

# **Debate Institute Africa Training Philosophy**

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## **PREAMBLE**

**We the Africa Debate Institute are**

**WELCOMING** the challenge to create a robust speech and debate curriculum which generations today and to come will use to sharpen their ambition and talent

**DEEPLY CONCERNED** about the lack of a structured speech and debate curriculum in African education systems which leads to undeveloped or underdeveloped talents

**FULLY ALARMED** about the lack of uniform professional standard in the Africa speech and debate arena which demotivates potential speakers from engaging in speech and debate programs

**DEEPLY CONSCIOUS** of the low social premiums that school and university administrations put to student speech and debate programs

**FULLY BELIEVEING** that there is a strong need to establish a curriculum whose products shall be humans of strong self-esteem and powerful African voices that have the power to change the world

**SEEKING** to bring a radical change in the way speech and debate programs are constructed in education institutions in-order to shape young people's minds towards geopolitical issues, African identity and global social trends

**RECOGNISING** that each generation has the responsibility of maintaining the level of consciousness attained by previous generations

**DEEPLY DISTURBED** by the degradation of the true essence of debate through limiting it to competitive debate alone And secondly undermining the impact a well structured debate program can have on her participants

**BEARING IN MIND** the idea that there is always a sizeable number of people who have interest in shaping and sharpening their speech and debate skills during their school time

**NOTING FURTHER** that African education institutions have the capacity of raising and nurturing the best speakers of the generations now and to come

**AWARE OF** the constraints that students face in the pursuit of excellence at their God given abilities due to lack of properly structured social systems that nurture their internal energy

The **Africa Debate Institute** therefore

**EXPRESSES ITS HOPE** in the idea that the future is only but something which must be created

**AFFIRMS** the need to develop high quality assessment tools for people who engage in speech and debate programs

**FULLY COMMITS** to design structured speech and debate courses or modules which will enable interested students to pursue excellence at their inborn talents

**SOLEMNLY AFFIRMS** that this process is a generational challenge that she is willing to take up for the good of the African dream

## **Effective Training: Essential Principles, Approaches, and Process**

*Guide for ADI speech and debate coaches*

This guide provides training designers and trainers with the key principles, approaches, and a process that underlie effective training design and delivery.

Key Training Principles ADI's training approach is characterized by six key principles –

1. Learner-centered,
2. Inclusion sensitive,
3. Actionable,
4. Experiential,
5. Active,
6. Measurable.

These principles underlie training design and delivery.

**Learner-Centered** . A learner-centered training is an environment that pays careful attention to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs that participants individually bring to the space. Training Design and delivery starts with the consideration of the participant's needs (**National Research Council. 2000**).

This starts with the consideration of the participant's context, knowledge and abilities – **the Training Needs Assessment** - which informs the **design** and **delivery** process as well as the approach to evaluation. From the culture of a participant to their **race, gender, skills, and ability**; trainings place emphasis on participants to ensure that the **outcomes are responsive to their needs and realities**. Acknowledging and respecting participant's prior experiences and understandings helps build a bridge to new learning.

**Inclusion** . Sensitive Inclusion sensitive trainings acknowledge that diverse participants bring different experiences and perspectives to a training that can enrich the training experience for all.

Such trainings strive to overcome patterns of exclusion based on actual or perceived connection to a social identity group that may affect access to training and/or learning dynamics during and after a training.

Differentiated approaches to training design and delivery ensure inclusion along locally relevant dimensions, from selection processes to evaluation questions. ADI follows inclusion sensitivity principles that build trust and safety among diverse participants, fostering conditions for all participants to contribute and engage in all training activities.

**Actionable**. Actionable trainings focus on knowledge, skills, and attitudes that have a practical utility and will help participants make an impact. Assessing the needs of participants before design allows for training content that is directly linked to realistic actions that participants can do post-training.

Learning objectives are fulfilled via actionable knowledge, skills, and attitudes that can be assessed. This enables participants to demonstrate desired competencies within trainings and apply the newly acquired learning after the training.

**Experiential learning** is “learning by doing.” Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) is a holistic, cyclical process that emphasizes that effective learning occurs when direct experience is tied to personal reflection, opportunities to make relevant connections to the experience, and the ability to demonstrate the appropriate use of the knowledge or skill.

