A practical guide for course
leaders and others engaged
in Fojo's educational activities
in Sweden and internationally

Fojo's view on learning

How to plan, implement and evaluate courses and learning

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1. Fojo's view on learning

Fojo Media Institute has been working since 1972 to strengthen and develop journalism in Sweden, and since 1991 in an international context.

Around 10,000 journalists in over 100 countries, students and representatives of civil society and the state have been learning for almost 50 years about journalism, about the journalistic craft, about the role of journalism in society, about business models, about how as a media company to manage the transition to a digital media landscape, how a good gender balance contributes to better news and how an understanding of climate change creates the conditions for good journalism.

And much more.

Over the years we have also asked ourselves some basic questions and in this way we have built up our own knowledge about learning:

– How do we know that what we are doing has an effect: that it leads to better journalism and in the longer term to a more democratic and sustainable world?

– How do we think when we implement our learning initiatives?

– What is it that guides us in planning and setting up our work?

– What methods do we use and what theories do we lean against?

This document aims to provide answers to those very questions.

2. Learning is an important element in Fojo's strategy

2.1 Fojo's vision, mission and strategy 2022-2025

Fojo's vision and strategy form the basis of all activities. All programmes, projects, training and events are governed by this strategy. This applies to Fojo's activities both in Sweden and internationally. The world is facing an era of enormous environmental, social and economic challenges, both locally and globally. These challenges demand a fresh understanding of the societal role of journalism.

Independent, quality journalism has traditionally been viewed as one of the pillars of democracy. Fojo expands the role of journalism to encompass sustainability. Just as independent journalism is an inalienable part of democracy, it also becomes an indispensable element of a sustainable society. We call this sustainable journalism. On this basis, Fojo formulates its vision:

The public[1] has access to the journalism it needs in order to reach well–informed decisions, so that individuals are able to exert influence over their lives and together create sustainable, democratic and inclusive societies.

Based on this vision, we devise our mission and our strategic objectives.

2.2 How learning creates the change that makes reality of our vision

This occurs primarily through the following three processes, which are closely interconnected with each other and where learning is an important part of each process:

As knowledge of new perspectives on journalism and its practical application increases, the societal role of journalism is expanded to encompass sustainability.

By linking research into environmental, social and economic sustainability with the practice of journalism, Fojo and our partners contribute to broadening and deepening knowledge of various aspects of sustainable journalism and its practical application. This knowledge provides an important foundation for discussing and identifying solutions to the challenges facing journalism.

As knowledge and experience is developed, disseminated and debated within the collaborations and networks that Fojo leads and participates

[1] Different groups of women and men, girls and boys, and non–binary individuals.

Fojo's mission

Together with our partners, we strengthen journalism in the interests of a democratic and sustainable world.

Fojo's strategic goals 2025

Together with our partners, we have strengthened journalism that
- **contributes to the sustainability of the media and society**
- **safeguards its own independence**
- **holds those in power to account**
- **contributes to gender equality and an inclusive society and**
- **acknowledges the severity of the climate crisis.**

in, norms, attitudes and behaviours are gradually altered at an individual, organisational and societal level. As knowledge about sustainable journalism spreads among media stakeholders, researchers, interest groups and industry organisations, understanding and commitment thereof are strengthened.

Over time, this transformative work will lead to more and more people beginning to alter the traditional approach and content of journalism, thus contributing to the expansion of its societal role. The change will lead to a gradual increase in the amount of sustainable journalism.

As the ability to produce and disseminate sustainable journalism is strengthened, conditions will be created to meet the new challenges facing journalism.

By training media executives, journalists and journalism teachers, and thus developing their organisations, Fojo helps to create the necessary conditions for carrying out the journalistic mission based on the new challenges facing journalism.

As collaboration between innovative educational institutions and innovative media producers is strengthened, conditions for learning and putting skills into practice are created. As Fojo contributes to building these bridges, journalistic training will become more practical and better able to meet the needs of media producers, thus increasing the relevance of education. Fojo also contributes to increasing the capacity of institutions by developing working methods for organisations that produce and/or contribute to the production of sustainable journalism.

Based on this transformative process, increasing amounts of sustainable journalism will eventually be produced and made available to the public.

As economic viability and sustainability is strengthened, the diversity of viable media producers and the quality of their journalism will be increased.

By developing and strengthening sustainable financing models for media organisations, Fojo helps to create the conditions for high-quality journalistic content, editorial independence and healthy dialogue with the public.

Among other things, this will be achieved by creating in-depth knowledge about innovative business models at both organisational and societal levels, about user needs and behaviour and how new target groups can be reached and understood through measures such as gender-equality and diversity analysis. This will offer producers increased opportunities to reinforce their ability to and methods for interacting with the public.

In the long term, the transformation process will allow more media stakeholders to develop new and improved models for economic sustainability, which will lead to a greater diversity of viable media producers who enjoy public confidence.

These changes are mutually reinforcing

By linking these three change processes, they reinforce one another. Knowledge development based on research and proven practice increases understanding and contributes to the continuous development of methods and tools for the journalistic craft, as well as to viable financial models.

Likewise, new practical experiences are part of the continuous development of knowledge, understanding and working methods. Networking catalyses and spreads changes to norms and behaviours, leading to larger amounts of sustainable journalism being produced and made available to the public. This in turn improves the conditions for different groups of women, men and non-binary individuals in society to obtain access to information, power and influence.

Partnership creates change

Fojo alone cannot create change; it can only come about through close cooperation with others. If this strategy is to meet expectations, a range of other conditions for favourable development will also need to be met. These include improved legislation and regulation to guarantee freedom of the press, freedom of expression and public access to information, the safety and working conditions of journalists and resources and infrastructure to facilitate both the distribution of media and access to information.

By cooperating closely with local, national, regional and international partners, Fojo can do our part to create change that moves us closer to a shared vision in line with Fojo's Vision 2030. See the full strategy on Fojo's web page.

2.3 Description of the contents of this manual

This material gives you as a course leader and educator knowledge of how Fojo views learning, while also highlighting some theories that we believe are important for adult learning. This is a key starting point: adult professionals learn differently from, say, students at university.

For adults, their own experiences play a crucial role, being able to relate what is said and done to their own experiences and situations. As well as perceiving the immediate benefit of what is dealt with during the course.

The material is an aid for you in planning, implementing and researching what methods and tools you can use in the practical work of training adult professionals. The hope is that you will get tools that can develop both you and the participants, who are the main persons involved.

