LEARNER CENTRED LEARNING AND **TEACHING.**

In the traditional approach to school teaching, most class time is spent with the teacher lecturing and the students watching and listening. The students work individually on assignments, and cooperation is discouraged.

Student-centered learning (or student-centered learning; also called child-centered learning) is an approach to education focusing on the needs of the students, rather than those of others involved in the educational process, such as teachers and administrators.

Student-centered teaching methods shift the focus of activity from the teacher to the learners. These methods include active learning, in which students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions of their own, discuss, explain, debate, or brainstorm during class; cooperative learning, in which students work in teams on problems and projects under conditions that assure both positive interdependence and individual accountability; and inductive teaching and learning, in which students are first presented with challenges (questions or problems) and learn the course material in the context of addressing the challenges. Inductive methods include inquiry-based learning, case-based instruction, problem-based learning, project-based learning, discovery learning, and just-in-time teaching.

Student-centered learning, that is, putting students' needs first, is in contrast to traditional education, by proponents of "student-centered learning" also dubbed "teacher-centered learning". Student-centered learning is focused on each student's needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles, placing the teacher as a facilitator of learning. This classroom teaching method acknowledges student voice as central to the learning experience for every learner, and differs from many other learning methodologies. Teacher-centered learning has the teacher at its center in an active role and students in a passive, receptive role. Student-centered learning requires students to be active, responsible participants in their own learning.

In traditional education methodologies, teachers direct the learning process and students assume a receptive role in their education. Armstrong (2012) claimed that "traditional education ignores or suppresses learner responsibility". With the advent of progressive education in the 19th century, and the influence of psychologists, some educators have largely replaced traditional curriculum approaches with "hands-on" activities and "group work", in which a child determines on their own what they want to do in class. Key amongst these changes is the premise that students actively construct their own learning. Theorists like John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky, whose collective work focused on how students learn, is primarily responsible for the move to student-centered learning. Carl Rogers' ideas about the formation of the individual also contributed to student-centered learning.

Student-centred learning means inverting the traditional teacher-centered understanding of the learning process and putting students at the center of the learning process. Maria Montessori was also an influence in center-based learning, where preschool children learn through play.

Student-centred learning allows students to actively participate in discovery learning processes from an autonomous viewpoint. Students spend the entire class time constructing a new understanding of the material being learned in a proactive way. A variety of hands-on activities are administered in order to promote successful learning. Unique, yet distinctive learning styles are encouraged in a student-

centredclassroom, and provide students with varied tools, such as task- and learning-conscious methodologies, creating a better environment for students to learn.[1] With the use of valuable learning skills, students are capable of achieving lifelong learning goals, which can further enhance student motivation in the classroom.

In order for a teacher to facilitate a student-centred classroom, he or she must become aware of the diverse backgrounds of his or her learners. To that end, the incorporation of a few educational practices such as Bloom's Taxonomy and Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple intelligences can be beneficial to a student-centred classroom because it promotes various modes of diverse learning styles, thereby accommodating the varied learning styles of students.

Student-centered methods have repeatedly been shown to be superior to the traditional teacher-centered approach to instruction, a conclusion that applies whether the assessed outcome is short-term mastery, long-term retention, or depth of understanding of course material, acquisition of critical thinking or creative problem-solving skills, formation of positive attitudes toward the subject being taught, or level of confidence in knowledge or skills.

Why learner-centred learning?

- Strengthens student motivation by giving them some control over learning processes.
- Promotes peer communication
- Reduces disruptive behavior
- Builds student-teacher relationships
- Promotes discovery/active learning
- Responsibility for one's own learning
- Learner-centered teaching encourages students to reflect on what they are learning and how they are learning it.
- Learner-centered teaching includes explicit skill instruction. Learner-centered teachers teach students how to think, solve problems, evaluate evidence, analyze arguments, generate hypotheses—all those learning skills essential to mastering material in the discipline.

Things that should be considered when implementing this practice:

Because the focus is on individual students rather than whole class structures, teachers often offer choices and adaptations within lessons, which empower student growth. This is a role teachers must be comfortable with if they are to implement a student-centred learning environment. To be considered a student-centred learning environment it has to be open, dynamic, trusting, respectful, and promote children's subjective as well as objective learning styles. Students may collaborate in hands-on problems and draw their own conclusions, or develop their own learning based on self-direction. This experiential learning involves the whole child—their emotions, thoughts, social skills, and intuition. The result of student-centred learning is a person who arguably develops self-confident and critical thinking.