Experiential trainings start with an analysis of participants’ needs then identify the appropriate activities for the training audience and content. Experiential

activities can range from activities that are conducted within the training space as well as those that participants can do outside of the training space.

**Active** . Active training enables a participant to engage with training content in an interactive manner. What distinguishes active training is that ***it extends beyond “learning by doing”*** and uses formal training components to shape and support a participant’s learning processes. Activities are designed so that the participants acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes rather than simply receiving them.

Several activities allow for an active training environment, including **role-playing, pairing participants for activities, and movement exercises**. These elements, when intentionally and appropriately used in trainings result in increased participation, enlivened learning, **deepened retention, and meaningful application**.

**Measurable** . Measurable trainings use **learning objectives** to develop appropriate evaluation plans and techniques that help extract learning which can be applied to training design and delivery. In the design process, the careful development of learning objectives that identify the knowledge, skills, or attitudes that will be gained by participants, allow for clarity in the measurement of a training’s success.

Trainings are **designed to lead to the impact** that programs aim to make. The changes that result from ADI’s trainings are measured to evaluate and learn from each training experience. Formative and summative assessments help the organization strengthen its trainings to be **effective** at providing skills that lead to positive impact for participants worldwide.

## **Training Youth<sup>1</sup>(PEDAGOGY) and Adults (ADRAGOGY)**

ADI trainings target both youth and adults. These audiences are distinct in the way that they learn. This is because at different stages in life, brain development levels and life experiences factor into what is considered as effective learning. This section is divided into youth learning and adult learning and provides the principles that enable the best learning for both audiences. It is important to distinguish **learning** and **training**.

Learning is the process of obtaining increased knowledge, skills, or attitudes. It is focused on the training participant's ability to acquire the content of the training.

### **Early Adolescent Learning (Ages 10 to 13)**

Early adolescents learning needs differ from older adolescents. When training early adolescents, apply these principles in design and delivery:

1. Early adolescent learning is characterized as engaging in strong, intense interests, that are often short lived.
2. Early adolescents prefer interactions with their peers
3. Early adolescents prefer active to passive learning. Their brain growth is enhanced and strengthened through practice and exercise.

### **YOUTH TRAINING PRINCIPLES**

<i>S/N</i>	<i>PRINCIPLE</i>	<i>APPLICATION</i>
1	Youth gain mastery through in depth and immersive learning.	Provide opportunities for practice with new tasks and problems, for continued use of new knowledge and skills.

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<sup>1</sup> ADI defines youth as people between the ages of 10 and 29 (in line with USAID's Youth in Development policy), unless otherwise noted for a specific training or context.



2	Youth learn best when less experienced learners can work alongside more experienced peers or skilled adults.	Provide collaboration opportunities - brainstorm possibilities, pool knowledge and insights, conduct collective analyses, critique each other, and draw energy from a common goal.
3	Youth thrive when working on challenges because they can address difficult but accessible problems.	Provide lessons and activities that require problem solving and critical thinking.
4	Youth are intrinsically motivated to learn at deeper levels through personally meaningful experiences that connect to peers or adults.	Provide opportunities to learn more about a topic, build competence in it, and connect with others who share on the topic.
5	Youth learn when information is presented as unfinished products that leave room for their contributions.	Provide opportunities to learn more about a topic, build competence in it, and connect with others who share on the topic.
6	Youth desire to use, apply, make sense, and make connections to what they learn.	Allow work on tasks that have meaning and value to the themselves or others
7	Youth find it valuable to recognize a range of feelings.	The learning environment should be sensitive to the

		role of emotion in activities.
8	Youth learn to use failure as an important part of the learning process when assessments are closely to learning.	Share criteria used for assessment and ensure clear markers of progress and growth.
9	Youth learn when there are opportunities for them to experience a range of adult roles.	Include opportunities to engage with adults on diverse tasks and ensure support by a rich/multi-dimensional adult role (i.e. mentors).