It is important for an educator to understand their target audience, to meet the participants where they are, and connect their reality to the content and set-up of the course. And to see all learning as a constantly ongoing process.

Planning a training for professional journalists and/or media workers requires knowledge and conscious choices. Of course, it is impossible to know in advance how your planning will work out for real, how much commitment there is to the subject, how group dynamics evolve and what shape you are in yourself when the time comes for the course.
If we are talking about a short course, a day course, the setup will be something different and you need to work in a well thought through way, so as to get a fair mix of theory and practice in short doses and with participant interaction.

And you will be forced to remove or shorten a number of elements. A crammed one-day course with a hundred PowerPoints at the expense of discussion and questions will rarely elicit applause from participants.

> **A crammed one-day course with a hundred PowerPoints at the expense of discussion and questions will rarely elicit applause from participants.**

Being responsible for a weekly course requires even more planning, but at the same time may be easier to implement because you have time for longer exercises and discussion. The course participants will also have more time to get to know each other and to contribute further with their own experiences and knowledge.

Learning by doing, is a well-used quotation from John Dewey, one of the 20th century's best-known academics in pedagogy and psychology. Very simply, it involves starting from an activity based pedagogy that blends theory, practice, reflection and action.
And the quotation is also used by course leaders who are planning and implementing a Fojo course.
Every time we do something new we learn lessons that can be used at the next opportunity; quite simply we learn from our experience.

2.4 Adult Learning

Research consistently shows that adults learn most effectively if:

 - the content is about the reality that they encounter in their work
 - the training is solution-oriented with clear objectives
 - participants are included in defining or have influence over what needs to be learned
 - learning is done with varied methods and practical exercises
 - learning takes place in a secure and democratic environment.

Can we then say that there is a special "Fojo pedagogy"?

No, the answer is that it's really about andragogy, that is, about how adults learn ("ped" in pedagogy stands for children, "andra" for adult). Within andragogy there are some important prerequisites based on, among others, the American adult educator Malcolm Knowles.

In practice, this means that we focus more on the course and learning process itself than on the content. It means a participant-centred and inclusive learning environment where we use the knowledge and experience that is present in the group and also take great account of the needs of the different participants.

We see learning as a process where participants themselves take great responsibility for their learning. The course leader's approach can be said to be more coaching in the sense that they must show great reliance on the participants' own ability to develop. But it is also important to adapt the approach according to the composition, experiences and needs of the group. There is not one single learning situation that is identical to the one before.

The job of the course leader is to support the learning process, whether or not this is:

- to communicate knowledge and paths to knowledge — facts, new findings and how to learn about them
- to hone skills — interviewing, writing, photo, pod, design etcetera
- to arouse insights, see the possibilities and limitations, and understand how and why things are as they are
- to instill courage, desire and effectiveness to change for the better.

About different learning preferences — David Kolb

The American psychologist David Kolb is another researcher whose theories of adult learning and learning preferences influenced Fojo's view of learning. Kolb believes that learning will be most effective if you follow a model he calls the learning cycle.

A little simplified, the model can be expressed as:
1. learn through my own experiences of what I've done myself and usually do
2. have time to reflect, on my own or with others, on my experiences
3. get help with drawing conclusions and theorising about what I have experienced. Abstract thinking, logic
4. apply what I have learned, experiment – and get new experiences.

Professionals usually have significant experiences, but they rarely have time at work to reflect on them, let alone to analyse, build theories and experiment. The strength of the education situation is to be able to offer space for this.

Kolb also highlights that each of us usually has a learning style that we prefer, a "best way" to begin learning (see cycle).

As an educator, it's good to know how the course participants prefer to learn. You can find out through simple questionnaires or ask people to discuss in groups, but it's not always possible to manage this. Then it is a great help to be aware of the different learning preferences and – most importantly – not to assume that my own way of learning applies to everyone.

Links:
- [Read more about the learning cycle](#)
- [Read more about how learning works](#)

2.5 Learning Models

Focusing on the learning process is everything in the field of andragogy (adult pedagogy).

GROW
The Grow method, originally created for coaching (by Englishman Sir John Whitmore), is a model which lends itself superbly to learning and course structures.

Draw/show and tell what your intended model looks like so participants understand and can follow the model and don't get impatient and want to know and do everything right away, a common occurrence among journalists.

- **G for Goal.** The goal for the group can suitably be based on the course contract. Individuals may have their own goals
- **R for Reality,** the reality that the various participants find themselves in and the problems or obstacles they experience
- **O for Options**, alternative possibilities, ways around the barriers, problem solvers, development of what already works
- **W for Will, Wrap-up or Way forward** (some variants), a kind of analysis or conclusion and approach to change
  After Will, it is time to formulate new goals, establish concrete action plans and/or strategies.