So below are some of the factors that teachers need to put into consideration while applying this method of learning but not only limited to those ones alone.

- What the child is curious about learning
- Teaching strategies to accommodate individual needs: intellectual, emotional

- Student's social needs: collaboration, communication, peer approval
- Curriculum goals overall
- Individual students learning styles.

Assessment of student-centred learning

For many years now, postsecondary educators have utilized a variety of student-centered learning methodologies to enhance student learning. (DeBoer, 2002; Norte, 2005; Scott & Buchanan, 1998). Unfortunately, many instructors who incorporate these approaches often use assessment methods designed for traditional teaching. Research shows, however, that assessment methods should also be student-centered (Ma & Zhou, 2000).

To be considered student-centered, the assessment technique should directly involve students in examining their own cognitive development by having them focus on learning first and the grade second (Pedersen & Liu, 2003). Strategies should be engaging and interactive while incorporating sharing, trusting, teambuilding, reflecting, helping, and coaching (Pitas, 2000).

Developing assessment that supports learning and motivation is essential to the success of student-centred approaches.

One of the main reasons teachers' resist student-centred learning is the view of assessment as problematic in practice. Since teacher-assigned grades are so tightly woven into the fabric of schools, expected by students, parents and administrators alike, allowing students to participate in assessment is somewhat contentious.

Thought must also be given as to whether student-centered assessments are individual, team-based, or a combination of the two.

Therefore, as a teacher/instructor you need to equip yourself with the skills and knowledge of assessment when using this method of teaching and learning. In assessment one is supposed to sit with the learner implying that it is something we do with and for learners and not to learners.

Teaching –learning methods that are child –centred.

Below are a number of teaching –learning methods that promote learner centred learning.

- Demonstration
- Asking questions
- Discussions
- Debate
- Group work
- Homework
- Guided learning

- Individual assignment
- Practical work
- Role play/Drama
- Simulation, etc.
- discovery / inquiry learning,
- problem-based learning,
- project-based learning,
- case-based teaching,
- Teaching with archival, botanical, and museum collections.
- pair work

1. Discovery/inquiry Learning

Definition

Discovery learning is an inquiry-based approach in which students are given a question to answer, a problem to solve, or a set of observations to explain, and then work in a largely self-directedmanner to complete their assigned tasks and draw appropriate inferences from the
outcomes, "discovering" the desired factual and conceptual knowledge in the process .

In thepurest form of this method, teachers set the problems and provide feedback on the students'efforts but do not direct or guide those efforts.

Note

- Some studies suggest that discovery learning can enhance students' retention of material.
- The studies that show a positive effect also suggest that retention is improved only when the learning task is based on previously understood principles.
- learning on the also learning new things or tasks this method is known to be the best or more efficient.

Inquiry learning and teaching method.

This is a student-centered method of learning and teaching focused on asking questions. Students are encouraged to ask questions which are meaningful to them, and which do not necessarily have easy answers; teachers are encouraged to avoid giving answers when this is possible, and in any case to avoid giving direct answers in favor of asking more questions.

Inquiry is the simplest of the learner- centred teaching approaches and might be the best one for inexperienced or previously traditional instructors to begin with. It requires designing instruction so that as much learning as possible takes place in the context of answering questions and solving problems.

As the students gain more experience with this approach, the instructor may increase the scope and difficulty of the focus questions, use more open-ended and ill-structured problems and simultaneously decrease the amount of explicit guidance
provided.

In an attempt to instill students with these qualities and behaviors, a teacher adhering to the inquiry method in pedagogy must behave very differently from a traditional teacher.

The teachers to practice this method should be able to portray the following characteristics below;

- ✓ They should avoid telling students what they "ought to know".
- ✓ They should talk to students mostly by questioning, and especially by asking divergent questions.
- ✓ They should not accept short, simple answers to questions.
- ✓ They should encourage students to interact directly with one another, and avoid judging what is said in student interactions.
- ✓ They should not summarize students' discussion.
- ✓ They should not plan the exact direction of their lessons in advance, and allow it to develop in response to students' interests.
- ✓ Their lessons should pose problems to students.
- ✓ They should gauge their success by change in students' inquiry behaviors (with the above characteristics of "good learners" as a goal).

How the teacher can facilitate the class when using this method?

