

Training Of Trainers

developing criminal justice trainers — a case study

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The purpose of this article is to describe one approach to preparing a diverse group of 15 individuals, representing seven different agencies in Chicago-Cook County's criminal justice system, to assume the responsibility for planning, administering and delivering training within their respective agencies.

The program planning process described in this article is one that has wide applicability to other training and development interventions. Hopefully, this description will prove helpful to other trainers and training agencies with similar responsibilities.

In undertaking this program, our assumption was that a mixed group of trainees could be trained together in the knowledge and skills considered fundamental to the field of "training." The respon-

sibility for this undertaking rested with the Cook County Criminal Justice Training and Leadership Development Program.

Background

The Cook County Criminal Justice Training and Leadership Development Program serves the major criminal justice agencies in Cook County, IL and provides over 50,000 hours of training annually. First funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration in 1972, the program developed as a joint project of the Public Service Institute of the City Colleges of Chicago and the Cook County Sheriff's Office.

The program's initial task was to meet the immediate training needs of the nonlaw enforcement agencies that comprise the crim-

inal justice system in Cook County. Since these agencies, at that time, were offering little training to their personnel, they welcomed this new program.

From its inception the program was also striving to approach criminal justice in Cook County, at least from an operational and training standpoint, as a system. Consequently, while offering training modules to individual criminal justice agencies, a number of programs were designed and offered on a system-wide basis, bringing together personnel from most elements of the criminal justice system. The most important system-wide program offered by the Criminal Justice Training and Leadership Development Program was the training of trainers program.

Presently, the program is the major sponsor of innovative training and organizational development programs for criminal justice agencies in Cook County. Refunding by the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission and an expanding level of involvement on the part of the client-agencies assures the continued existence of the program.

Furthermore, the government of Cook County has agreed to "institutionalize" the program's success by incorporating a significant portion of the program in its budget. Thus, the program became a distinct unit within the arm of county government by the summer of 1975.

Obviously, this success story did not happen overnight. The nature of the funding of our program was such that plans had to be made to phase out the program's dependence on outside grants starting no later than the third year of operation. The strategy that evolved included the following considerations:

(1) We decided that the scope of the program, if it was to be funded locally, would have to be reduced and could be accomplished best by equipping the participating agencies to provide for many of their own in-house training needs.

(2) System-wide programs would continue to be sponsored by the Criminal Justice Training and Leadership Development Program.

(3) The program would function as a training resource and coordinating mechanism for all the county's criminal justice agencies. The first step in this overall strategy was to prepare the agencies to do in-house training. It was for this purpose that we designed the "Training of Trainers Program."

Selection Process

Having determined a definite need for in-house training capability, or improvement of that capability,

seven different agencies agreed to participate in the training of trainers program. These agencies, with the exceptions of the State's Attorney, Public Defender and Judiciary, make up what is commonly referred to as the criminal justice system.

We met with each agency manager individually to describe the program, its objectives and to secure commitment to the project. A measure of the commitment received from these agency managers was their agreement to release the trainees from their normal duties on the days training was scheduled.

