

Lesson Plan 17: Trainer Identity**1 hr 10 minutes****Lesson Description**

In this lesson, trainers discuss different aspects of their identity and consider how their identity influences their interactions with participants. Understanding how identity affects group dynamics is important for creating a safe learning environment.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this session participants will be able to:

1. Examine the elements of their identity.
2. Analyze how a trainer's identity influences participants' perceptions of them.
3. Analyze how a trainer's identity can influence their perception of participants.

Materials

- Optional: Puppets from Day 5 Intro Activity or 1 piece of blank paper per participant
- 1 Copy of *Power Flower* per participant (See lesson plan)
- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Pens/pencils

Preparation

- Read and prepare lesson plan
- Prepare flip charts with:
 - Power Flower*
 - Identity Triangle*
- Write questions from *Power Flower* topic (see below) on a piece of flip chart paper
- Write learning outcomes on the flip chart

Introduction**Option A****5 minutes**

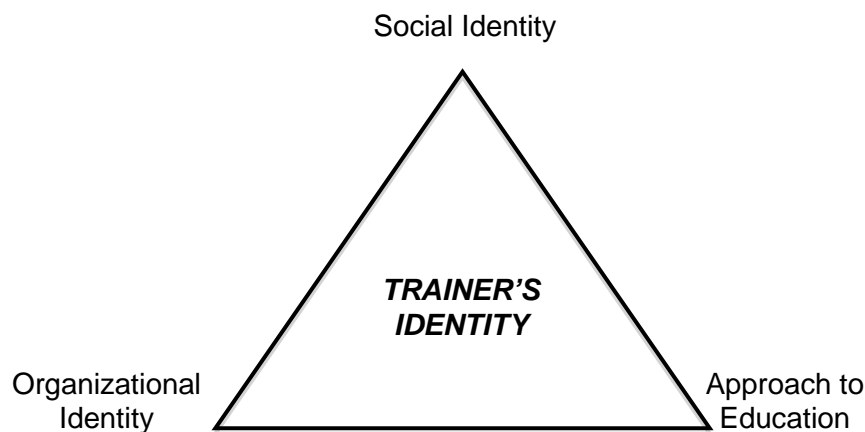
1. Ask participants: "What affects your first impressions of a person?" Record ideas on the flip chart.
2. Explain that participants and trainers have preconceived notions about each other as soon as they meet. A trainer's identity affects how participants react to them and how they respond to the information in a workshop. A trainer's identity also affects how the trainer perceives and responds to participants.

Option B**15 minutes**

1. Ask participants to select one of the puppets created during the opening activity. They should not select their own puppet.
2. Ask participants to guess who their puppet belongs to, then explain the following in the large group:
 - "Which features of the puppet helped you recognize the person who made it?"
 - "How did you decide which features to put on your puppet?"
3. Explain that the puppets are representations of different aspects of our identity. This lesson examines how identity influences our work as trainers.
4. Present the learning outcomes or lesson description.

Identity Triangle**25 minutes**

1. Tell the participants: "Trainers will be more effective if they are aware of their own identity and how it affects their perceptions."
2. Explain that one tool we can use to understand our identity is the *Identity Triangle*. Put the *Identity Triangle* on the flip chart.

Identity Triangle

(Adapted from Arnold et al., 1991)

3. Tell participants that the triangle represents 3 aspects of identity: social, organizational, and approach to education.
4. Ask participants: "How would you define each of these types of identity?" Write down key words from their answers on the flip chart. Add any missing details.

- **Social identity** considers your race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, gender etc.
- **Organizational identity** has two parts. The first is how the reputation and the internal values and beliefs of an organization influence an employee's perception of themselves, and the perception that other people have of them. The second is whether or not we are part of the organization we are working with. Our "insider" or "outsider" status influences how we are perceived by participants and the level of flexibility and influence we have in our work.
- **Approach to education** is about the values that we bring to our work and what we believe our role as a trainer should be (Arnold et al., 1991). Approaches to education can be divided into 3 main categories. Write down the categories on the triangle beside the phrase "Approach to education":

(1) In an expert approach knowledge is transferred in a one-way communication from the trainer to the participant. Active learning techniques are rarely used, and lectures are the predominant form of teaching. This technique is commonly used in many colleges and universities. It is also known as a passive or traditional approach to teaching.

(2) A participatory approach to education and training places a high value on the experience and prior knowledge of participants, and acknowledges their potential and diversity. Active learning techniques are used to share information and learn new knowledge, skills and attitudes. The trainer and participant learn from each other, and together develop a shared understanding of a particular topic

(3) A transformative approach to education and training does more than teach people knowledge and skills, it aims to change peoples' attitudes and behaviors by challenging their worldview and perspective. This fundamental change in the way that people think and act is achieved by using participatory techniques and encouraging deep reflection.

Trainers may use all of these approaches to training in their work, but may be more comfortable with one approach over another. Similarly, participants may have more comfort or experience with a specific approach. The approach we identify with most is considered our approach to education.