- Acting as facilitators rather than directors of students' learning
- Providing a variety of materials and resources to facilitate students' investigations
- Modeling inquiry behaviors and skills
- Posing thoughtful, open-ended questions and helping students do the same
- Encouraging dialogue among students and with the teacher
- Keeping children's natural curiosity alive and as a teacher, remaining a curious, life-long learner
- good relationship with students

2. Problem –based learning and teaching (PBL).

It is a student-centered method of teaching and learning in which students learn about a subject through the experience of problem solving. Students learn both thinking strategies and domain knowledge. The goals of PBL are to help the students develop flexible knowledge, effective problem solving skills, self-directed learning, effective collaboration skills and intrinsic motivation.

Problem-based learning is the most complex and difficult to implement of the methods of learner-centred learning. It calls for a complex, open-ended,authentic problem whose solution requires knowledge and skills specified in the learning objectives.

PBL also requires considerable teaching skillsfor instructors to deal with unfamiliar technical questions and problems, student resistance and possibly hostility toward PBL, and the array of interpersonal problems that frequently arise when students work in teams.

Despite the challenges, PBL is a natural environment in which to develop students' professional skills such as problem-solving, team work and self-directed or lifelong learning, and it provides an excellent format to integrate material from across the curriculum.

What is expected of a teacher in order to use this practice?

1. Prepare class for change

2. Establish working group

4. Seeking Advice from Experts in PBL

5. Planning, Organizing and Managing

6. Training PBL facilitators and defining the objectives of a facilitator

7. Introducing Students to the PBL Program

9. Changing the assessment to suit the PBL

10. Encouraging feedback from students and teaching staff

11. Managing learning resources and facilities that support self-directed learning

12. Continuing evaluation and making changes

Note; An example of a PBL group (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Awesome_PBL_group.jpg)

3. Teaching with archival, botanical, and museum collections

Teaching with archival, botanical, and museum collections can help students to evaluate evidence in primary documents, develop skills in visual and contextual analysis, collect and examine raw data, extract and synthesize information from a large amount of undifferentiated material, and correlate different sources in order to make informed arguments.

This is a good method of teaching and learning because it can be applied from primary pupils up to the university level. Infact this is the one of the methods that is supported by the government especially with the teaching of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and the history and culture of Rwanda.

4. Group work

Group work usually involves groups of students formally working together on projects or assignment, though it may sometimes take place in formal classroom settings.

Good practice guidelines for group work

Student Engagement and preparation:

- **Consider student ability to engage in group work.** Group work may prove more difficult for some students.
- **Clarify expectations and learning outcomes of group work with you and your students**. This enables student preparation and focus.
- **Consider your student's formal teaching timetable when deciding on the quantity of group work to include**. Remember, the less free time your students have, the harder it will be for them to organise times when all group members are free.
- **Consider group size.** The group size can contribute greatly to group dynamics. A smaller group may find it easier to gel, allowing for participation from more reserved students. However, a larger group may allow for greater synergies as it incorporates a greater range of strengths and perspectives. When planning group work, you can reflect on the size that will best suit your outcomes.
- **Give clear instructions before they form their groups.**

Group work facilities:

- **Ensure your students have access to facilities in which to conduct group work.**
- **Consider whether your group work pre-supposes access to resources that may create difficulties for students**. For example, will students need access to:
    - Library books that cannot be checked out by undergraduates,
    - An internet connection,
    - A colour printer?

Who may have difficulty engaging with group work?

- **Students with English as a second language** may find it harder to engage in group discussions.
- **Students with significant external responsibilities** (for example, those with young children), or those on placements, may find it difficult to ensure availability for group work outside of timetabled hours.
- **Students who lack confidence** may find it difficult to contribute to group discussions.

Advantages of working in groups.

- It leads to active learning hence deeper learning.
- Students feel less isolated
- Encourages development of critical thinking
- Students get involved and in their own learning.
- Promotes social skills and interactions
- Depending on the task it may be possible to divide the work and share the load.
- Quiet students have an opportunity to speak and be heard in small groups thus overcoming the anonymity and passivity associated with large groups.
- Gives a chance to students to learn from each other.

Disadvantages

- Individual students will have less control over the overall task than if they were completing it alone.
- There is always of group members who are overly dominant, who don't or contribute little and some who may fail to contribute all.
- Some students especially the clever ones feel that they could have attained a higher marker if had worked alone.
- Time consuming if not well monitored.
- Stubborn students tend to lose focus of the activity.

5. Demonstration method.

The demonstration method is best used in teaching learners how to perform manipulative operations.

