

# Planning Programs for Adults

## Chapter 1



# Chapter Purpose

- Give people who plan programs for adults a glimpse of the what, who, where, why and how of program planning.
- Describe what education and training programs look like.
- Explore roles of people who plan programs and variety of setting where these programs are held.
- Examination of the purposes and primary outcomes of programs for adults.
- Discuss how programs are planned and why planning models are a useful tool in the planning process.
- Exploring two sources on which the model presented in this book, the Interactive Model of Program Planning, is grounded.

# Appearance of Programs for Adults

- Vary from highly formal to informal programs, and come in all different shapes, sizes, and formats.
  - Information or skill sessions
    - Can last an hour or can be daylong workshops
  - Conferences
  - Highly intensive residential study at corporate training centers, universities, and wilderness experiential learning programs.
  - Training in corporate settings offer variety of education and training
    - Employees may choose to attend with some being mandatory.

# Appearance of Programs for Adults

- Planned by or for individual learners
  - Methods like individual learning plans and portfolios are used to tailor programs for learners.
- Designed for small or large groups of learners
  - Workshops and national or international conferences hosted by professional associations, participants come to one locations, or they may take a course from work sites, libraries, or from their homes through distance learning.
- Designed for small or select group
  - From a given organization or cross-country leaders of international programs.
- Classes and Activities
  - Sponsored by community recreation programs or senior centers are typically open to the public.

# Planners of Education and Training Programs

- Education and training programs for adults are planned and coordinated by people in numerous roles who have varied backgrounds and experiences.
  - See examples on pages 3-4 of the textbook.
- The centrality of responsibility for the people who plan education and training programs is defined differently depending on their level of responsibility.
- Planners spend the majority of their time developing, implementing, and evaluating programs, and may take on other tasks such as organizational development and facilitating change activities.

# Sponsors and Purposes of Education and Training Programs

- Many types of organizations sponsor education and training programs for adults.
  - Staff roles: centrality of these programs to these organizations varies by the mission and goals of the sponsors.
    - Providing education and training programs for adults may be the primary mission, such as continuing education divisions or conference centers.
  - Other roles: professional organizations or cultural institutions
    - Providing education and training programs for adults may be a secondary or tertiary mission.
- These programs may be sponsored by non-educational organizations
  - Business, industry, or the military

# Sponsors and Purposes of Education and Training Programs

## **Five primary purposes for education and training programs:**

1. Encouraging continuous growth and development of individuals
2. Assisting people in responding to practical problems and issues of adult life
3. Preparing people for current and future work opportunities
4. Assisting organizations in achieving desired results and adapting to change
5. Providing opportunities to examine community and societal issue, foster change for the common good, and promote a civil society

# Change as a Primary Outcome

- Change as an outcome or result is the implicit expectation in each of the five purposes.
- Education and training programs foster three kinds of change:
  - Individual Change (sample outcome page 6-7)
    - Acquisition of new knowledge, building of skills, and examination of personal values and beliefs
  - Organizational Change (sample outcome page 7)
    - Leads to new or revised policies, procedures, and ways of working
  - Community and Societal Change (sample outcome page 7-8)
    - Provides ways for differing segments of society (e.g., members of low SES, women, ethnic populations, governments, business enterprises) to respond to the world around them in alternative ways, which can result in positive changes (civil rights movements, Arab Spring).



# How Education and Training Programs are Planned

- Program planning models serve as a guide or road map, which help many planners get through the maze and masses of decisions, political maneuverings, negotiations, details, and deadlines that come with program planning.
- Program planning models:
  - Include ideas of one or more persons about how programs should be put together and what ingredients are necessary to ensure successful outcomes.
  - Can be very simple (easy to follow steps) or highly complex (in-depth qualitative descriptions to depict a comprehensive array of issues and decision points).

# Sources for the Model

The Interactive Model of Program Planning, is derived from two major sources:

1. The classic and current descriptions of program planning approaches and models, and the concepts and ideas related to each approach
2. The practical experiences of program planners

# Approaches to Planning Programs

**Three of the most often used approaches to planning programs are:**

1. Conventional/Traditional Approach (description/scenario pages 10-11)
  - a. Planning programs in a stepwise progression, where you move logically through the planning process.
2. Pragmatic or Practical Approach (description/scenario pages 11-14)
  - a. Planning programs recognizes changes will be made throughout the process; at times, planners may not be sure where they are going as they run into surprising situations.
3. Radical Approach (descriptions/scenario pages 14-16)
  - a. Focuses on social activism, democratic principles, and transformation by following ideas and concepts (i.e., negotiation, democratic ideals, cooperative and participatory planning, social learning) rather than models of program planning.

# Authentic Planning Experiences Captured by Scholars

- Scholars who have provided fascinating glimpses of the program process:
  - Pennington and Green (1976)
    - Earliest scholars to challenge the assumption that program planners always follow specific models of planning and include all the steps in those models.
    - Found that planners would identify a clear set of tasks and decision points and saw major discrepancies between what planners did and what popular models said they should do.
    - Comprehensive needs assessments were rarely conducted, often those designing the actual instructional activities did not take background, characteristics, and experiences of particular groups of learners attending the program into account.
  - See pages 16-17

# Authentic Planning Experiences Captured by Scholars

- Cervero and Wilson (1994, 2006) (pages 16-17)
  - Found that power, personal interests, ethical commitment, and negotiation are central to planners
  - Found program planning as an interactive and action-oriented process in which decisions and choices are made that do not follow the conventional approach to planning
- Gboku and Lekoko (2007) (page 17)
  - Provided international perspective about the importance of culture and place in the planning process.
  - Stress traditional ways and principles on which many of the African societies were based

# Authentic Planning Experiences Captured by Scholars

- Forester (1999, 2009) (page 17)
  - Developed “practitioner profiles”, which are highly descriptive of the specific everyday practice of planners.
    - Profiles captured from a wide variety of places: impoverished cities, cities in Israel and rural Venezuela, and native homeland to Hawaiians.
  - Tackled many topics such as cultivating surprises, exploring values-based disputes, envisioning possibilities, recognizing opportunities in the face of conflicts, and encouraging transformational learning experiences.
  - Stressed that to promote useful interaction and dialogue to address messiness, planners must facilitate conversations, moderate and argument, and mediate proposals for action in order to promote successful negotiations.

# Experiences of Those Immersed in Program Planning

As both scholars and practitioners, authors have learned that in building models it is important to understand:

- Theory and research on which program planning is based
- The reality of what it takes to plan an effective and workable program
- There is no right way to plan programs for adults
- It is a continuous journey consisting of twists and turns, wide expansive views, and ever-changing landscape
- And what has worked today may or may not work tomorrow

See pages 17-20