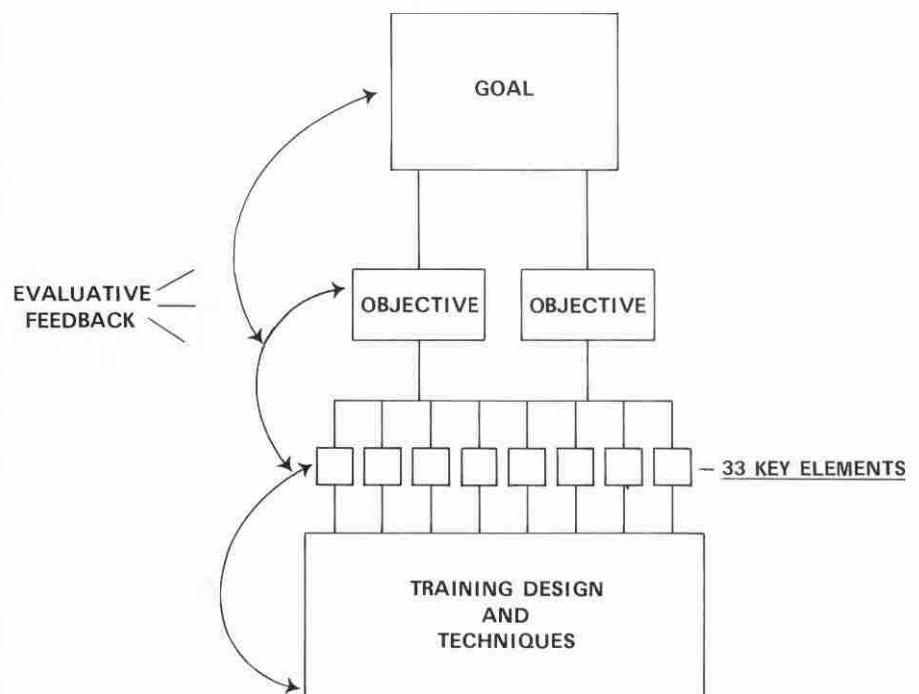
This work-release commitment precluded many of the problems normally associated with long-term training programs of this type and was also a clear indication to the trainees that they were being invited to participate in an important event. Most importantly, during these preplanning sessions with

the various agency heads, we made clear the qualifications required of the participants. Our concern was that the trainees be: volunteers, experienced on the job, committed to the goals of the agency, reasonably intelligent and possible candidates for promotion (upwardly or laterally) to the position of in-house trainer.

This selection process resulted in a list of 19 volunteers for the training of trainers program. Somewhat to our surprise and delight the list included two employees who held the positions of "training director." Three of the candidates worked in a training capacity for their agencies. The other candidates were primarily supervisory personnel.

Our next step was to interview and contract with these candidates. We met with each candidate separately to (1) clarify the program's goal and objectives, (2) discuss the proposed training

Figure 1.
Program Planning Process



activities along with the scheduling of events, and (3) request a personal commitment to the program in terms of time and level of individual involvement. Essentially, this was the time for the candidates to opt out of the program.

This was also the time for the candidates to participate in the planning process. The selection process resulted in our group of 15 trainees. Four of the participating agencies had two trainees in the program, two had three trainees, and one agency could spare only one employee.

The Program

Our program planning process followed an orderly progression from an abstract goal statement to the formulation of a training design and appropriate training techniques. This process of refinement is illustrated in Figure 1.

A significant outcome of our planning phase was the realization that this effort at training trainers had to be treated as a basic, initial phase of a more long-term developmental effort. We concluded that our time frame would not allow us to adequately equip the trainees with presentation or "up-front" training skills. Rather, we defined this phase of training trainers as the "planning and management of training" phase.

The overall goal of the training of trainers program was "to enhance the delivery of training in Cook County's criminal justice system through the training of in-house agency trainers." The concept of "delivery" included: (1) acquiring management, interpersonal relations and communication skills needed by trainers; (2) the ability to assess training needs and design programs in response to those needs; (3) the ability to define and maximize training resources; and (4) the ability to conduct some in-house training programs.

Major Objectives

The program's objectives were:

(1) to provide agency trainers with the minimum level of management, interpersonal relations and communication skills necessary to be able to assess training needs and design effective training programs in response to those needs.

(2) to enable agency trainers to define and maximize the utilization of training resources available within Cook County.

A latent objective or intended outcome of the program was to create a team or network of criminal justice trainers in Cook County. It is this network of trainers that would work closely with the Criminal Justice Training and Leadership Development Program

in the future. Figure 2 depicts this relationship.

Our objectives were reduced further to 33 "key elements" or behavioral statements of the skills we hoped the trainees would acquire through the program. These elements were prioritized, clustered and served as the basic ingredients of the program workshops.

