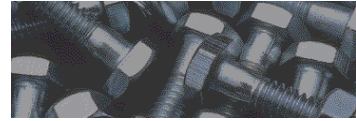# NUTS AND BOLTS OF THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The curriculum development process can be categorized into five basic steps: 1) needs assessment, 2) the planning session, 3) content development, 4) pilot delivery and revision, and 5) the completed curriculum package.

The ideal situation is to have, at a minimum, 12 - 18 months to design and develop a curriculum. This allows time for a planning session(s), follow-up meetings and/or mechanisms for continued work, a pilot of the original program design, revisions based upon the pilot, and another delivery of the revised program.

As a general benchmark, it takes 6 to 25 times the length of the completed curriculum to develop the content focus areas, including gathering data and research, holding a planning session(s), designing instructional strategies and preparing participant materials and visual aids.

For example, for a 36-hour training program, you should allow between 90 and 900 hours (11 to 112 eight-hour days) of development time, dependent upon the complexity of the issue(s) to be addressed through the training program, and the expected outcomes of the program.

The completed curriculum package should include, at a minimum:

Lesson Plans and other instructional materials in the ITIP (Instructional Theory Into Practice) format: see *OJJDP Training and TA Protocols* for a sample.

Training Aids (including computer view graph presentations, overhead transparency masters, videotapes, etc.) to complement the content and increase transfer and retention of the learning.

Step One: Needs Assessment

Needs Assessment data helps the **Curriculum Design and Development Team** (CDDT) to fully understand the intent of, and expectations for the completed curriculum. It should answer the following questions for those charged with developing the training program:

1.   What is the purpose of the new training program? Who is the audience? How long is the training program envisioned to be? Is this envisioned to be a program delivered by experienced facilitators or by agency personnel (not necessarily trainers or facilitators)?

2.   How was this determined as a need to be satisfied by a curriculum being developed to offer training on the issue? (The answers to this question will affect the design of training activities and content exploration strategies.)

3.   What are the outcomes expected of the curriculum?

        *   To train others to be trainers? (Capacity building)
        *   To train agencies or organizations on an emerging trend or issue?
        *   To add to the body of curriculum around a certain subset of the issue?
        *   Other reasons?

Steps Two and Three: The Planning Session and Content Development

The Planning Session and Content Development steps typically occur in tandem. It is during the planning session that discussions occur about the content that is to be developed and delivered in the curriculum.

The Role of the Curriculum Design and Development Team (CDDT)

The team actively participates in the design and development of the curriculum. A typical team is composed of content experts and/or contributors, curriculum and training design experts, and a team coordinator who facilitates the process, and manages administrative issues related to the design process.

For example, for a 36-hour curriculum, consider engaging the services of two to four content experts, one to two curriculum design experts, and one team coordinator (typically a representative of the OJJDP grantee or contractor). The Team Coordinator

should be familiar with the needs assessment data, the curriculum's purpose, and expectations of the outcomes from the development of the curriculum.

The Planning Session(s)

The team should meet at least once for a **Planning Session**, the initial phase of the curriculum design process. Planning sessions can be from one to four days or longer, dependent upon the complexity of the training program and the expected length of the program. For example, for a 36-hour training program, a two-to three-day planning session would help the group begin to form as a team, understand and clarify the expectations placed upon them, and provide face-to-face opportunities for beginning creation of a content outline creation.

Typical outcomes from a planning session should include:

* Overall expected program outcomes
* Outline of major content focus areas (as specific as possible)
* Suggested instructional strategies for each content area
* Draft outline of the training program agenda (including tentative blocks of time for each content area)
* Draft performance objectives for each content area
* Content development assignments with time frames for completion

The team coordinator should share information and samples of the format for lesson plans, participant materials and training and visual aids, as well as how the materials should be submitted (on disk or CD in a certain computer format, camera-ready hard copy, etc.)

If the CDDT team can only meet once, it is important to spend time discussing and setting up alternative communication mechanisms so the team can continue to progress toward the curriculum design deadline. Scheduling regular conference calls including transcript notes and using e-mail and voice mail systems can assist the team in working together if geographically separated.

Step Three: Content Development

This is the work that is generated as a result of the Planning Session, and is the heart of the curriculum development process. In this step performance objectives are finalized for each content area, instructional strategies are developed for each performance objective, and as a result, lesson plans, participant materials and training aids are developed by the team to guide participants to successfully meet the expected program outcomes and module performance objectives. This is the piece of the curriculum development process that is the most lengthy.

For example, for a 36-hour curriculum, with a medium level of complexity in terms of content, it may take from 30 to 60 content development days to successfully design and research content areas, instructional strategies, create lesson plans in the ITIP format, and design complementing participant materials and training aids.

Step Four: Pilot Delivery and Revision

In this step, the curriculum is piloted with a sample of the target audience to validate the content, instructional strategies, and expected outcomes of the training program. There should be complete lesson plans, participant materials and training aids (visuals such as overhead transparencies, computer view graph/presentations, handouts, etc.) to test during the pilot delivery. In essence the pilot delivery is the "test drive" of the curriculum to determine whether it meets expected outcomes.

Key focus areas on which to collect data on during the pilot delivery are:

– Does this meet the learning needs of the audience around this issue(s)?(Mechanisms to collect this are end-of-day reaction sheets/tools, end-of-course evaluations, and trainer observation of learners. Having an end-of-program product such as an Action Planning tool to implement changes around curriculum focus issue(s) is also a useful measure.)

– Are the lesson plans and other trainer materials complete enough to guide their effective use with a group in training? (That is, are the instructions clear and complete? Are all materials sequenced with participant manual and materials?, Do the training aids and other visuals enhance learner focus and retention?, etc.)