Demonstrations are valuable tools for teaching both concrete techniques (skills) and abstractconcepts (principles). A good demonstration allows a student to learn by observation, a skill we use innately when learning to talk, walk and even clap our hands. They can be used to teach techniques like conducting a counseling session, using a computer program. They can also be used to help students learn concepts like profit margin in economics, Boyle's law in chemistry, or probability in mathematics.

The process of giving a demonstration

The presenter should try a dry run on any demonstration prior to actually giving it. The dry run should follow the steps to be followed or used in the actual demonstration.

1. Orient the learners to the demonstration i.e. explain what is to be demonstrated and how it relates to what they are learning.
2. Learners should be shown what the demonstration is going to achieve if possible.
3. The teacher should show and describe the resources and materials to be used.The group can be asked to name and describe equipment and materials needed with the presenter producing the items as they are named. The presenter can finish by showing items not named by the group.
4. Give the demonstration, each step and important point should be identified and listed. Care must be taken to show and explain each step in a way learners can see and understand.
5. Summarize as needed, depending on the situation and learner objectives, the presenter may be directed to perform the activity demonstrated.

Advantages of Demonstration method:

- It saves time in presenting,
- It concentrates attention of learners on relationships to be understood,
- It makes efficient use of "power of observation,"
- It is a means of strong motivation, and
- It can be used in training groups or individuals.

Disadvantages of Demonstration

- Demonstration is not effective when the number of students is greater
- It provides no scope for 'learning by doing' for students as students just observe what the teacher is performing. Thus students fail to relish the joys of direct personal experience.
- Since the teacher performs the experiment in his own pace, many students cannot comprehend the concept being clarified.
- Since the method is not child centered it makes no provision for individual differences. All types of students including slow learners and genius have to proceed with the same speed.
- (iv)It fails to develop laboratory skills in the students. It cannot work as a substitute for laboratory work by students in which they are required to handle the apparatus themselves.

6. Question and answer method.

Asking and answering questions is a form of active learning that has a place within any classroom setting. Questions asked by the teacher/instructor can involve students more fully in a lesson, leading to deeper understanding of subject material. Questions asked by students offer an opportunity to clarify material and they also provide feedback for the teacher/ instructor.

Why do teachers/ instructors ask questions?

- To see what students have learned -- from the last activity, from the lesson, from their reading, from their last assignment, from the previous ten minutes of discussion.

- To start a discussion -- to prompt a debate, to help students develop their analytic faculties
  For example: *'What other approaches did the teacher/instructor suggest to this question?', 'Manzi, would you please make the case for that view, while Butare opposes it?'*
- To answer them -- to give appropriate additional input, to introduce a mini-presentation on something which is obviously causing problems for most of the group, to show how clever they are
  For example: *'So how can we pull these conflicting views together?, Well, we could start by'*

  Good questions and helping students to ask them.

What is a good question? At the moment, I hope, that's a good question! Why? Because a good question may be one that:

- The questioner really wants answered, now (good questions are therefore personal,)
- Opens up a subject, or other possibilities
- Explicitly builds on current knowledge
- Provokes a response from colleagues
- Makes its presuppositions explicit
- Leads the learner through a chain of reasoning.

Different types of questions tend to prompt different kinds of answers, and hence different kinds of learning. The following list suggests what kinds of questions prompt what kinds of learning.

Description	Who? What? Where? When?
Comprehension	How? Can you describe that in another way?
Application	How? In what ways? How could you use that theory to explain?
Analysis	Why? How does this contrast with? What are the key elements of this problem?
Synthesis	How can you put these ideas together?
Evaluation	How would you judge how effective this is going to be? What criteria would you use to compare a range of?

As you move down the list, you are requiring more advanced intellectual skills.

Responding to students questions

There are two main kinds of responses to students' questions:

(1) Answer the question, and
(2) Help the students to answer the question for themselves.

Answering the question

You have to decide in how much detail to answer. A good first step is to check that you have understood the question -- a brilliant five-minute answer to the wrong question won't be much use! *'So are you asking..?'* is a useful start to such a checking question.

Once you have the question clear, try a short answer and then check whether this does it for the questioner. It often does. If it doesn't, you should check how many other people have this question now, before you launch into a longer answer. (If the question interests only one person, it may be best answered at the end of the session.) As well as giving an answer, also tell the questioner where they can find more information.

Not answering the question

You will have met this favorite teacher's trick. *'That's a really interesting question. What do you think? What do the others think?'* Reflecting the question back to the questioner carries a number of messages. It suggests that questioning is an important part of learning. It suggests that learning can be a collaborative enterprise. It suggests that learning is sometimes a matter of constructing and even negotiating meaning, rather than receiving wisdom from an expert.

