Many of the learning events in the Guide are designed to help managers carry out these kinds of staff activities.

If you haven't incorporated staff training and development into your role as a local government manager, you may find the idea of doing this a bit daunting. Or, you may feel you have not been doing something you should be doing. Not to worry. Many managers, in the past, have not seen staff training, or human resource development, as a direct senior management responsibility. The attitude toward the role of learning facilitator for the manager is changing rapidly. With momentous chance such as given in most organizations and their working environments, we can hardly ignore the need for continuous learning on the job. More importantly, most organizations have such a dearth of middle and supervisory management capacity that responsible senior managers must consider ways to grow their own management talent, in-house and on-the-job.

As for becoming a competent learning facilitator (or someone who helps some one else learn largely through their own initiative and effort), it has been my experience that the competent manager can become a competent trainer, if they aren't already. Furthermore, the Guide is designed to make the learning facilitation task as easy as possible. We will come back to how to use the Guide in a moment but now, let me say a word or two about the trainers who are contemplating the use of this Guide for Managing Change.

The Guide offers opportunities for management trainers to operate in a variety of different modes. While the materials in this workbook can be used in a more traditional classroom mode, you will discover they are really more action oriented than the usual management text. While it includes the usual concepts and strategies that define the management process, there are many exercises (what we call experiential designs) to help the trainer and trainees (or manager and management team) apply these concepts and strategies to real problems and work situations. There are also training notes that suggest different ways for the learning facilitator to use the materials, either in the classroom or on the job.

As a trainer, I have used the learning designs in this Guide in a variety of ways. For example, I have conducted two-week residential workshops for senior managers who were each asked to bring a problem statement and data about the problem with them to the workshop. These problem statements, when applied to the problem diagnosis-solving cycle of events outlined in the Guide, became case studies from which everyone learned, including me! I've also used the concepts and strategies in the Guide to: help managers take a structured look at their organization and how it is operating; engage in management team building (resulting in better working relationships among key officers); and help management teams carry out action planning for new projects.

These kinds of training interventions are both exciting and productive because they engage the learners in a process, which is reality based and the fruits of the learning immediately evident - and usable.

To reiterate these opening remarks, the Guide is designed to meet the needs of both local government managers and trainers who work with local governments. They include concepts and strategies about the managing change process, a variety of exercises and experiential ideas on how to apply the conceptual materials to the experiences of the trainees and their work environment, and trainer notes on how to plan, implement and manage the various training events.

Before looking at some underlying assumptions and values about the learning process and training, as a management strategy, let me reassure both the urban manager and trainer that this kind of training rarely fails. While the training may be conducted at varying degrees of competence (meaning some learning facilitators are better than others and some groups of training participants are more committed and active than others), it is reassuring to know that this kind of action oriented, client centered, performance based training is almost always successful.

Some underlying assumptions and values

The training materials in this Guide are based on certain assumptions and values held by the author. Some are based on conventional wisdom about how organizations operate, managers manage and learners learn. Others are, perhaps, less common to the reader's understanding of these processes, or experiences with them.

Let's look briefly at some of these underlying assumptions and values.

- (a) The most effective learning experience involves theory, practice and the opportunity to relate the theory and practice to the participant's own work setting experiences. The concepts and theories are either preceded or followed by opportunities to test or reflect upon them in some structured way, based upon the participants' own management and organizational experiences.
- (b) The effectiveness of the training experience is optimised when the trainer can combine knowledge enhancement, skill building attitudinal change and help the trainee emerge from the training with a "product." The product can be an action plan to be taken home for implementation or a problem solved, in one way or another, using the knowledge and skills gained in the workshop.
- (c) The learning experience is not successful if it fails to tap the knowledge and experiences of those involved in the training. This means the trainer must plan time for considerable interaction among the training participants. Most trainers programme too many activities or information for dissemination into too short a period of time. The trainer should leave enough time in the design for the participants to share ideas and experiences as well as time to reflect upon them.
- (d) Adult learners not only need time to reflect upon their experiences but stimulation to do so. The trainer's role is to create opportunities and stimulants for reflection. You will note as you use these materials that they include a number of questionnaires (instruments) to help the participant look at his or her own experience within the work setting (organization) in a systematic way.
- (e) If you do not like the way the materials are designed, you should feel free to change them. In fact, you should feel an obligation to change any training design so it will work for you and your participants.
- (f) The effective trainer is someone who can work with a minimum of training techniques, trusting that the participants will take responsibility for their own learning.
- (g) The bottom line in management training is behavioural change. Some trainers get nervous about this assertion - but think about it for a moment. If the workshop participant (manager) does not behave differently when he or she gets back on the job, the training experience and investment have been wasted.

