



Staff Development
Facilitate for Transfer of Learning
Adventure + Nature = Happiness

trains outdoor program staff to make a difference

What are some ways your program wants to “leave tracks”?

How can you escort your students, campers, or clients to grow, change and emerge from your program and go on to make positive changes back at home, school, or on the job? What changes or contributions do you want to promote for other individuals, for the community, and maybe in the world?

It's all about transfer of learning

Transfer of learning =

- recognizing the importance of an experience and finding a later lasting use for that experience, often in a different context than the original experience.
- the integration of learning from the adventure program into the student's or client's life (job, family, school).

Adventure and Nature Experiences



Promote Beneficial Outcomes
in students /campers / clients



through
Transfer of Learning



conducted by competent facilitators
trained by

THE EXPERIENCE COLLABORATIVE

Adventure and Nature Experiences >> Promote Beneficial Outcomes

Land

- Backpacking, camping, hiking
- Rock climbing, belaying, rappelling
- Ice climbing
- Bouldering
- Mountaineering
- Canyoneering
- Bicycling
- Caving
- Snowshoeing
- Nordic, backcountry, and downhill skiing and snowboarding
- Ropes/challenge courses
- Group initiatives
- Wilderness reflective solos
- Sustainable service projects
- Running

Water

- Sailing
- Flat and whitewater canoeing, kayaking, and rafting
- Sea kayaking
- Snorkeling
- Scuba diving
- Standup paddle boarding

Intrapersonal benefits (emotional development)

- Time out from societal judgments
- Calming, resolving of mental fatigue
- Persistence, and staying open to outcomes
- Brain's ability to focus (be here now)
- Self-control, patience
- Mindfulness: Being present non-judgmentally
- Decreased stress, fear, and anxiety
- Following the rules, knowing when to break the rules
- Follow through
- Rewilding: Understanding how personal health is connected to planetary health

Interpersonal benefits (social development)

- Trust in others
- Teamwork, cooperation, compromise, and camaraderie
- Inclusive leadership
- Communication—listening, non-judgmental language
- Compassion and empathy for others
- Appreciating, respecting, and accepting other beings (human and non-human) for who they are and what they are
- New energy in relationships
- Ability to approach stressful interpersonal events as challenges rather than threats; lowers impulsivity.





customizes training to match your staff's existing experience and emerging needs

Training can focus on areas including..

Why Transfer of Learning? The Process of Facilitation

Facilitation offers people a chance to share what they have learned in their adventure experiences and to recognize that they are supported, or not alone, in their efforts.

1. **The adventure experience paradigm** to promote peak learning experiences.
2. **Why facilitation**, more than any other skills, enables outdoor leaders to correctly address client needs.
3. **Why processing is difficult**, but necessary, as a facilitation tool.
4. **Apply group development stages** to the planning and facilitation of adventure experiences for optimum transfer of learning.
5. **Match transfer of learning**—specific, nonspecific, and metaphoric—with your adventure programming goals.
6. **Choose facilitation techniques** that are most likely to achieve client learning and change.
7. **Apply current research** and emerging practices about adventure facilitation into your leadership practice.
8. **Effectively co-facilitate** with a co-leader.

How to Promote Transfer of Learning: Foundational Facilitation Skills

1. **Assess group needs** to develop programs for adventure client groups
 - a. Use CHANGES, GRABBS, APPLE models; then...
 - b. Implement the model to conduct a needs assessment of a client group; and based on that needs assessment...
 - c. Develop and implement an experiential adventure-based program for the client group, including goals, proper sequencing of activities, and incorporating a variety of processing and facilitation strategies.
2. **Effective communication and discussion skills**, including...
 - a. Listening for understanding.
 - b. Communication that enables change, focus on process vs. product
 - c. Conveying preparation, respect, enthusiasm, and use of examples to connect to real life.
 - d. Putting the group in a circle close enough so all can be involved
 - e. Redirecting tangents back to the main points.
 - f. Summarizing and transference discussions.
 - g. Formal and informal facilitation
3. **How to plan adventure experiences** using...
 - a. Experiential learning models—learning by doing combined with reflection
 - b. The processing matrix and continuum of facilitator vs. group involvement
 - c. The processing pinnacle to move participants to a high level of reflection

