Learning for Performance:
Toolkit for Health Worker Training and Education

INTRODUCTION

Health workers are among the most valuable resources of any health system. Developing a strong workforce requires training health workers to perform their jobs, updating their skills and knowledge to match evolving health needs, and helping them advance along appropriate and satisfying career paths. Learning interventions are critical components of offering quality health services, ensuring that health workers perform to standard, and addressing the health workforce crisis facing many countries.

Learning for Performance (http://bit.ly/lfp-toolkit) is an instructional design process that is targeted to fix a performance problem or gap when health workers lack the essential skills and knowledge for a specific job responsibility, competency, or task. The *Learning for Performance* (LFP) process combines experience in two key areas: performance improvement and instructional design. This process can be used to develop learning interventions of any scale.

THE LFP STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

LFP uses a step-by-step process with practical tools. As the development team follows the process, it is often appropriate to go back to an earlier step and refine the outputs to make the education or training program focused, efficient, and effective. The LFP process is flexible; depending on the situation, it may be possible to use only portions of the process, or enter the process at steps other than the first step. Experience shows that the first few steps usually occur in tandem.

1. Specify the learning goal related to the gap in skills and knowledge

2. Learn about the learners and their work setting

3. Identify existing resources and requirements for training and learning

4. Determine job responsibilities (or competencies) and major job tasks related to the gap in skills and knowledge

5. Specify essential skills and knowledge

6. Write learning objectives

7. Decide how to assess learning objectives

8. Select the learning activities, materials, and approaches and create the instructional strategy

9. Develop, pretest, and revise lessons, learning activities and materials, and learning assessment instruments

10. Prepare for implementation

11. Implement and monitor learning and logistics

12. Assess effectiveness of the learning intervention and revise.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

LFP places learning interventions in the context of performance improvement, a method of analyzing performance problems, determining the missing factors that lead to these problems, and setting up systems to improve and support worker performance. Performance improvement is based on addressing the factors that need to be in place for workers to perform their jobs to standard. There is some evidence that attention to the performance factors can also improve job satisfaction and retention.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Instructional design is a systematic five-phase process used worldwide in health, education, business, and industry to develop training and educational programs. LFP applies the five phases of instructional design—analyze, design, develop, implement, and evaluate—and strengthens the relevance and efficiency of the learning by systematically linking the curriculum content and learning methods to the job tasks, the specific learners, and specific work contexts. This results in better transfer of learning to improved performance on the job.

KEY BENEFITS

The LFP approach:

- Ties learning to specific, identified job responsibilities and competencies, which is especially beneficial in task-shifting

- Eliminates unnecessary topics from training, which reduces curriculum bloat

- Identifies the most appropriate ways to develop health workers (approaches, methods, assessments, etc.)

- Incorporates skills practice and application of skills and knowledge that are directly linked to the worker's job situation

- Addresses the performance factors that determine whether new skills and knowledge can be applied on the job (transfer of learning).

TOOLKIT

Access the complete LFP guide and toolkit in English (http://bit.ly/lfp-toolkit), French (http://bit.ly/lfp-french), or Spanish (http://bit.ly/lfp-spanish), and explore the interactive website (http://bit.ly/lfp-web). Microsoft Word versions of the tools are available in English, French, and Spanish.