STAIRCASE
Another model that may be better suited to pure knowledge acquisition is the staircase or spiral staircase. Start in the simple and concrete then move step by step to complicate and put things in a wider context. You can reconnect during the journey to the first step, the simple and concrete (spiral model).
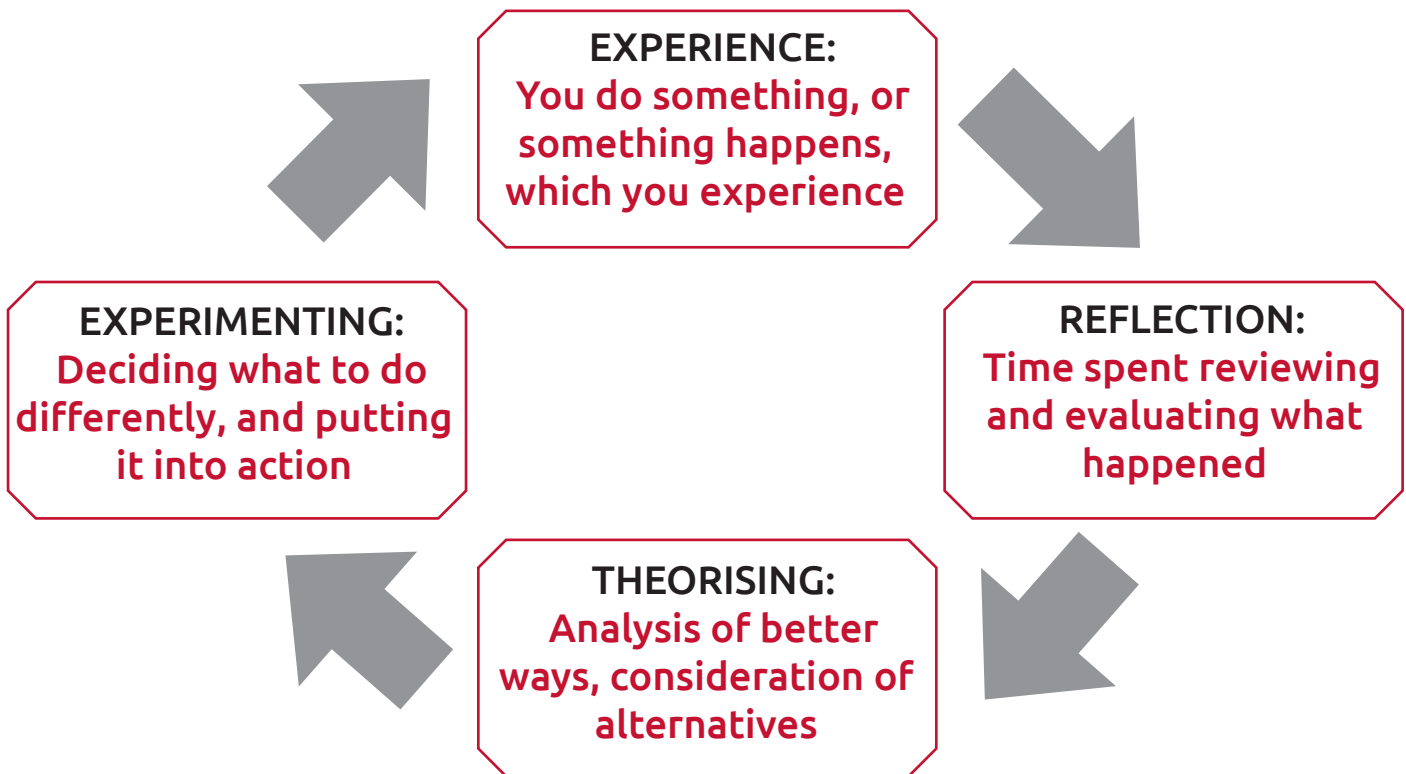
NOTE! Here too, you can draw and tell what your intended model looks like.

KOLB
A third example: Show and explain Kolb's learning cycle or ask HOW people in the group usually learn different things. Therefore, talk about how the course provides space for the participants' own experiences/knowledge, time to reflect together on these, theories/analyses and ways of practising and testing.

KOLB

EXPERIENCE:
You do something, or something happens, which you experience

REFLECTION:
Time spent reviewing and evaluating what happened

THEORISING:
Analysis of better ways, consideration of alternatives

EXPERIMENTING:
Deciding what to do differently, and putting it into action

Cycle of continuous development – adapted from Kolb's learning Cycle

GROW

GOAL

What do you want to achieve?

REALITY

What is happening now?

OPTIONS

What could you do?

WILL

What will you do?
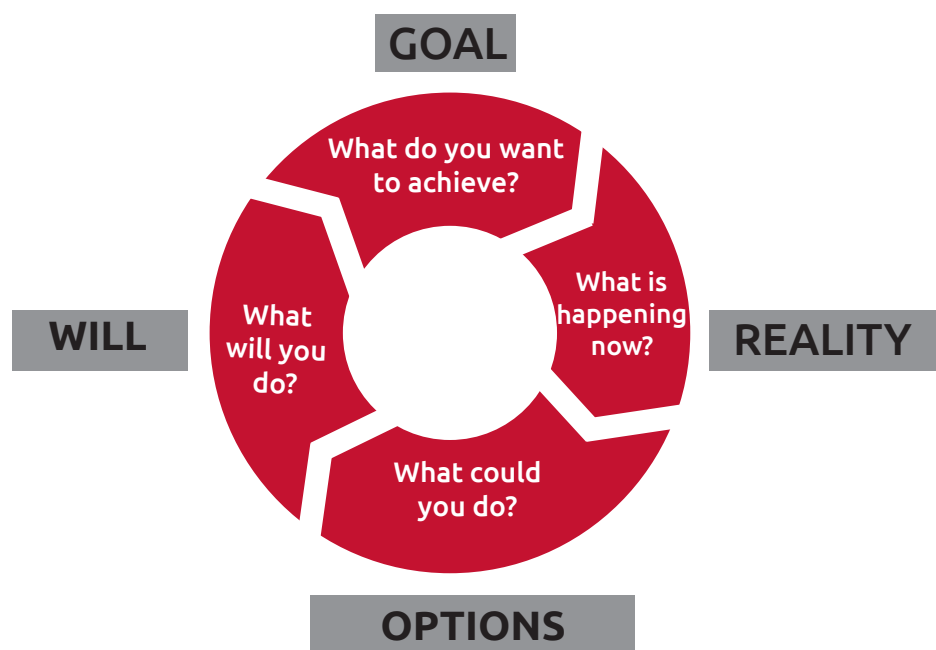
3. How you can plan a course/workshop

3.1 What to think about before the course starts

In all education, it is important to set concrete goals for what course participants should learn. From an educational point of view, it is an advantage if course leaders, project managers, clients and any others involved can discuss the objectives of the training at an early stage. The course leader can then formulate a course description and be involved in the admissions process.

What should you consider when formulating different knowledge goals? How can they help you to best plan the training set-up?

The goals need to be concrete, clear and preferably measurable. Use active verbs and consider whether they are concrete enough. How do you measure that someone "understands"? This can be difficult if you don't do a test, which we rarely use at Fojo.

Here are some points to reflect on.

KNOWLEDGE GOAL: I will know:

– how I read an annual report
– how the temperature in the Arctic has changed in 30 years
– how social media works.

Communicate knowledge and paths to knowledge, facts, new findings and how to learn about them…

SKILLS GOALS: I will be able to:

– analyse the financial position of the company,
– report better on climate issues
– find what people are tweeting about right now in the square in Kalmar
– interview, write, coach, give better feedback, become a better manager.

Train skills – interviewing, writing, using social media, images, design…

AWARENESS/MOTIVATION GOALS: I want/ shall:

– Become more critical in scrutinising economic reports
– Get my own column on climate change
– Get readers more involved in reporting
– Change my writing, interviewing and leadership want more, become a better person.

Awaken insights, see their possibilities and limitations, their conditions and understand how and why.
Learn more about goals and learning levels from educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom, in what is called "Blooms Taxonomy".