Several of the major key elements were:

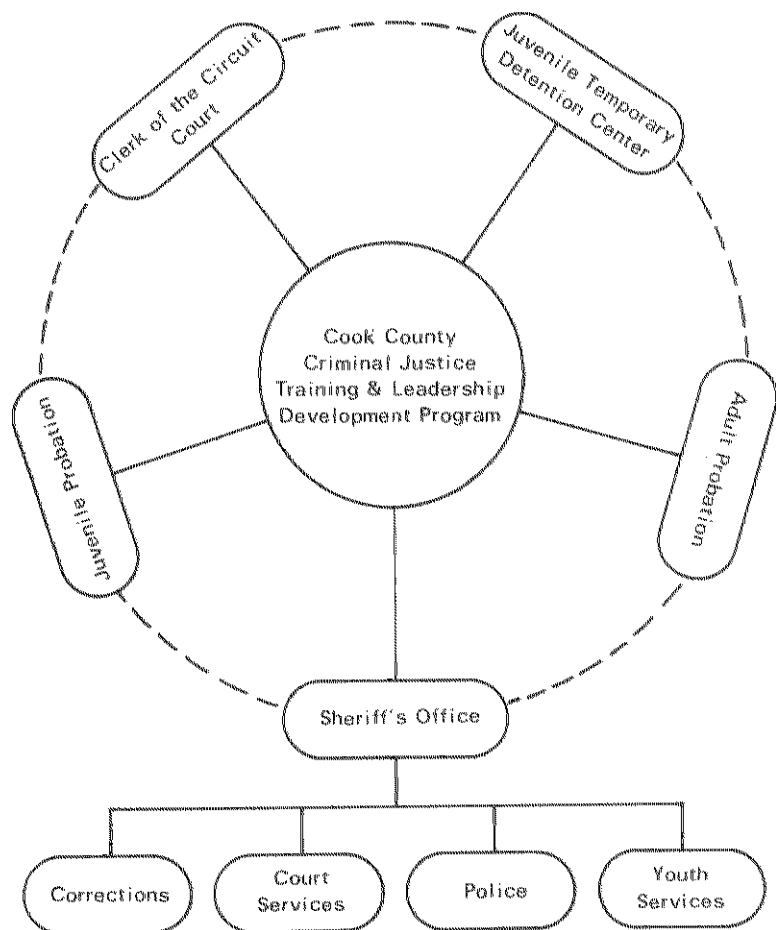
(1) To assess and prioritize agency training needs;

(2) To prepare training goals and objectives;

(3) To be able to design training programs with the most effective techniques;

(4) To be able to design, conduct

Figure 2.
Criminal Justice Training Arrangement In Cook County



and interpret training evaluations;

(5) To select and/or adapt available training materials, including audio-visual aids;

(6) To assess and manage outside trainer-faculty;

(7) To recognize various styles of training.

Some of our key program elements were not covered as well as we had hoped. However, these elements served as the basis for a constant monitoring system to insure that the program remained on track.

Program

A total of 21 days of formal training was completed between the months of September, 1974 and January, 1975. Eleven of these days were nonresidential (9 a.m.-5 p.m.) and 10 were divided among three residential workshops held in lodge/motels outside of the immediate Chicago area. The group met at least twice a month over this five-month period. These meetings ranged from one-day sessions to four-day workshops.

In addition to the classroom activities, the trainees were expected to complete inter training assignments (readings, work exercises, etc.) and to be available for an occasional *ad hoc* session when it became necessary. Also, individual consultation sessions were held throughout the life of the program. These intertraining activities were an extremely important component of the program design and required the equivalent of 10 work days.

"In-Class" Teams

The program design consisted of two parallel tasks which served as the major work focus for the group. First, the group was divided into three "in-class" teams. These teams worked together throughout the training of trainers program to be conducted during the last residential workshop. Second, agency teams (trainees from the same agency) worked on a "back-home" training task which

consisted of identifying training needs in their agencies and planning for a specific training activity to meet those needs.

The back-home (reality-based) task was the major intertraining activity, while the in-class task was the primary focus of the classroom activities. The back-home task lagged one or two steps behind the in-class task so the trainees could practice assessing needs, setting objectives, etc. before they went back to their respective agencies to employ their new skills.