**Adapted from How Youth Learn, 2013**

### **Positive Youth Development in Training**

To achieve positive outcomes for youth, ADI incorporates Positive Youth Development (PYD) in trainings. PYD compliments youth learning principles and is defined by USAID as an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths (Positive Youth Development, 2017).

## Adult<sup>2</sup> Learning Trainings

The needs of adults in a training environment differs from the needs of youth. Therefore, it is important for training design and delivery to be informed by adult learning principles. For adults to learn and apply the content introduced in trainings, their learning needs must be prioritized. ADI's adult learning principles are drawn from the work of Malcolm Knowles. It is not only important to know the principles, but to also apply them to training effectively.

### ADULT LEARNING PRINCIPLES

<i>S/N</i>	<i>PRINCIPLE</i>	<i>APPLICATION</i>
1	Adults need to be involved in their own learning.	Encourage participants to self-evaluate and assess their own learning and performance. In addition, provide opportunities for participants to design their individual learning experience (i.e. through projects they choose and design)
2	Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities.	Provide opportunities for learners to reflect upon and share their existing knowledge and experience.
3	Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life.	Make a connection between the learning content and each participant's long term professional or personal goals.
4	Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content oriented.	Share examples and stories that relate the learning content to participant's

<sup>2</sup> ADI defines adults as people above the age of 29, unless otherwise noted for a specific training or context.

current challenges or ask participants to share their own examples.

*Adapted from Knowles, M. S. (1984). Andragogy in action: applying principles of adult learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.*

### **Inclusion Sensitivity Approaches in Trainings ADI's training**

Audiences are diverse. They range from youth to adults who represent different geographic regions and ethnic groups, speak different languages, belong to different faiths, and are different genders and sexual orientations, among other social and cultural identities.

The immense diversity among participants requires that all trainings are inclusion sensitive to ensure that every participant is able and empowered to equally participate and contribute.

#### ***Trust and safety are essential.***

Creating an inclusive environment starts in design, from the moment participant selection criteria and outreach strategies are conceptualized to when a training begins. In some cases, where engagement with participants starts before the training event, setting the expectation for an inclusive environment will involve many members of a program team.

In all cases, training designers and trainers have an important role in promoting and modeling inclusion while encouraging discussion and reflection during training events.

### **Gender Sensitivity in Training Approach**

A gender sensitive training explicitly addresses gender differences in existing roles, knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs that affect access to the training, receptivity to the topic, and opportunities to apply new knowledge and skills after the training.

Such differences may be related to disposable income or time, availability to travel, literacy levels, educational attainment, public and private leadership roles, occupational trends, etc. It is important that training design, delivery, and evaluation consider and respond to gender-specific needs and priorities that affect productive learning.

Gender inequality is an obstacle to equitable and sustainable development around the world. Trainings globally should strive to go beyond accommodating gender differences to transforming them in ways that widen opportunities and reduce constraints.

Trainings are inclusive spaces where the agency and dignity of all people are recognized and respected.

In Practice: **Create a “Brave Space”** with methods that increase the active participation of both women and men .

Through thoughtful content and trainer-facilitated discussions, participants can learn to listen and respectfully question gender-related facts and opinions in a “brave space” that may be uncomfortable at times, but is never unsafe.

To address behavioral differences between men and women, participatory methods such as using small groups or organizing separate women and men’s groups can help both genders contribute effectively.

## **Ability Sensitivity in Training Approach**

Ensuring that trainings are accessible and responsive to the needs of people with disabilities is central to trainings.

***People with disabilities can feel excluded in trainings if there are few or no opportunities for their active participation.***

From activity modifications to facility considerations, meeting the needs of participants who require accommodations allows trainings to be more inclusive. Culture Sensitivity in Training Approach Training diverse groups requires culture sensitive approaches that help optimize learning for multi-cultural groups. Awareness of sociocultural issues and effective approaches for design and delivery of trainings for culturally diverse participants is important.

From considering the role of language to delivering trainings informed by global perspectives (i.e., customs and beliefs), culture sensitive approaches contribute to a training that embraces cultural difference by recognizing the role that culture plays in the lives of participants in and outside of the learning environment. To be effective, a training must consider and acknowledge difference in culture, which may include race, ethnicity, values, and beliefs.