Action research and management

The training materials that follow are organized into two broad categories. The first is "Action research and planning" - a systematic process designed to help the participants sharpen their decision making and problem-solving skills. Most managers are not as proficient as they could be in making decisions and solving problems. The Action Research and Planning sessions are designed to address deficiencies in managerial skills and performance. They are covered in **Part I** of the Guide.

The second category of topics is much broader, more eclectic and less systematic as presented. They are designed to help the individual participant reflect upon his or her own experiences as a manager and to increase their understanding and

appreciation of the complexity of contemporary organizations. These training materials are included in **Part II** of the Guide. **Part III** is short. It includes only one learning event, *Planning Reentry*. This module is designed to help bridge the gap between the learning experiences this Guide provides and the task of going back into the organization and picking up the reins of responsibility.

These two broad categories (“Action research and planning” and reflective topics) provide a juxtaposition of practical skill-building sessions and more reflective, philosophical, conceptual matters that engulf the work setting. By playing one off against the other, it is possible to enhance the quality of the learning experience.

In each of the sessions, it is also important for the trainer to focus attention on the individual and group work habits of the participants. If the training participants are being unproductive, disruptive, or engaged in other types of non-learning behaviour, it is important to help them understand their behaviour. More often than not, such behaviour mirrors their own work styles. By ignoring such behaviour, we tend to give it legitimacy, thus reinforcing it. Management courses should provide opportunities to increase individual awareness of unproductive behaviour and explore alternative approaches to becoming more effective as a manager and organizational team member.

Individual and small group work sessions provide opportunities to highlight various attitudes and behaviours that reflect the reality of the work place environment. The trainer's challenge is to help the participants recognise these attitudes and behaviours and devise alternatives to overcome the negative ones and reinforce those that are positive.

Having options as a measure of success

It has been said that effective management is having options. Without options, it is doubtful whether the manager, in fact, can manage. He or she may, under those circumstances, react only to the inevitable.

Effectiveness in training is also dependent upon having options, particularly if we believe training or human resource development, is a serious venture in the processes of nation and organizational capacity building.

The Guide To Managing Change For Urban Managers and Trainers is designed to help managers and trainers become more proficient in creating their own options and, therefore, becoming more effective and competent in performing their individual roles. To illustrate this point, we would encourage those who use this Guide to think about the many options that are available to use these materials, both in the classroom and on-the-job. While there are options suggested in each of the training modules that follow, they only scratch the surface of what is possible. Having options is the sign of a competent manager. The same is true of those who help others learn.

A final author's note

The *Trainer's Notes*, preceding the *Concepts and Strategies* for each training session, have been written from my own personal experience. While some would argue that writing in the first person is unprofessional, I believe it is important to share some of my own experiences in using these materials over the years. Such personalization, I hope, will also send the signal that training is an individual effort and not subject to routinization. Each trainer needs to alter the materials and design to meet their own needs as well as those of the training participants.

PART I

INITIATING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The man who has ceased to learn ought not to be allowed to wander around loose in these dangerous days
M.M. COADY

Trainer's notes

Topic: Expectations exercise

Time required: 1 - 2 hours, depending upon number of participants

Most training sessions of more than three or four days can benefit from an initial exercise (after the opening session) to bring out the participants' expectations about the forthcoming training.

While this small group exercise on course expectations makes some people nervous, experience with it has been positive. The biggest problem can be the amount of time it takes. This one has been designed to be less time-consuming by using

smaller groups that combine their expectations and report them as a small group. It begins the self-reflection process, prompting such questions as "What is important for me to learn during this programme?" It also gives the trainer information for evaluating progress as the course proceeds.