FORMULATE ACTION PLANS

One way to flesh out their goals is to allow participants to formulate realistic and concrete action plans for how to apply knowledge and skills upon completion of the course. This is an aspect that needs to be included in the planning. Action plans may have

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different levels of ambition, from the modest level of "I will write three articles on the course subject after the completion of the course" to "my workplace should set up a whole new monitoring area".

Either way, time must be set aside to discuss and formulate action plans. This will be its own course element but should not take disproportionately long in relation to the other course content, the thematic learning and the exchange of experience.

Read more about action plans below: Action plans

International courses and participants

If you are going to do a course for participants in or from another country there is a range of other circumstances, which are specific to each country and situation. The more knowledge and background information you have about your course participants, their prerequisites and needs for the course, the greater the chance that you'll end up well in your course leadership role and making participants feel that the training is aligned with their needs.

It is also important to understand the context of the participants: What opportunities do they have to undertake the training and apply their newly acqui-

red knowledge afterwards? What does their work situation look like? Have they chosen to participate in training themselves, or is it the employer who required it? It usually affects interest and motivation (applies everywhere). What external circumstances affect the learning situation?

It can be about everything from unstable internet or poor ventilation on the premises, to political unrest and conflict.

Sometimes you need to work through an interpreter, which usually means each element takes significantly longer, the interpreter may need to have part of your material in advance so as to be able to prepare in the best way etc. Then it's good to plan more space into the schedule.

Also, consider what cultural glasses you are putting on: if you are working in an African country, for example, you shouldn't use images/photos in a PowerPoint-presentation that are only based on a European or Western norm etc. You may need to edit and customise your material for the target audience and use more local or regional examples.

As always: Preparation is everything. Here both Fojo's project managers and collaborators can assist with valuable knowledge and information, so that you really understand the context you're going to work in.

3.2 Things to do before the course starts

Create a secure learning environment. Communicate with the group and individuals.

Feeling reassurance and trust is a good foundation for learning – to dare to ask questions, expose oneself, face challenges, challenge others and be able to participate in the sometimes difficult exercises. It is therefore important that you as a course leader make an effort to create a good, collegiate atmosphere in the group from the start. This can start even before the start of the course by communicating with participants and letting them get to know each other a little in advance. Depending on what the course is about, for example, you can:
– Send out a more personal "welcome letter" with more than just what is in the course programme ("Hi, we'll see you soon... it will be exciting/looking forward to..."). And invite participants to ask questions, have viewpoints

– Explain more about what the course will be like, content and form regarding specific conditions
– Suggest participants make contact with each other
– Ask them to articulate their own expectations and wishes (if you feel you need to get these in advance)
– Give them a task that they can share with each other, e.g. answer some questions, interview someone/themselves, write a text, read a book or text or watch a film, take in knowledge or perspective, collect headlines, images, statistics.
Some of this, of course, one can save for the start of the course. But an early meeting with the group and the individual participants makes for a smooth start to the course, where you've already started to create a good climate for learning.

Schedule! Hear, see, or do?

Do you find it difficult to schedule the different elements of a course?

Calm down, it IS hard. And the hardest thing may be figuring out how long a regular lecture takes. You (or a guest lecturer) may want those listening to ask questions and come up with input and their own examples during the course of the lecture. Or you may have decided to take questions and discussion after the presentation. In either case, it is close to impossible to know in advance how long things will take unless you completely exclude participants, which is quite contrary to inclusive pedagogy.

One way to escape the dilemma is to prepare as short items as possible and think about using the same amount of time on discussion and reflection.

It is significantly easier to determine the time for an exercise, although of course you must test yourself to know. Don't forget that reflections on the exercise or any reporting can take just as long, and time each session along with the group. Training one's abilities in exercises of various kinds is also a learning style that experienced adults often prefer, not least jour-nalists. Keep in mind that sometimes a little theory can precede an exercise, but often it works just as well with the sequence: exercise – reflection – theory creation, see Kolb.

Expect that there will not be enough time for everything you have planned and that some things must be skipped – preferably in consultation with the group. On the other hand, if there is too much time, just take a pause and let the participants just "hang out" or tuck in a spare module! It's worth its weight in gold to collect some exercises, anecdotes, quizzes, funny videos, energy kicks etc. which can work in different situations. Sometimes they can have greater relevance and value than what you planned from the beginning.

Also feel free to consider that your own and any guest lecturer's input into the course constitutes about half of the time. In an inclusive educational situation, participants account for the rest: participants, lecturers and course leaders each build their part of the course's results.

4. Implementation of course

4.1 Course start

The start of a course/educational situation has great importance for a good atmosphere, good group feeling and the desire to learn. Depending on how long the course is, you get to spend different amounts of time on the introduction itself. For one-day courses/workshops, work all the more on preparation (see above).

Here are some tips for the first day or hour. Some of the points don't really take any time but are more a matter of approach. With 12 participants, for example, all of the following points can be browsed through in 45 minutes (some tips are doubtlessly redundant for some but easy to forget sometimes):

• if it can be done, furnish the room so that everyone can see each other and can walk up to each other or change places. As flexible furnishing as possible is the optimal. A circle, semicircle or coffee shop sitting facilitates communication in the group. A U shape where the course leader/lecturer sits behind a table at the front signals "desk teaching" and not "participant in focus"

• make sure to know the participants names or learn the names quickly. The list of participants helps here and it is even better if you have been able to communicate with them in advance

• greet and welcome each person, perhaps on the way in to the teaching room or, in any case, before getting started. If possible, try to remember where they work and on what

• tell the group about yourself but let each member of the group get to speak as soon as possible, preferably after about five minutes, by opening early for a round of some kind

• use the round to create a kind of contract or agreement on content. Ask participants to formulate their hopes and worries and any concerns. Write down what they say as keywords or in header form and use it as the basis for a content contract. Set a time limit on how long each person is allowed to talk and help participants to be short and concise by giving them a couple of minutes of thinking time

• flag right at the start that everyone must achieve an action plan and concrete strategies for their continued work. It encourages them to take care of what feels relevant and important. How participants will then work onwards and how they will formulate their action plans can wait until later in the course

• also explain how you intend to structure the course. Feel free to draw and explain if you have an intended model for the learning process. (See examples above, GROW, Staircase, Kolb).

4.2 More tips during the course

"Mind your step"

Most of us have probably sat and become irritated by a lecturer turning his back on the participants and talking to a whiteboard or hiding behind their laptop. Or one who is sauntering around waving their arms or standing and swaying from side to side. Or for that matter the statue who doesn't move a muscle but overflows with words and looks more at their script and at the PowerPoint than at the "listeners". Don't do those things, please!