### **Interactive Methods**

There are many ways that you can break up training sessions and keep trainees attentive and involved, including:

**Quizzes.** For long, complicated training, stop periodically to administer brief quizzes on information presented to that point. You can also begin sessions with a prequiz and let participants know there will also be a follow-up quiz. Trainees will stay engaged in order to improve their prequiz scores on the final quiz.

Further motivate participants by offering awards to the highest scorers or the most improved scores.

Small group discussions. Break the participants down into small groups and give them case studies or work situations to discuss or solve. This is a good way for knowledgeable veteran students to pass on their experience to newer students.

Case studies. Adults tend to bring a problem-oriented way of thinking to workplace training. Case studies are an excellent way to capitalize on this type of adult learning. By analyzing real job-related situations, students can learn how to handle similar situations. They can also see how various elements of a job work together to create problems as well as solutions.

Active summaries. Create small groups and have them choose a leader. Ask them to summarize the lecture's major points and have each team leader present the summaries to the class. Read aloud a prewritten summary and compare this with participants' impressions.

Q & A sessions. Informal question-and-answer sessions are most effective with small groups and for updating skills rather than teaching new skills. For example, some changes in departmental procedure might easily be handled by a short explanation by the supervisor, followed by a question-and-answer period and a discussion period.

Question cards. During the lecture, ask participants to write questions on the subject matter. Collect them and conduct a quiz/review session.

Role-playing. By assuming roles and acting out situations that might occur in the workplace, students learn how to handle various situations before they face them on the job. Role-playing is an excellent training technique for many interpersonal skills, such as customer service, interviewing, and supervising.

Participant control. Create a subject menu of what will be covered. Ask participants to review it and pick items they want to know more about. Call on a participant to identify his or her choice. Cover that topic and move on to the next participant.

Demonstrations. Whenever possible, bring tools or equipment that are part of the training topic and demonstrate the steps being taught or the processes being adopted.

### **Other activities.**

Create a personal action plan

Raise arguments to issues in the lecture

Paraphrase important or complex points in the lecture

### **Advantages**

Interactive sessions keep trainees engaged in the training, which makes them more receptive to the new information.

They make training more fun and enjoyable.

They provide ways for veteran students to pass on knowledge and experience to newer students.

They can provide in-session feedback to trainers on how well trainees are learning.

### **Disadvantages**

Interactive sessions can take longer because activities, such as taking quizzes or breaking into small groups, are time-consuming.

Some methods, such as participant control, can be less structured, and trainers will need to make sure that all necessary information is covered.

### **Hands-On Training**

Experiential, or hands-on, training, offers several more effective techniques for teaching students, including:



Cross-training. This method allows students to experience other jobs, which not only enhances student skills but also gives companies the benefit of having students who can perform more than one job. Cross-training also gives students a better appreciation of what co-workers do and how their own jobs fit in with the work of others to achieve company goals.

**Demonstrations.** Demonstrations are attention-grabbers. They are an excellent way to teach students to use new equipment or to teach the steps in a new process. They are also effective in teaching safety skills. Combined with the opportunity for questions and answers, this is a powerful, engaging form of training.

**Coaching.** The goal of job coaching is to improve an student's performance. *Coaching focuses on the individual needs of an student and is generally less formal than other kinds of training.* There are usually no set training sessions. A manager, supervisor, or veteran student serves as the coach. He or she gets together with the student being coached when time allows and works with this student to:

Answer questions

Suggest more effective strategies

Correct errors

Guide toward goals

Give support and encouragement

Provide knowledgeable feedback

**Drills.** Drilling is a good way for students to practice skills. Evacuation drills are effective when training emergency preparedness e.g. story telling drills, argument structure drills, rebuttal drills, karl popper drills, world skills drills, BP drills etc

## **Advantages**

Hands-on training methods are effective for training in new procedures and new equipment.

They are immediately applicable to trainees' jobs.

They allow trainers to immediately determine whether a trainee has learned the new skill or procedure.

## **Disadvantages**

They are not good for large groups if you do not have enough equipment or machines for everyone to use.

Personal coaching can be disruptive to the coach's productivity.