In spite of its potential usefulness, if you do not feel comfortable using such an exercise, don't. However, it is often valuable to take some risks, to experiment. When I used this expectation exercise with a management team many years ago, it turned into a lengthy series of monologues about each member and his or her background. I was anxious when the discussion went far beyond the time allotted to it. When an attempt was made to hurry the participants along, they were very harsh with me. As it turned out, this management team had worked closely together but never really knew each other as persons. It was an opportunity they did not want to forfeit. As the team-building workshop progressed, it became clear that the time was well spent. Sometimes the group has to be trusted to say what is important and valuable to it - and the trainer needs to be responsive to their needs.

Tasks

1. Brief the total group on the exercise and ask each participant to spend 5-10 minutes responding to the statement "This management course will be a success for me personally if"
2. As stated in the work sheet, groups of four to six should join together to discuss their individual responses and to put together a summary to report to the total group. Twenty minutes should be adequate but monitor the groups and time the session accordingly.
3. Bring the small groups together and have each group make a short presentation. As they progress from the first report, to the second, etc., group representatives should not repeat what has already been said by previous groups. This is a good time to start modelling effective group behaviour! Effective group behaviour includes putting a value on time as a scarce resource and how it can be used effectively.
4. Bring the session to a close by summarising what you see as key expectations and how the course is designed, or can be altered, to meet these expectations. If some expectations are clearly outside the realm of possibility, this is the time to say so. Many years ago at an executive course one person came to the course with only one goal in mind, to learn about zero based budgeting (ZBB)! ZBB was not on the agenda and no one else wanted it added as a topic for discussion. Luckily, it proved possible to locate a book on the subject and loan it to him. The trainer arranged to meet with him at a mutually convenient time to discuss the approach.

Exercise

Take a few moments and complete the following statement. This management course will be a success for me personally if:

When you have finished writing, join three to five others who are also finished and share with each other your criteria for a successful course. Be prepared, as a group, to summarise the most important criteria for making this time together productive and professionally rewarding. (Use the following space to summarise your small group's discussion).

Record in the following space the most important criteria to be applied to this course if it is to be successful in meeting the learning needs of you and your colleagues (based upon small group and plenary discussions).

THE URBAN MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

The secret of managing is to keep the guys who hate you away from the guys who are un-decided
Casey Stengel

Trainer's notes

Topic: The urban management challenge

Time required: approximately 1 1/2 hours

The overall purpose of this session is to help the participants think about: (a) what it means to be effective either as a manager or an organization designed to serve specific audiences; and (b) the various factors that contribute to individual and organizational effectiveness. It is also a good icebreaker to help get participants into an experiential, interactive learning mode. (This exercise was designed to be used within an urban management course. If the participants you are working with represent a different work setting, change the exercise accordingly).

Tasks

1. Brief the total group on the rationale for the session and the tasks they are to perform.
2. Break total group into four smaller working groups of similar size. Two groups are to address the individual dimension of urban management and two groups the organizational dimension. All four groups will be requested to carry out two specific tasks:
 - (a) To define "effectiveness" from either an individual or organizational perspective;
 - (b) To list those factors they believe contribute to individual or organizational effectiveness.
3. Give each group newsprint and markers; they should have 30 minutes to complete the two tasks.
4. At the end of the 30 minutes bring the four groups together to report their results. Each group will have approximately 10 minutes to make their presentations when they return to the plenary discussion.

The trainer should ask each group to comment briefly on how they worked together as a team. How did they decide to address each task? Were they frustrated by the tasks and the way they worked together? If they had to do it again, would they address the tasks differently?

Compare, to the extent possible, the responses of the two groups working on the same tasks and the differences and similarities in respect to individual and organizational effectiveness.

Training outcomes should include:

- a. A greater awareness of what is meant by "effectiveness"
- b. What contributes to individual and organizational effectiveness
- c. Whether or not the total group sees these two approaches to effectiveness as being fundamentally different or the same
- d. Some discussion of the consequences of the exercise regarding their work together during the workshop (the "so what" question)

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