If you're going to walk around the room then there should be a reason, like showing or using any item, to listen more closely to what a participant says, to check if someone needs help or ask another to show an example. Keep your eyes on the participants, one by one, so they feel like you're there with them, and so you can yourself read how they react. Sit or stand so they see all of you, at least at the beginning. Feel free to sometimes ask a colleague to sit in and observe you and give feedback so you become aware of your body language, your gestures or other behaviour.

If you find it hard getting interrupted by questions and getting caught in answers or changing track, say so but make note of the questions, write them down

so that you remember them and so that whoever asked the question will be reassured that you will revert to their question later on. Also, don't forget to listen when participants talk to each other, in groups or two and two. There are many who shy away from going directly to the course leader but are happy to ask or talk to the colleague next door. Recurring rounds of the kind presented under the "Team Around" heading below help the hard-to-talk to get unstuck — while making the most chatty ones hold back and listen to others.

Refuel with Team around

One way to give and get feedback long before the course ends (and when it's really too late) is to "refuel" afterwards, as a last item of the day or first on the next. The "Team Circle" method lends itself superbly to this and also works as a check on what people have absorbed of what has been said and done so far. It becomes a way of reminding each other, a kind of "maximised memorisation".

  The team around circle should move quickly and is based on each person being entitled to their own thoughts, feelings and viewpoints. It's not the place to break off, say against or start a discussion. If any controversy does arise, relegate it to another occasion, outside the round. It's perfectly OK for participants to refrain from saying anything or to ask to come back. You can take the team around in the order people are sitting or ask participants to pass the word on to whomever they want — or let the one who wants to get the floor. More on the team around here.

Visualise!

Images of all kinds are very helpful in learning – for adults as much as for children. Think through in advance what can facilitate intelligibility, reinforce messages or create interest, but draw or spontaneously also show photos, videos and movie clips during the journey. PowerPoint as a presentation technology is a good visualisation support, but choose your images with care to reinforce what you say and feel free to keep the text short, "less is more." How to use powerpoint.

Also ask participants to draw, paint or pick out finished images. For example, a multi-day course may begin with participants being allowed to draw/paint a metaphorical picture of their editorial office, themselves at work or in a special situation.
  This can be sandboxes, emergency rooms, gardens, restaurant kitchens, zoos or racetracks... Questions and concerns surrounding the images bring new perspectives on the working life and professional role. Emphasise that the metaphors are spontaneous and apply to the moment. In the following days, they can revisit the images and comment, modify or even replace them.

  The pictures below show how a bunch of editorial supervisors pictured themselves in metaphorical form in 15 minutes. The strong symbolic values of the drawings helped participants understand and recognise both themselves and each other in the role of supervisors.
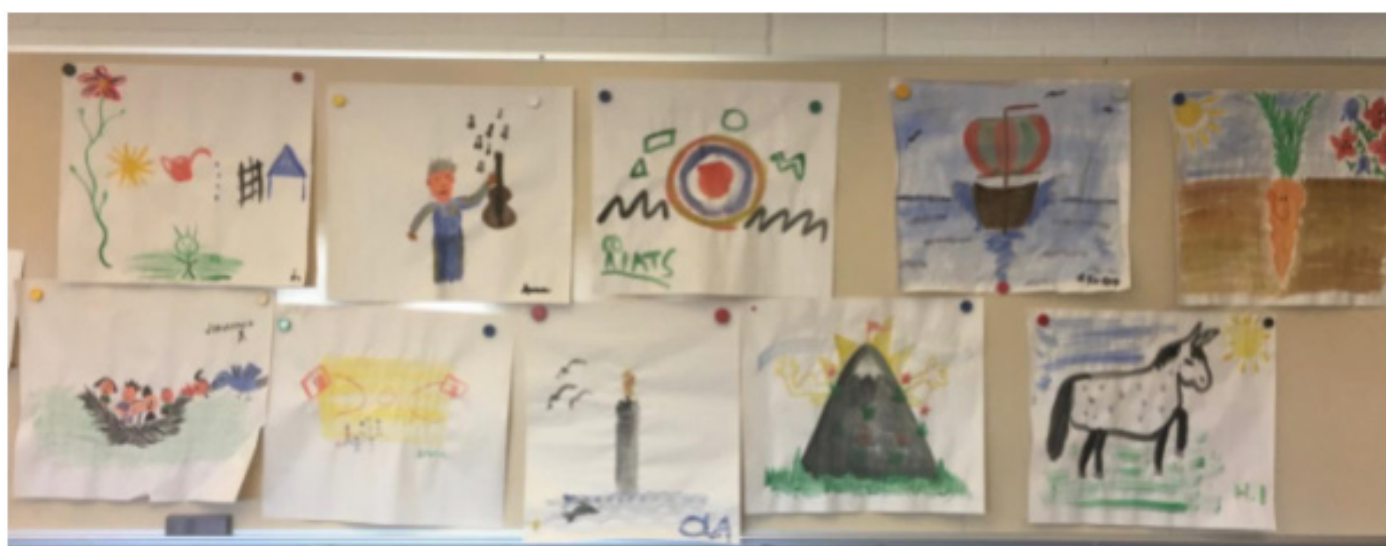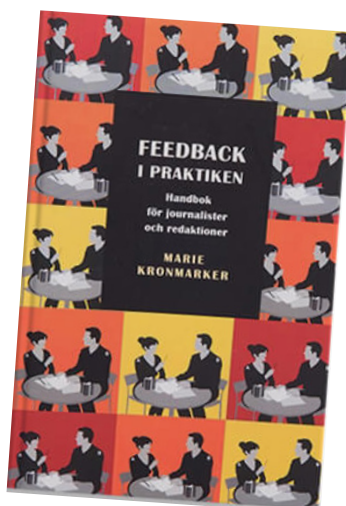
Feedback

Give feedback on what participants say, suggest and do, and encourage them to give feedback to each other! Journalists are often critical types and are likely to contradict, find flaws and overshare their opinions. So tell the group clearly:

Only encouraging, positive feedback in the group! Any critical points should be raised individually! Stay firm on this, at least until when you think you know that the group members feel safe with each other. Feel free to go through some good rules for feedback, which participants can stick to. And stick to them yourself!

Read more about feedback in the book "Feedback i praktiken" by Marie Kronmarker. The book is available for purchase through Fojo [here](#).