(It may also suggest that you don't know the answer. If this is the case, say so. Admitting to not knowing also carries the message that it's OK not to know Ð as long as you can offer a way to find out.)

Vary your approach. Try *'Could you try putting that question in another way?'* or even *'What would make a satisfactory answer for you to that question?'* Each discipline has its own kinds of useful supplementary questions. You're trying to help the students to find ways in which they can move towards an answer, based on what they already know. You're modeling the way you think in your subject. Do this explicitly.

How do you decide which approach to use?

Answering the question conveys information and meets the students' immediate expressed need. Not answering the question helps the students to reflect on and extend their current understanding.

Which approach you use depends on which of these outcomes you think is the most important at the time? Too much 'not answering' can annoy students and reduce their confidence in your subject expertise. Too much 'answering' can convert them into fact-collecting robots! In each session you need to use both approaches. You may be tempted to start by answering their questions and then move to encouraging them to work on the questions themselves. This is not recommended. It can set up the expectation that your role is to answer questions. Your role is to answer some of their questions, and also to help them learn to ask questions and answer them for themselves.

About this method a renowned author says, "If the teacher does not know the answer he should admit it and either he ask the students to find it in the text-book or offer to find out the answer himself. No teacher can answer all the question which can be asked in yes or no. The students should be asked such questions which compel them to think the matter over. If the students

cannot answer the question fully, his partial answer should be accepted and another student may be asked to improve upon it. The teacher himself be in regular habit of reading latest texts as students should also be asked to find answers in authoritative texts".

In this method the teacher controls the situation. Generally informal lesson is developed by means of question-answer method.

Advantages of Question-Answer Method

(i) It can be used in all teaching situations.

(ii) It helps in developing the power of expression of the students.

(iii) It is helpful to ascertain the personal difficulties of the students.

(iv) It provides a check on preparation of assignments.

(v) It can be used to reflect student's background and attitude.

(vi) It is quite handy to the teacher when no other suitable teaching method is available.

Disadvantages

(i) It requires a lot of skill on the part of teacher to make a proper use of this method.

(ii) It may sometime disorganise the atmosphere of the class.

(iii) This method generally is quite embracing for timid students.

(iv) It is time consuming

Learning must be an active process. Asking a question is an action; answering a question is an action; debating what makes a good question or an acceptable answer is also an action, and can be an intellectually and personally challenging one. I hate tortured metaphors, but I sometimes see a question mark as a hook which engages thought and action. Do you?

7. <u>Role- play method</u>

Role play simulation is a learning method that depends on role playing. Learners take on the role profiles of specific characters or organisations in a contrived setting. Role play is designed primarily to build first person experience in a safe and supportive environment. Role play is widely acknowledged as a powerful teaching technique in face-to-face teaching.

The problem of teaching real or pure, undiluted information is that afterwards, the students, if they paid attention, will be left asking “what is it for? What does it mean?” Role- play enables them to start

answering these questions and to start expanding them: “what does it mean to a farmer in Rwanda, to a coal miner in Ohio, to an oak population in the Balkans.” information, alone, rarely makes people change their minds, but personal experiences often does. Role playing, like any other good method, transforms the content of education from information into experience.

When we are young, we learn by mimicking, playing, and experimentation. As our language skills develop and formal schooling kicks in, these strategies are replaced by language-based learning, which can dampen our curiosity and motivation to learn. Role play simulation aims to revive the ease and joy of experiential learning.

Role play simulation models human interactions (allowing the players to role play) in a constructed environment by:

- creating an artificial social structure (or simulating some known social structure)
- enforcing the social structure
- Providing plausible scenarios for players to respond react and enroll to.

Why should a teacher use role playing?

A. motivating students

 the creative aspect of the exercise will make it seem more like play than like work.

 the pressure to solve a problem or to resolve a conflict for their character can motivate a student far more than the sort of pressure that they usually face preparing for an exam, and it is far more typical of the pressure that will be on them in real life.

 Role-playing exercises are particularly useful in courses for non-majors to emphasize the intersection between science and daily life. Popular geoscience role-playing scenarios generally deal with hazards and environmental issues that combine natural and social sciences.

 the primary purpose of role-playing exercises is to get students to look at the material they are learning in a new light. The instructor is persuading them to alter their mental maps of the world instead of just filling them in (Blatner, 2002).