Power Flower

25 minutes



1. Pass out a *Power Flower* to each of the participants and post the large version of the *Power Flower* (drawn on a piece of flip chart) at the front of the room. Explain that the white petals of the *Power Flower* represent aspects of our social identity, the light grey is our approach to education, and the dark gray is our organizational identity.
2. Ask participants to fill in the inner petals of the *Power Flower*. Provide an example by filling in a few petals yourself on the *Power Flower* at the front of the room. An example of how to fill in the petals is shown below.
3. Once participants have finished filling in the inner petals, ask them to fill in the outer petals with the predominant identity of the people they train or will be training. If the

participants work with distinct groups of people have them fill in the outer petals individually. If they work with a similar demographic fill in the outer petals as a full group.

4. Once participants have filled in the outer petals, post the following questions on a piece of flip chart paper and ask participants to discuss them with a partner:
 - "How does your identity influence the way participants perceive you?"
 - "How does your identity influence your perception of participants?"
 - "How do the differences and similarities in the identities of you and your participants influence your work?"
 - "Given your participants' identities, what can you do to ensure a safe learning environment free of discrimination?"
5. Ask participants to share some responses in the full group.

Review**5 minutes**

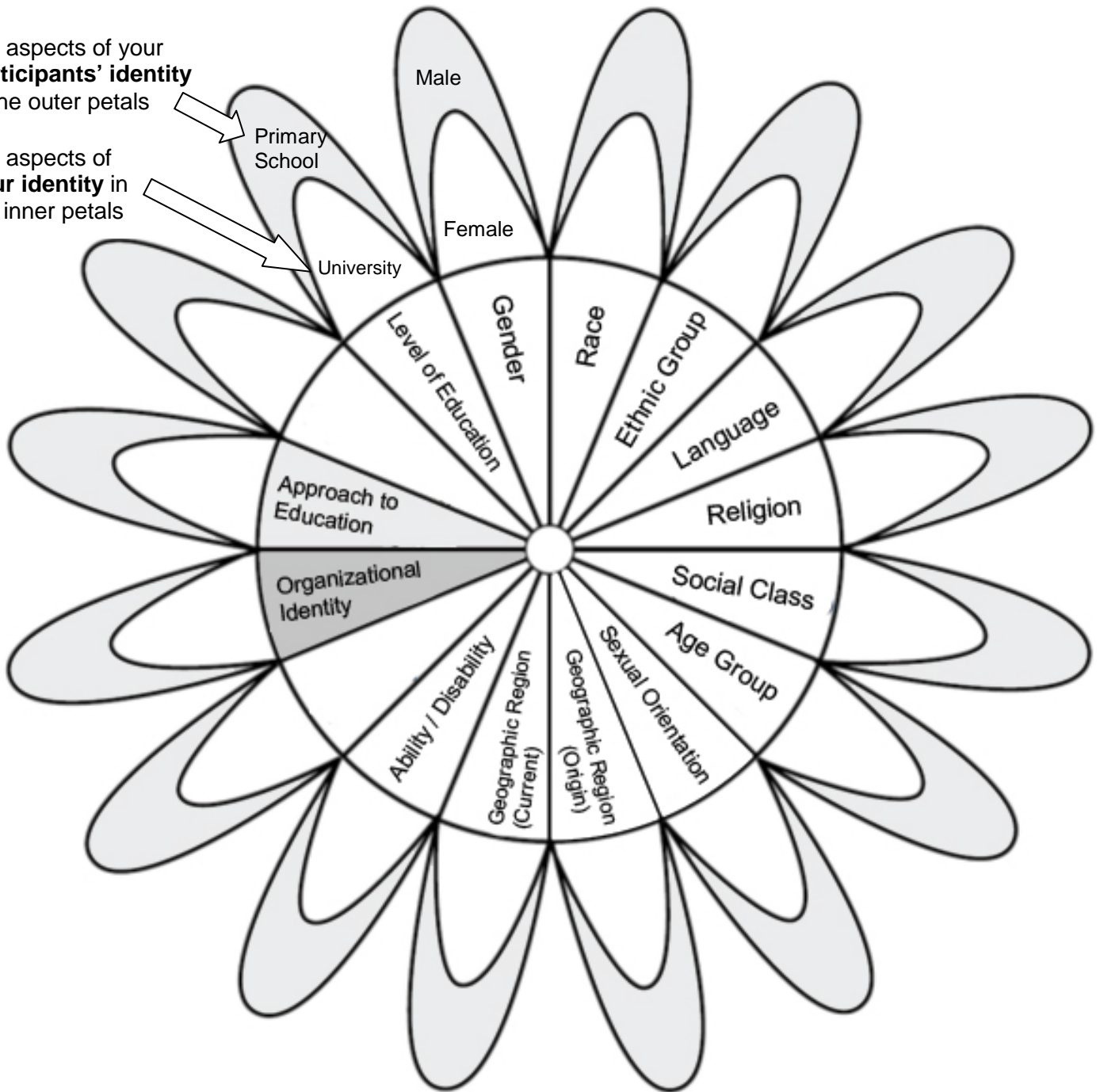
1. Ask participants to discuss with a partner:
"How will the information from this lesson influence you the next time you are training?"

Reflections on Lesson

Example Power Flower

Put aspects of your **participants' identity** in the outer petals

Put aspects of **your identity** in the inner petals



Power Flower