Apprenticeship can be expensive for companies paying for students who are being trained on the job and are not yet as productive as regular students.

## **Computer-Based Training (CBT)**

Computer-based training is becoming increasingly prevalent as technology becomes more widespread and easy to use. Though traditional forms of training are not likely to be replaced completely by technological solutions, they will most likely be enhanced by them. Human interaction will always remain a key component of workplace training.

Nonetheless, it is a good idea to look more closely at what training technologies have to offer and how they might be used to supplement existing training programs or used when developing new ones. Computer-based training formats vary from the simplest text-only programs to highly sophisticated multimedia programs to virtual reality. Consider the following types:

Text-only. The simplest computer-based training programs offer self-paced training in a text-only format. These programs are similar to print-based, individualized training modules with the addition, in most cases, of interactive features. While simple in format, these programs can be highly effective and present complicated information and concepts in a comprehensible and easily accessible way.

**CD-ROM.** A wide variety of off-the-shelf training programs covering a broad range of workplace topics are available on CD-ROM. Programs can also be created by training consultants for the specific needs of the particular organization or individual departments.

**Multimedia.** These training materials are an advanced form of computer-based training. They are much more sophisticated than the original text-only programs. In addition to text, they provide stimulating graphics, audio, animation, and/or video. Multimedia tends to be more provocative and challenging and, therefore, more stimulating to the adult mind. Although costs are higher than text-only software, the benefits in terms of student learning may well be worth it. Multimedia training materials are typically found in DVD format.

**Virtual reality.** Virtual reality is three-dimensional and interactive, immersing the trainee in a learning experience. Most virtual reality training programs take the form of simulation, which is a highly effective form of training. It is hands-on experience without the risks of actual performance. Flight simulators, for example, have been used successfully for years to train airline and military pilots in critical flying skills, as well as to prepare them for emergency situations in a safe and forgiving environment.

## **Advantages**

Computer-based training programs are easy to use.

They can often be customized or custom designed.

They are good for helping students develop and practice new skills.

They are useful for refresher training. They are applicable to self-directed learning.

They can be cost-effective because the same equipment and program can be used by large numbers of students.

They are flexible because trainees can learn at their own pace and at a time that's convenient for them. Computer-based programs are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. No matter which shift a student works, training is always available.

Some programs are interactive, requiring trainees to answer questions, make choices, and experience the consequences of those choices. This interaction generally results in greater comprehension and retention.

They are uniform, which makes it possible to standardize training.

They are measurable. When computers are used for training, it is possible to track what each student has learned right on the computer. Most programs have post-tests to determine whether the student has understood the training. Test scores give trainers statistics for training evaluations.

### **Disadvantages**

These programs require trainees to be computer literate.

They require trainees to have computer access.

There is little or no interaction with a trainer; if trainees have questions, there's no one to ask.

These programs are not effective at teaching "soft-skills," such as customer service, sales, or sensitivity training.

They are not the best choice for new or one-time training. Trainers need live interaction to ensure new skills or concepts are being communicated. Trainees need to be able to ask questions and receive feedback.

Some poorly designed programs are “boring” and result in trainees having a poor retention rate of the material as well as a low finish rate.

### **Online or E-Learning**

In addition to computer-based training, many companies with students in a variety of locations across the country are relying on other technologies to deliver training. According to the ASTD “State of the Industry” report, companies are using a record level of e-learning, and ASTD predicts that number will continue to rise. This method is becoming more and more popular as access to the Web becomes more widely available. Some examples include:

**Web-based training.** This method puts computer-based training modules onto the Web, which companies can then make available to their students either on the company’s intranet or on a section of the vendor’s website that is set up for your company. There are many courses available on the Internet in many different topic areas. These courses provide a hands-on, interactive way for students to work through training presentations that are similar to CD-ROM or PowerPoint, on their own. Training materials are standardized because all trainees will use the same program. Materials are also easy to update, so your training is always in step with your industry. Web-based training programs are also often linked with software (a learning management system, or LMS) that makes trainees’ progress trackable, which makes recordkeeping very easy for the training administrator.