Feedback i praktiken, Marie Kronmarker.

Group subdivision – for different purposes

"Group work", to exchange experiences in small groups, practise, perform tasks, conduct role play etc., sometimes meets resistance. In most cases, resistance is due to bad experiences from school, where the task could feel meaningless.

With a group of adults in the same professional category and with similar interests and challenges, it is different, especially if a contract with clear goals has been drawn up from the start. So be sure to clearly articulate the goal and the supposed benefit of the group exercise itself, see [course start.](#)

Working in small groups provides more space for the individual to learn and take in other people's perspectives, as well as to contribute their own knowledge and experience. As a course leader, you should be available for questions and support.

In fact, splitting the class into groups may be trickier than motivating participants for the exercise itself. You can of course do this in a variety of ways, based on where people sit, give them numbers etc. However, maximum output usually comes if the participants are allowed to choose each other, for example, based on the field of work, interest, basic knowledge etc.

As a course leader, you can also ask them to form either as uniform or as mixed groups as possible. Next time they're going to be split up, you can tell them to be with different people from last time – and the groups don't always need to be the same size.

Also, exercises and work in small groups do not always need to be accounted for in front of everyone. If group after group is to tell you what they've done or arrived at, it often becomes numbingly long and boring. So think carefully what the purpose of group work is. Sometimes a quick round of evaluation of what the activity in the group provided is enough.

Instead, it is about gathering as many solutions, ideas or reflections as possible around a topic; different groups can account for different parts or share their 'best tip' while others fill in with questions, comments and reflections.

4.3 End of the course

Action plans

The ambition of most of Fojo's courses is for new knowledge, skills and insights to be applied in practice, in the workplace. Allowing time for individual action plans is an excellent way to help participants implement what they take with them from the course.

Educationally, it is advisable to point out action plans from the start and during the course run a process that looks much like in the Grow model, with goals – description of reality – obstacles and opportunities – new goals – concrete action plan.

Illustrating the process and its parts from the start makes it easier for participants to capture (or reject) ideas, concrete tips and new opportunities during the course of the training.

In the final phase, as a leader, you should give plenty of time to each person to articulate and write down their own propositions and goals, the strategy for how and when they should be implemented, why and with the help of who or what. Feel free to allow participants to work in small groups providing feedback on each other's action plans. This increases the chance for any action plan to become relevant and concrete. A closing verbal round where each person shares what they want from their action plans is valuable extra input and a memory jogger for the rest of the group.

There is an English-language model, SMART, for action plans and other work on achieving goals (ranging from New Year resolutions to personal development). It could be smart to present the model, where the letters stand for:
● Specific – be concrete and specific, help each other with it by asking what, who, how
● Measurable – measurable, in the sense of understanding when the goal is achieved
● Achievable – realistic, possible to achieve

● Relevant – in our case in relation to one's professional role and job situation
● Timebound – thought-out deadlines for short- and long-term goals respectively.

An important issue not included in the Smart model is: Who or what can help me achieve the goal?

So you can also raise this question if you want to deepen the discussion about how course participants move forward with their planning and their goals after the course ends. It is then, after the course, that the knowledge shall be translated into reality.

If you want to learn more about giving feedback, coaching and group processes, there is more to obtain from the last section: In depth.

Action plans have so far had a higher level of ambition in Fojo's international operations than in the Swedish activities. This is logical because the course activities of Fojo's international operations are part of development collaboration that takes place in project or programme form. There are always goals or expected results that are determined at the start of the project. A large part of the project activities are precisely courses and trainings of various types that are accommodated within concepts such as "capacity development" and "organisational strengthening" among Fojo partners and target groups in the projects. Participants in various learning sessions are expected not only to increase their knowledge, but also to contribute to knowledge and behavioural changes at the next level of the project's result chain, that is to say organisations, institutions, government agencies and even societal level.

But Fojo's Swedish and international activities are becoming more and more connected, for example, course leaders in Sweden are resource people/participants in aid projects.

Read more: Goal setting with the SMART-formula

Specific – be concrete and specific, help each other with it by asking what, who, how.

Measurable – measurable, in the sense of understanding when the goal is achieved.

Achievable – realistic, possible to achieve.

Relevant – in our case in relation to one's professional role and job situation.

Timebound – thought-out deadlines for short- and long-term goals respectively.

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4.4 Digital training

During the pandemic year, Fojo made a rapid development journey into the digital world. In just a few days, the courses were realigned from physical meetings to digital on Zoom. This involved a lot of planning, new thinking and creative solutions. In the beginning, most courses were slimmed down in the Swedish activities to fewer and shorter days.

Fojo put in extra resources such as an assistant course manager responsible for the technical aspects of Zoom, extra help with technology before and during the course, as well as closer harmonisation with those concerned.

As a result of this realignment, Fojo has produced material that provides concrete tips and advice for digital training from the perspectives of the course leader and the course participant. The material is available here.

Briefly, for a digital course, your lecture needs to be shorter, well structured and preferably varied, with interruptions for discussion in small groups and short breaks.

Working in a verbal presentation with moving images, an audio clip or examples from different web pages can raise energy levels. Do not forget to try to keep eye contact with your participants, although in reality it can be very difficult. And remember that your body language and your own energy level affect engagement. If you are enthusiastic and interested yourself, the participants will be too.

New digital aids and programmes are coming out all the time, which can be interesting to test. But it's important not to get caught up too much in the technology. Expect also that some participants may have problems with connections or software or not feel comfortable with new technologies, which then becomes limiting. But digital training is in all likelihood here to stay. So the need to continue testing, learning, developing and evaluating will be part of the activities.

4.5 Evaluation and follow-up

For all sorts of evaluations, first of all clarify what it is one wants to know. This really means that different courses require different methods of evaluation, partly because some course scores are more difficult to measure than others, partly because you may want to know different things after different courses.

A score at the end of the course roughly answers the question "how does it feel now?" and can provide valuable feedback to the course leader and Fojo on how the actual course opportunity was perceived. But not what happens afterwards. A supplement for you as a course leader can be a verbal round in which participants tell you what they have gained from the course, what new knowledge and skills can be used/applied at work. A major gain may also be; having acquired a network of contacts to learn from and exchange experiences with. This also becomes a way of summing up and reminding each other of what has been particularly important.