–   Do the instructional strategies piloted help learners successfully complete the performance objectives? Do they need to be modified/revised/changed to be effective?
–   What is the actual number of trainers/facilitators needed to effectively deliver the program as designed? What types of expertise and experience should the team have to be effective?

–   Other data relevant to the effectiveness of the program. (Was the time for each module sufficient? Was the sequencing of the learning appropriate?, etc.)

In an ideal situation, there would be time between the pilot delivery and the due date of the curriculum project for revisions and another delivery to occur.

Step Five: The Completed Curriculum Package

The validated curriculum package contains all materials necessary in order to deliver the curriculum to its target audience. A comprehensive package should include master copies of all lesson plans and trainer materials (including suggested preparation methods, trainer qualifications to deliver the program, etc.), participant manual and complementing materials, and training and visuals aids developed for the curriculum (slide shows, transparencies, etc.).

At this point in the development process, the curriculum is validated and is ready for further training program delivery and distribution.

BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR EACH STEP OF THE PROCESS

Planning for expenditures to support curriculum development is an important part of the development process. The following is an example of the budget for a 36-hour curriculum development process of a low-to medium-complexity curriculum, using basic professional fee and per diem estimates. The amounts used are estimates only.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Topic for development identified through the use of various processes	$ 20,000
Total Estimated Expenses for Needs Assessment Phase (dependent upon needs assessment mechanisms)	**$ 0 - 20,000**

PLANNING SESSION

2 days, on-site at Grantee/Contractor Administrative Offices

3 content experts at $350/day x 2 days on-site	$2,100
3 content experts at $350/day @ 1 day travel to & 1 day travel from planning session site	$2,100
1 curriculum developer at $350/day @ 2 days on site	$ 700
1 curriculum developer @ $350/day @ 1 day travel to & 1 day travel from site	$ 700
1 day of preparation (to gather data, ideas, etc.) to share) x 4 team members x $350/day	$1,400
Team Coordinator (if an employee of the OJJDP grantee or contractor)	$ 0

Team Coordinator (if contracted by grantee or
contractor) @ $350/day x 6 days (1 day prep,
2 days on-site, 2 days travel to and return) $2,100

Team Lodging @ $79/day x 3 nights x 4 people $ 880

Team Coordinator Lodging (if not employee)
@$79/day x 3 nights $ 225

Meals and Miscellaneous Expenses @ $42/day
for 4 days for 4 team members $ 672

Meals and Miscellaneous Expenses for Team
Coordinator @$42/day for 4 days $ 168

Travel Expenses to and from Meeting Site
for 5 people at $500/each* $2,500

Site for 2 day meeting (if at offices of grantee
or contractor) $ 0

Site for 2 day meeting (use of a hotel meeting
room or conference center @ $50 - $150/day) $100 - $300

* Estimated average round trip air fare

Total Estimated Expenses for a Planning Session **$ 13,845**

DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM AFTER PLANNING SESSION

Content & Training Strategies Development Days
as a Result of the Planning Session (12 - 30 days)
@ $350/day+ $4,200 - $10,500

+ Development days would be assigned by the team coordinator
to various team members dependent upon content/program development expertise and
responsibilities.

Miscellaneous Expenses Related to Curriculum $1,500

Development (Printing, Postage, Telephone Calls, Audio-Conferences, etc.

Total Estimated Expenses for Development Phase   <u>**$ 5,700 - 12,000**</u>

PILOT DELIVERY OF NEW CURRICULUM
(Trainers' expenses, fees and materials only for a 36-hour delivery)

2 - 4 Trainers Fees for 8 days @$350/day (2 days of preparation, 1 day travel to site, 4 days on site, 1 day travel return)	$ 5,600 - 11,200
Expenses (Lodging) for 2 - 4 Trainers @ $79/day for 5 nights	$ 790 - 1,580
Meals and Miscellaneous Expenses for 2 - 4 Trainers @ $42/day for 6 days	$ 504 - 1,008
Transportation Costs for 2 - 4 Trainers to and from training site @ $500/each	$ 1,000 - 2,000
Materials (Participant Manuals and Materials, printing, audio-visual equipment rental, office supplies, etc.)	$ 750
Space Rental for Training Program* (1 main training room (1,200 sq ft minimum for 24 - 30 participants, 2 adjacent breakout rooms @400 sq ft)	$ 0 - 1,000+

* Training space costs range from no cost at some juvenile justice training academies and universities to $1,000 and up for hotel or conference center space, dependent upon space requirements.

TOTAL Estimated Expenses of a Pilot Delivery   <u>**$ 8,644 – 17,538**</u>

REVISION OF TRAINING PROGRAM BASED UPON THE RESULTS OF THE PILOT

Revision Work on Curriculum Package
(Will vary dependent upon the complexity
of the topic and the success of the pilot)
1 - 10 days $350/day $350 - $3,500

Miscellaneous Expenses related to
revision (printing, postage, etc.) $1,000

TOTAL Estimated Expenses of the Revision Step   **$1,350 - $4,500**

COMPLETED CURRICULUM PACKAGE

Curriculum Package
(distribution of package only with no revisions
from the pilot) $2,500

Curriculum Package (second delivery of $8,494 -16,488
revised program using 2 - 4 trainers)

Printing and Distribution of the Revised Curriculum
Package $2,500

**TOTAL Estimated Expenses of the Curriculum Package
Step**   **$ 2,500 – 18,988**

TOTAL of all estimated expenses related to Curriculum Development for this example   *$32,039 - $86,871*

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