**Tele- or videoconferencing.** These methods allow the trainer to be in one location and trainees to be scattered in several locations. Participants are networked into the central location and can usually ask questions of the trainer

via the telephone or by a webchat feature. Lectures and demonstrations can be effective using this method.

**Audioconferencing.** This method is similar to videoconferencing but involves audio only. Participants dial in at the scheduled meeting time and hear speakers present their training. Question and answer sessions are frequently held at the end of sessions in which participants can email questions or call in and talk to a presenter.

**Web meetings, or webinars.** This method contains audio and visual components. Participants dial in to receive live audio training and also follow visual material that appears on their computer screens. These presentations are similar to CD-ROM or PowerPoint presentations and sometimes offer minimal online interactivity. Q & A sessions may also be held at the end of sessions.

**Online colleges and universities.** This method is also known as distance learning, and many schools now offer certificates or degrees through online programs that require only minimal on-campus residency.

Collaborative document preparation. This method requires participants to be linked on the same network. It can be used with coaches and trainees to teach writing reports and technical documents.

E-mail. You can use e-mail to promote or enhance training. Send reminders for upcoming training. Solicit follow-up questions for trainers and/or managers. Conduct training evaluations through e-mail forms.

#### Advantages

Online or e-learning programs are effective for training across multiple locations.

They save the company money on travel expenses.

They can be a less expensive way to get training from expert industry professionals and consultants from outside the company.

They are useful for refresher training.

They are good for self-directed learning.

They can be easy to update with new company policies or procedures, federal regulations, and compliance issues.

They offer trainers a growing array of choices for matching training programs to student knowledge and skill levels.

#### Disadvantages

These programs require trainees to be computer literate.

They are usually generic and not customized to your company's needs.

Some students may not like the impersonal nature of this training.

Students may be too intimidated by the technology or the remoteness of the trainer to ask questions.

Lack of computer terminals or insufficient online time may restrict or preclude access to training.

Inadequate or outdated hardware devices (e.g., sound cards, graphics accelerators, and local area networks) can cause programs to malfunction.

Your company's Internet servers may not have enough bandwidth to receive the materials.

Self-instruction offers limited opportunities to receive context-specific expert advice or timely response to questions

#### How to Use a Blended Learning Approach

Blended learning is a commonsense concept that results in great learning success. The blended learning approach is simply acknowledging that one size doesn't fit all when it comes to training. In a nutshell, blended learning means

using more than one training method to train on one subject. Here are several good reasons to use a blended learning approach:

A University of Tennessee study showed that a blended learning program reduced both the time and the cost of training by more than 50 percent.

The same study showed a 10 percent improved result in learning outcomes compared with traditional training.

Learning experts believe that a big advantage of blended learning is that it more closely replicates how people actually learn on the job, through experience and interaction with co-workers.

This approach works well because the variety of approaches keeps trainers and trainees engaged in training. Blended learning simply makes a lot of sense.

Consider the many factors that affect training:

Subject matter

Audience make-up

Types of learners

Budget considerations

Space constraints

Compliance issues

Any or all of these considerations affect your choices for training and may even necessitate that you use a blended learning approach. Chances are you already use this method perhaps without even realizing it. Have you ever:

Used a PowerPoint training session and incorporated written quizzes, small group discussions, and role plays at various points in the training?



Broken a complex subject into parts and used a different training method to teach each section or step?

Used a live trainer with hands-on demonstrations for initial training and a CD-ROM or online course for refresher training?

If you have done any of the above methods, you are already using a blended learning approach. Here's how to plan a blended learning training program.

Once you've identified training needs, answer these questions about each situation:

What are the training conditions?

Do you have a classroom? How many people will it hold?

How many computers do you have access to?

What resources are available?

What are the characteristics of the training content? Is it soft or hard?

Who is your target audience?

What are its demographics?

How many languages do you need to accommodate? Which ones?

How many students need this training?

How quickly do you need to accomplish this training?

Your answers will direct you to the optimal delivery method. However time consuming this process may seem, blended learning offers trainees a well-planned session that is custom-designed for them, the subject, and the learning environment. In the long run, blended learning saves time and money since this training process is an efficient use of resources to help students develop sufficient levels of knowledge retention.