Fojo has a model for evaluating the courses in Sweden, which essentially looks like this (2020):
Step 1: Fojo e-mails a survey (Linnaeus University tool) to participants shortly after the end of the course. There, different elements are scored, with re-sponse options from good to bad and with space for comments. The same survey questions are used for all kinds of courses. The response rate is usually high. Fojo also sends out and e-mail to the participants' employers, reminding them that their editorial staff (the course participants) have acquired new skills that can be put to good use, offering tips and ideas for internal follow-up
Step 2: A couple of months after the end of the course, participants receive an e-mail with two open questions about what has happened after the course and what benefit the participant has had from it. Response rates vary from course to course
Step 3: In some courses, Fojo has started working on follow-up days in the form of a new meeting, most often on Zoom. Such a follow-up is itself an evaluation of what parts of the course the participants have been able to implement in their work . After the follow-up day, another questionnaire is sent with questions and room to comment.

Fojo's current evaluations can be compared to a model devised by Professor Donald Kirkpatrick, former president of the American Society for Training and Development. The model has four steps and looks like this:

Step 1: Reaction – a measurement of how satisfied or dissatisfied participants feel right after the course
Step 2: Learning – to what extent have participants achieved the learning goals, gained new knowledge, skills, experiences? One way to measure this can be the work on the action plans and practical evaluation exercises during the course of the training. See also Refuel with Team around
Step 3: Behaviour or application – have participants been able to apply what they took with them from training, have they changed their own behaviour at work, improved their skills? This is roughly what Fojo does in step 2 but with more specific questions and in Kirkpatrick's model preferably through direct dialogue one-on-one, by phone, skype, facetime etc.
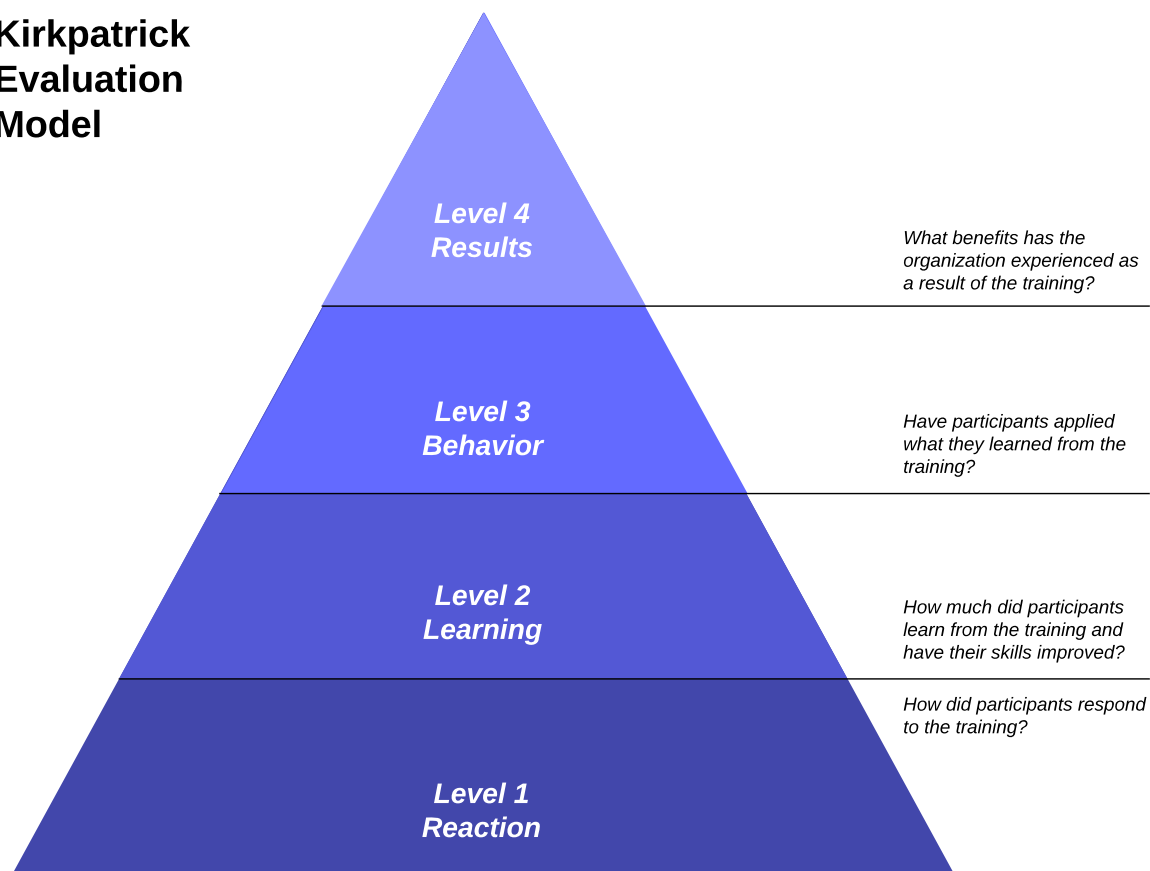**Step 4:** Results at organisational level - have the participant's new skills had a positive impact on the entire editorial/freelance group or in other further contexts? If so, what and how?

Occasionally, a fifth level has been added to Kirkpatrick's evaluation model. For example, Kaufman has developed a level that deals with change at societal level. Evaluation of learning in the international development work undertaken by Fojo is not significantly different from how it is done in Swedish activities.

One level of difference – which can be said to be significant – is that the knowledge-conveying activities of international aid projects have higher requirements to lead to more comprehensive and, above all, demonstrable results to be reported to financiers. The planned results – expressed as goals – deal with expected changes in attitudes, behaviour, norms and evaluations at the individual, group, organisational and societal levels. The latter can be local, regional and national. The reason is that aid's raison d'être and its overall objective is to contribute in a broad sense to the development and reform of developing countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe, their governance, laws, policies and the technical capacity of government agencies.

Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model

Level 4
Results

What benefits has the organization experienced as a result of the training?

Level 3
Behavior

Have participants applied what they learned from the training?

Level 2
Learning

How much did participants learn from the training and have their skills improved?

How did participants respond to the training?

Level 1
Reaction

Read more: Kirkpatricks evaluation model

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5. Good examples from our activities

Fojo's courses are almost always given very high scores by participants in the evaluations that are always done in the form of surveys. Fojo's courses in Sweden have not only included increased knowledge, abilities, greater self-confidence and professional trust for participants.

The courses have also helped editorial offices and media outlets attain the necessary conditions for better coverage in several areas.