Thus, the program concluded with two products. First, each in-class team planned and implemented a short training program for the benefit of the other trainees. Second, each agency's representatives produced a training program in response to identified needs within their agency.

Training Techniques

In preparing our trainees to become trainers we intentionally employed as many training techniques as possible. It was our intention to model various training styles and techniques during the program. We hoped that trainees would begin to recognize styles and techniques that would be both comfortable and appropriate for their agency training programs.

Six trainers were involved at various stages in the program. They used techniques that demanded a wide range of trainee involvement. Formal lectures, guided discussion, instructional media, role - playing, problem - solving, team work, communication skills practice, instrumented and experiential laboratories are some of the techniques experienced by the trainees.

Another important tool presented to the trainees was a workbook of readings compiled by our staff. This workbook consisted of over 40 separate articles and/or chapters and was designed to (1) offer reading materials which could not be

found in any one source; (2) reinforce and broaden the scope of the classroom activities; (3) become a single depository for all program-related materials; and (4) become a resource for the trainees' future reference and professional development.

Program Evaluation

It was not possible for us to implement a pre-post test evaluation approach. However, we made every effort to collect and analyze as much subjective, posttraining feedback as possible. These efforts included:

(1) tape-recorded minutes after every training activity

(2) short posttraining feedback forms administered after each workshop

(3) self-rated "team effectiveness criteria" sheets completed by

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the trainees and based on criteria established by the trainees

(4) peer evaluation ratings of how each in-class group performed its training program

(5) structured verbal feedback sessions

(6) a detailed five-page post-training questionnaire based on program objectives, overall design, techniques and trainer-ratings

(7) follow-up interviews with each trainee.

The results of this constant monitoring process were very positive. Most of the trainees felt that the program's objectives were accomplished and that the program's design was most effective. Our final posttraining evaluation instrument resulted in 15 pages of feedback on most aspects of the program.



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Results

The outcome of the training of trainers program in terms of its impact on Cook County's criminal justice system is best illustrated by citing several examples of what occurred during the program or shortly thereafter:

- One participating agency, which previously had no training staff, designated its three program representatives as its training staff.

- All but two of the seven agencies have implemented or are planning to implement the "back-home" training programs that resulted from the program.

- All but one of the agency delegates are actively planning future training programs for their agencies.

- One agency established a training budget of considerable size.

- Several of the agencies are about to participate in an inter-agency training program.

- A great deal of sharing of resources, including equipment and trainers, is now taking place across agency boundaries.

- All but one of the trainees have signed up for follow-up training sessions and most want to participate in a second phase of training trainers.

Future

Four follow-up training workshops have been planned by us and the trainees. At the conclusion of the training of trainers program, an entire day was devoted to planning for future professional development activities. These follow-up sessions will build on certain training areas and fill in any gaps that were left at the conclusion of the original program.

These follow-up sessions will revolve around the following four topic areas.

1. Group Process/Communication Skills
2. Needs Assessment/Training Design

3. Evaluation of Training

4. Instructional Media

A second phase to the training of trainers program is presently being planned by us and the past participants. Planning instruments have been completed by most of those who want to participate in Phase II. Also, a one-day planning session will be held during the summer. This phase will be a long-term training experience spread out over six-eight months.

The primary goal for this second phase will be to equip the trainees with training presentation skills. In other words, based on a thorough understanding of the concept of "training" (covered in phase I), phase II will focus on "how to do training."

Most of the phase I trainees will return for this second phase of the program. Additional new trainees will be carefully screened through an "assessment center" process now being prepared. These new trainees will return to their respective agencies as presenters of training and assistants to those delegates that attended both phases and the follow-up sessions.

The long-range goal of the Criminal Justice Training and Leadership Development Program is to make training an integral part of Cook County's criminal justice system. There are many avenues toward that goal. The training of in-house agency trainers is one that we are pursuing vigorously with a significant degree of success.

USEASTD

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