

GROUP CONTACT METHODS

Method demonstration- A method demonstration is to teach a skill. It teaches how to do certain work. It is always interesting to the farmers and especially when the demonstration is concluded by the extension worker, it increases their respect for the worker. Examples of method demonstration subjects include (i) seed treatment (ii) pruning, and (iii) spraying.

Things to note in method demonstration are as follows:

1. Outline operations in logical steps
2. Identify key points
3. Carefully select materials and tools
4. Arrange for diagrams or other teaching aids
5. Rehearse demonstration until perfect
6. Make sure all the audience can see and hear him
7. Explain purpose and show application to local problem
8. Show each operation slowly, step by step
9. Emphasize key points
10. Invite members of audience to repeat demonstration

Advantages of Method Demonstration

1. It teaches needed skill to many people at one time
2. Seeing, hearing, discussing and participating stimulate action.
3. It builds confidence in extension worker if demonstration is skillfully performed
4. Local leaders easily learn simple demonstrations and can repeat them with other groups.
5. It promotes personal acquaintance between the demonstrators and the farmers
6. It influences changes in practice with many people at a single meeting.

Limitations

1. It is frequently difficult to ensure that all members of the group can see clearly
2. With certain demonstrations considerable equipment must be transported to the meeting places
3. Requires a certain amount of showmanship not possessed by all extension workers.

LECTURE:

The lecture method is most suited to the literate population. But it can be adapted to all types of audience. It is used to present authoritative information to a large audience in the shortest time. A wide range of subjects can be covered using the lecture method. The speaker makes a presentation on the topic allotted to him for a definite period of time. Its weakness is that people are not likely to master as much of the information as the speaker is likely to assume; because for the most part it is a one way communication. Members of audience listen in terms of their interest and remember in terms of their motivation and memory. It is the cheap method and the results are easy to check.

SYMPOSIUM

This is a short series of lectures; usually by 2 to 5 speakers. Each one speaks for a definite amount of time, and presents different phases or subdivisions of a general topic. The topic should be large enough or general enough to permit two or more subdivisions that are sufficiently significant to justify separate discussion by speakers. The subject may or may not be controversial. It is important that the speakers are of approximately equal ability, to avoid one speaker dominating the meeting or giving the audience a distorted view of the subject. The symposium is used primarily for information gathering, at the professional level. The advantage of symposium over a lecture is that two or more experts present different facts of the topic.

PANEL

It is an informal conversation put on for the benefit of the audience, by a small group of speakers, usually from 2 to 8 in numbers. They are selected on the basis of the information and experiences they have. Members are seated so that they can see one another and face the audience. The panel is generally rehearsed before it is presented to the public. The leader introduces the members of the panel to the audience and announces the topic. He has the responsibility to see that the conversation keeps going, by asking questions or making brief comments, and encouraging the less talkative members. The special advantage of panel is that a spontaneous conversation about some subject may have more interest for the audience than a lecture.

DEBATE

On a controversial subject two teams of usually 2 to 3 persons present their point of view. Each speaker has time allotted for speech to make his main speech and defence after the main speeches have been completed. In this case, there is two way communication between the debaters, but one way communication for the audience. The range of subjects for the debate is limited to controversial topics. The big advantage in a debate is that more than one side of a question is presented. There is however, one danger. If it is a decision debate there is the temptation for the debate to become highly antagonistic. In such a case, the motive to win the debate by means may lead to distortion of information, ignoring the primary need to inform the audience. This objection to the debate is overcome by holding non- decision debates or by having a forum after the debate.

FORUM

It is a discussion period that may follow any one of the above methods of presentation. It consists of a question period in which members of the audience may ask questions or make brief statements. The forum provides an opportunity for the audience to clear up ambiguous points and to raise questions for additional information. It also gives individuals an opportunity to state briefly their understanding of a point and see whether they have interpreted correctly the material presented. It is primarily a means of understanding information.

BUZZ GROUP

Also known as Phillips 66 format or hurdle system. With large group when there is limited time for discussion, the audience may be divided into smaller units for a short period. Groups of 6 to 8 persons get together after receiving instructions to discuss about a specific issue assigned. The secretary of each small group will report the findings or questions to the entire audience when they are reassembled. This technique can be successfully used for defining or clarifying the problem. It can help in developing a list of possible goals, standards, and activities for the consideration of the total group. It also helps in refining ideas and developing solutions to the problems.

WORKSHOP

Workshop is a special type of working conference of a week or more duration. In workshop emphasis is given on lecture, individual conference and working in group. Under the guidance of the consultants work sessions the individual participant can work on a special problem either individually or as a member of group. This method is used for professional improvement and in-service training. The main items of the workshop are lectures by staff members, group meeting with selected groups, individual consultation and study, informal discussion on problems, arranging inspirational or special events and providing library and other resources for the study.

BRAIN STORMING

It is a creativity of generating ideas to solve a problem. It is the unstructured generation of ideas by a group of people. The group is selected for their creativity and knowledge to seek solutions to particular problem or simply find better ways of meeting project objectives. Suggestions are encouraged and follow during a creativity session and everything is acceptable. From this, many ideas, some entirely new are brought forward for analysis and ranking. Brainstorming is less structured than problem solving meetings. It seeks to generate entirely new ideas. People get involved and make positive contributions. It is good for team building and working together. It requires good facilitator to conduct the brain storming session.

SEMINAR

It is one of the most important forms of group discussion. The discussion leader introduces the topic to be discussed. Members of the audience discuss the subject to which ready answer

are not available. A seminar may have two or more plenary sessions. This method has the advantage of pooling together the opinions of a large number of persons.

CONFERENCE

Pooling of experiences and opinion among a group of people who have special qualifications in an area. The conference method mainly consists of small and large group discussion, steering committee and open plenary session. The conference help in clarifying various issues involved in a particular area as different points of view are expressed by experts in the conference.