Here are two examples in Fojo's Swedish activities:

Successful cooperation on climate of the future

They met on Fojo's course in climate journalism. And it was then that the idea of collaborating was born. SVT Småland's editor and Hem & Hyra's reporter began during the course to investigate whether or not municipal housing companies today are building apartments that can stand the test of recurring heatwaves in the future. Back in their editorial offices, they were given the go-ahead to proceed and continued to share all the research, all the contacts and any suggestions of possible interviewees. The result: many news features (on both national and regional TV, with several hundred thousand viewers) and one longer, in-depth feature with a lot of statistics and facts. And more is on the way.

"The climate course inspired us to break this big topic down into concrete ideas. It has been great to work together, not least to gain support and increased confidence to take on the coverage of the climate crisis for real!" says one of the reporters.

Multiple exposures of fraud after Fojo course

Two journalists from an industry magazine took a Fojo course together. It turned out to be a good investment, as the editor-in-chief said later. Back in the office, it's often difficult to single-handedly drive change, but two people who share the same experiences gain a very different sense of power together. After the course in crime journalism at Fojo, they continued to track down new ideas for digging and investigations. There have been many exposures since then: about companies cheating year after year with taxpayers' money; about illegal labour in the industry; about gross exploitation of workers; tax cheating and other violations of Swedish law. The latest investigations have revealed serious crimes among companies that provide various construction and household services with slave-like working conditions. And the revelations have resulted in government agencies and industry associations taking forcible action against the companies.

"Had I been able to, I would have always let two colleagues take a course together, then there will really be lasting change," the editor-in-chief says.

In international activities there are many examples of learning that received results beyond personal development. Here are two:

Journalist in Somalia became news anchor in TV programme and audience increased by 10,000

In Somalia, Fojo collaborates with the Danish media institute IMS in a project aimed at helping to professionalise journalism and contribute to economically sustainable business models for media. A male course participant's career took off through the project and the media company where he worked developed both his website and strategy for reaching out into social media. He also gained a leading position in a new TV programme broadcast via YouTube which helped increase the number of paying viewers by over 10,000. The programme is also extensively commented on by its followers.

Further education produced one of Kenya's best investigative journalists

Action for Transparency (A4T) is a Fojo-backed project in Kenya that develops methods to combat corruption in the public sector. One of the participants in several further education sessions conducted within the project has evolved to become one of Kenya's most prominent investigative journalists. She has been rewarded with several awards and her articles and features, including for CNN, have exposed high-level corruption. For example, she wrote about a parliamentarian who used money for his personal election campaign which was intended for village development projects. He was not re-elected.

6. Further reading: on feed-back and coaching

6.1 Basic tips

The job of the course leader is not to hand out scores or gold stars for good performance. But allowing participants themselves to evaluate and reflect on their own development and learning process is often a good idea. Giving and getting feedback is also a method that we can use to develop professionally. Here are some useful tips on what you can do:

● Let whoever should receive feedback begin the conversation! Ask what he/she wants feeback on. Don't jump ahead to the result so that you can immediately say what you think

● Pay attention to your spontaneous reactions! Make note of them to yourself

● Convey your reactions. Clarify that they are precisely your subjective thoughts and feelings. Avoid as far as you can judging or evaluating in terms of good or bad. Say I! You are just you and what you can do is help whoever has written to see and justify for themselves. Say, for example, "This got me interested. This gripped me. I don't really understand this. I'd love to have more/less of this". Provide solutions or changes. Let the participant decide what he or she will make of your reactions

● If there is time and it is needed: Explore the reactions together! Try to sort out what it was that made you react the way you did

● Sometimes, afterwards, it is enough to simply convey your observations, say what you saw, heard, perceived. Nothing more

● Be sincere AND caring. It's easier to be sincere, even really critical, if you really wish the other person well. The most difficult thing, of course, is giving response to someone who is happy with their result while you yourself think it has flaws. But it works if the other person knows and understands that you are doing it out of consideration

● Encouragement, encouragement, encouragement! It's certainly not enough to say "That was good" or "I don't have any comments". (What a stupid thing to say by the way! As if comments equals criticism.) No, be extra careful to be concrete about what you like. Sweeping praise is fun for the moment but nothing you learn from

● Talk about the conversation. Ask for feedback on your feedback, so as to know to what extent it was helpful.

6.2 Group dynamics and processes

"Threat number one for a group is to become dependent on the leader and that the leader takes all responsibility."

"As leader I shall start and support the learning process – not interfere too much in the group process but take responsibility only for the process to be there!"

The quotes come from Seán Gaffney, a leadership educator and gestalt therapist, who has several times visited Fojo. Gaffney's theories are largely consistent with the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO) model, a theory of fundamental interpersonal relationships in groups.
   FIRO divides group processes into three phases, which can be briefly described this way:

Phase 1: Belonging

In the beginning, a lot of energy goes into the people in a group getting to know each other. To create trust and become effective in their learning, they need time to socialise. So give them space to meet outside of the classroom, on coffee breaks and in communal activities. Give tips about cafés, bars, evening excursions etc.

Creating a common goal, a course contract, is part of the Belonging phase. Link: "What to think aboaut and do before the course starts."

Phase 2: Role search

After a while, the individual participants usually want to show what they want, what they can do and what role they wish to have in the group. They can begin to question each other, the leader, the goal for the course etc. As leader, you do best in allowing thoughts and emotions to come out.

Listen and try to see resistance and viewpoints as welcomed feedback! The team around is an excellent tool in this phase. Trying as a leader to take power or become authoritarian often leads to the group either returning to the belonging phase or to the emergence of real conflict.

Phase 3: Togetherness

As the role search phase concludes, the group can gain new energy and enter what the FIRO model calls togetherness. Now the group works well, participants understand each other's roles and accept the position. That there may be subgroups and disagreements is OK and not a threat.

The group starts working towards the goal as a team. You yourself, as a leader, can let participants work independently, operate in the background and show you're there. Participants decide for themselves when they need you!

Read more: The FIRO-model

Resistance can manifest itself in many ways, such as being late, being disruptive, getting out the mobile phone, appearing bored or openly criticising the leader, the subject, the teaching method etc. In most cases, resistance and conflict in a group are due to nervousness, a feeling of discomfort, learning problems or – not least – factors completely outside the educational situation.

When you prepare mentally for the meeting with the group, assume that different kinds of resistance can occur so that you are not surprised and intimidated by it. See it as useful feedback and consider that:

"The earlier a crisis comes up, the stronger the group will be". (Seán Gaffney)