4. **Professional framing and briefing** of activities, including...
 - a. Description of activity purpose and processes
 - b. Connection of activity to participant goals
 - c. Invitation of group to name the activity
 - d. Creative processing strategies other than question and answer in a circle
5. **How to create and facilitate adventure experiences** incorporating...
 - a. Generations (levels) of facilitation
 - b. Debriefing funnel and freezing the action
 - c. Active processing
 - d. Feedback
 - e. Unhurried yet not drawn out time management
 - f. Being alert for emerging metaphors and significant incidents
 - g. Sufficient wait times; comfortable with silence
 - h. Summaries, paraphrases, or restatement of clients' remarks
 - i. Notebook to recall significant points
6. **Effective questioning strategies**, including use of...
 - a. Prepared questions, plus flexibility for emerging questions
 - b. Open-ended unbiased questions that invite students to discover lessons
 - c. Logical question sequences from easy (knowledge) to complex (synthesis, transference)
 - d. Questions about emerging metaphors and significant incidents
8. **Nonverbal and creative facilitation techniques**
 - a. Art, drama, music
 - b. Writing, poetry, storytelling
 - c. Photos or videos of activities to replay and recall issues and commit to change
 - d. Presentations to help students explain their adventures to an outsider
 - e. Repeat the same activity to reflect on and improve behaviors

How to Promote Transfer of Learning: Advanced Facilitation Skills

1. **Frontloading before the adventure experience**, including...
 - a. Revisiting (commitments)
 - b. Objectives (learning summation)
 - c. Motivation (application to reality)
 - d. Function (positive actions)
 - e. Dysfunction (negative actions)
2. **Metaphoric framing**, including...
 - a. Three types of metaphoric transfer and how they relate to the eight levels of facilitation techniques
 - b. Isomorphic frames that match client needs
 - c. How to create isomorphic frames
2. **Fortifying and focusing**, including double binds and paradox
3. **Intentional and person-centered facilitation** skills, including...
 - a. Participant-directed processing
 - b. Independent reflection

The Experience Collaborative staff trainings are ...

- collegially developed and presented with your staff
- involving, fun, and build lasting connections
- built upon your staff's existing experience
- flexible to respond to emerging needs
- experiential—demonstrating, practicing, doing, and enhancing staff skills
- conducted at your site and in the field
- active opportunities to apply skills being learned to your students or clients on-the-spot
- inclusive of continued follow-up, mentoring and check-ins
- based on current evidence-informed practices and applicable research

4. **“Raccoon Circles”** as a facilitation technique.
5. **Use of ceremony and ritual** in adventure programming.
6. **Integrate mindfulness, contemplative introspection, and reflection** to accomplish interpersonal and intrapersonal outcomes of adventure education.
7. **Integrate immersion in nature** and wilderness with adventure activities to promote flow, focus, and personal development.
8. **Deeper discussions** (about meaning, purpose, non-ideological spirituality, compassion, community, personal awareness, etc.) with adventure program clients.
9. **How to resolve conflicts**, and deal with client resistance to involvement and change.

More about Transfer of Learning

Students, clients, and campers emerge from thoughtfully-developed outdoor adventure education programs with stronger emotional and social skills. They may experience newfound confidence, empathy for others, ability to focus, and decreased anxiety.

These benefits occur because the students had highly-competent outdoor adventure educators who did not just guide them to the top of the mountain and back down again safely. The educators taught and supported the students to get up the literal or metaphorical mountain and back down again on their own, often as part of a supportive group endeavor.

Outdoor adventure leadership involves teaching skills and knowledge—for example, how to tie climbing knots, how to repair a backpacking stove, and maybe about the constellations in a clear night sky. Another dimension involves imparting processes of reflection and thinking about adventure experiences clients and students are having in a way that allows them to make changes back at home, on the job, or at school. This is called transference, or the application stage of Kolb’s cycle of experiential education. Priest and Gass (2018) explain that the capabilities to perform technical skills in an environmentally sound manner are common among outdoor leaders. The abilities of leaders to climb, paddle, or peddle, for example, are relatively easy to learn and assess. However, the abilities to instruct, organize, and facilitate participants in adventure experiences are less common in preparing outdoor leaders.

So, staff training you receive from The Experience Collaborative is based on evidence and applicable research showing that skills in transfer of learning will help program staff go beyond the technical skills by using the mountain, the river, the ropes course, portable initiatives, or the classroom as venues to help their students and clients further develop self-esteem, group cooperation, problem solving, trust, reflection and communication skills, to learn behaviors that benefit the individual and society. This process is called facilitation, which has been described as the cornerstone of effective adventure learning experiences (Nadler & Luckner, 1992).

References:

- Priest, S., & Gass, M. (2018). *Effective leadership in adventure programming* (3rd ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Nadler, J., & Luckner, R. (1992). *Processing the experience: Strategies to enhance and generalize learning*. Montecito, CA: True North Leadership.

For More Information...

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