 Role-playing exercises show the world as a complex place with complicated problems that can only rarely be solved by a simple answer that the student has previously memorized (Cage, 1997).

 Additionally, the students learn that skills they learn separately (such as quantitative and communications skills) are often used together in order to accomplish many real-world tasks (Bair, 2000).

 Adding a sympathetic, generally human element to science is often encouraging to students with science and math anxiety. Lessons can use role-playing to emphasize the value of feelings and of creativity as well as of knowledge (Dallmann-Jones, 1994).

 Exercises emphasizing the importance of people and their viewpoints are important preparation for students who will go on in many professions, including business, academia, and politics.

 Students need to understand the needs and perspectives of the people around them to get through life, and to understand themselves.

 Role-playing exercises can be used to develop skills important inside and outside of science: the kind of skills needed to make learned information useful in the real world. Many of these are very difficult to teach using more traditional methods of instruction: self-awareness, problem solving, communication, initiative, teamwork (Blatner, 2002).

 If an assignment includes research or problem solving, students are more likely to retain knowledge that they have constructed themselves more than that simply handed to them in lecture (Havholm, 1998 ; Duveen and Solomon, 1994).

 Bonnet, 2000 tried, with some success, to instill ethics in school children using role-playing.

How does role-play work?

The choice of the role-play relies on the learning agenda and has to have clear aims and objectives. There are various ways role-play can work.

a) Observation: learning through observation and reflection happens when a group of learners watch a specifically constructed role-play using actors, simulators or even played by the tutors.

b) Modelling: Helps to learn a concept or an idea through participation. For example children can learn about history and historical figures by acting out scenes. While adults can participate in a constructed scenario- like an angry customer, worried patients etc.

c) Contemplation: It helps to stimulate analysis through exploring complex concepts and debating issues- usually ethical problems where there is no clear right or wrong.

d) Skills development: The participant can practice and develop skills such as breaking bad news, calming down an angry client, negotiating with customers etc.

e) Self-reflection: through participating in role-play the learners bring many of their hidden attitudes to the surface and it helps them understand their own prejudices biases and assumptions. It helps to see the world through the other person's eyes and understand methods of communicating.

f) Re-enaction (is one of the possible ways of organizing knowledge and one of the forms of interaction with the world): By re-enacting a past experience it helps to bring recall, catharsis and also helps to identify creative solutions to a problem that could have previously been difficult due to emotional

Constructing a role-play

Role-plays can be simple or complex, short or long and can be adapted to suit the needs of what is being taught or explored. If it is a simple skills being practiced we can set the scene quickly and let the participants practice.

The key steps in constructing a role-play are:

- Define Aims and Objectives (is it to practice skills, explore concepts etc.)
- Define setting/placement
- Define clear role descriptors and what they will say (at least an outline)
- Define time limit
- Define observer tasks (if any)
- Define ground rules of safety and feedback
- Define debrief agenda
- Define facilitator tasks

What a teacher or instructor needs to put into consideration when using this approach?

- As a teacher/trainer or a facilitator, we need to keep the time (and also prepare to call time out if things get out of hand!) We need to be observant and we need to take notes for feedback. We can ask observers to do the same. The feedback should be objective and based on observed facts.
- If it's a group ensure the participants in the role-play are physically separated from the observers and are set close enough to be observed but far enough to give a semblance of a stage.
- Be watchful for any participants going off the script and becoming too inventive- this may hijack the agreed agenda and also confuse the other participant(s) this is why very clear descriptors for the role and what the role has to say will be useful.
- etc.

Advantages and Disadvantages of role – playing

Advantages of Role-Play

i. Energizing activity / fun to do.
ii. Allows participants to contribute actively (even the quieter ones) .
iii. It is Time efficient.
iv. Experiential learning is more powerful than instructions.
v. It delivers complex concepts in a simple manner.
vi. Needs little preparation for the teacher/facilitator (unless you want to print out role descriptors).

Disadvantages

i. Participants may be too shy and reluctant.
ii. Can be threatening to some.
iii. It can become 'too much fun' and disrupt the task.
iv. Participants can get too involved and loose objectivity.
v. Participants can overact (to exaggerate the role) and show off; the observers may not observe well or take notes.
vi. The observers may take 'sides' based on their preconceptions.

Finally role-play is a powerful and effective teaching method for children and adult and can be adapted to deliver any learning objectives from simple to complex concepts. IT really lends well to practice communication skills, debate complex ethical issues or explore attitudes and beliefs. The success lies in the construction and delivery with careful facilitation.