

Adult Meeting/Personal Evaluation

Class Evaluated:

Asbestos Inspection and Assessment Annual Refresher Course
Mississippi State University, Continuing Education
March 14, 2001
4-hour course

Purpose of the course:

The Refresher course is intended for individuals who have been certified as Inspectors of Asbestos and are seeking re-accreditation under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Inspectors must successfully complete a four-hour refresher course to gain re-certification. "Successfully" is defined as attending the four hour course and scoring 70 percent or better on a 25-question, multiple choice exam (see attachment) administered at the conclusion of the 4-hour course.

Course objectives were:

- To identify new and review current federal and state regulations
- To review bulk sampling requirements
- To review recordkeeping and documentation procedures
- To identify new developments in inspection procedures

Course Fee:

\$100

Housed in the Division of Continuing Education at Mississippi State University is one "unique" department - the Department of Environmental Training and Development. This department is the "designated provider" for all environmental training/certification/re-certification for the state of Mississippi. This means that training is provided to a "captured" audience (those who work in the environmental field and who need training, certification or re-certification with MSU being the only place to receive the training).

The Environmental department is small staffed in that its personnel consists of one program manager (Ben Rosenkrans), who holds a Master's Degree and has been developing and instructing Environmental programs for 13 years; one program coordinator (Dr. Amy Vickery), who holds a doctorate degree in the environmental field; and one secretary (Tammy Wilson).

Because of the nature of the programs, marketing does not pose a problem for this department. Dollars are spent wisely in that there are only two brochures advertising produced yearly advertising their course offerings. One brochure lists all courses, dates, and locations from January – June and the second brochure lists all courses, dates, and locations for July – December. The printing and mailing costs is divided among the number of programs listed in a brochure (see attached program summary expense page) and charged to that particular program. For example, the attached brochure has 28 dates and locations. The cost of printing and mailing were \$3,000 ($\$3,000/28 = \107 per program). So, \$107 would be charged to the program closeout sheet, which list all costs associated with the course as well as the amount of money

taken in through registrations. If the course should cancel due to low enrollment, then the program closeout shows a negative and is filed as such (see attached program closeout form).

The fees for the course are based on the costs for instructors, course materials, refreshments, travel of instructors, and facilities. The Environmental department also provides in-house training or on-site training to business and industry. This helps to alleviate the travel costs of employees as well as time away from their jobs.

Net income is excellent in the environmental area since there are very few outside consultants used for instruction. Ben and Amy conduct 80% of the training (which is considered to be part of their job responsibilities), enabling them to clear a larger profit than if they had to pay consultants to teach the classes.

As you'll see from the attached brochure, most of the classes are offered at Mississippi State, but there are some offered off-campus. Again, the more programs they can conduct at MSU, the more money the program will make (no facilities fee, travel costs, etc.). CE is self-supporting, so net income is definitely something that must be considered in each program offering since each department must carry their own weight.

Because the Division of Continuing Education has a conference center, they do not have to charge facilities to the program closeout vs. when they provide the training off-campus. Holding a majority of the programs at MSU makes it relatively easy. They simply schedule a conference room according to their dates and provide a room set-up request to the conference center manager; the secretary handles the registration, copying of course materials, and schedules the delivery of refreshments. Registration is defined as: when people register via telephone, fax, or mail, a confirmation letter is generated and is mailed to the participant with the pertinent information concerning the course (start time/end time for the course, course date(s), location/building name, parking decal if the program is at MSU and a campus map with the Continuing Education building highlighted to alleviate difficulty in directions). Remember, as the registrations are entered into the computer, a database is being generated with information that will be used in the future for mailing purposes.

Since the courses are relatively the same each time out (accept for regulation changes), the costs involved with delivering the course is usually the same or very close, so assumptions can easily be made as the costs involved. This also makes it easy to schedule on a six-month basis vs. every three months. Material cost remains the same since the only changes are regulation changes.

Seventy-five (75%) percent of their participants come from business or industry. Ben and Amy are now seeing an increase in school districts, community colleges, and IHLs participating due to the new regulations by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Databases for brochure mailings come from mail lists that are purchased from associations such as the Mississippi Manufacturers Association as well as databases generated from past participants. The secretary is responsible for sending reminders to past participants when their certification is about to expire and informing them on the upcoming re-certification course. In

the class I attended, all 25 participants were there for re-certification purposes (a prime example of a “captured audience”). Although the course was offered during MSU’s spring break, Ben and Amy could not cancel the course because had they cancelled the course all 25 participant’s certification would have expired before another training session could have taken place.

There is a lot of in-house training conducted for business and industry in this department. As the brochure states, charges for on-site training are based on how much it costs to present the course and not on how many people attend. Here is where MANY partnerships are formed. For example, an industry may need the training in a timely manner, and because a partnership has been established, arrangements will be made quickly to accommodate the client (industry). The bonus for business or industry is:

- They don’t have to pay costly travel
- They don’t have employees off-site
- A large number of employees can be trained at one time
- The training is custom-tailored to compliment their policies and procedures

MSU Continuing Education forms a partnership and gains “additional” income that was not budgeted at the beginning of the year.

The primary technology used is a slide projector by Ben and Amy uses a PowerPoint presentation. Videos are used occasionally.

Depending on the number of participants, the classroom is usually set in a classroom style setting for anything over 15 people. Anything below 15 people, an open U is used. The registration table is always at the front of the room, so the participants can be registered and greeted as they arrive while the refreshments are placed at the back of the room. This allows participants to move back and forth to the refreshments during the training without disturbing the instruction process or other participants.

The evaluation tool(s) that are used is a 25-question, multiple-choice exam and a one-page summative evaluation (see attached).

My personal evaluation:

In the class I attended, the setting was very informal and the room was set classroom style (see attached drawing) with the refreshment table located at the back of the room, which was conducive for learning with 25 participants.

Refreshment breaks were scheduled for every two hours which is o.k., but should probably have given them a break on the hour. I found myself watching the clock ready for the two hours to end. The environment (lights/heating) of the room was comfortable and conducive to learning.

Some background information you should be aware of is that all the folks who attended this program have gone through this same training at least three times already. Ben asked for a show of hands of those who have attended this training at least three times already to determine how many participants could probably “teach the class.” The only reason these 25 participants were attending was to receive re-certification, which means most any one of the participants could

have probably taught the course. It was Ben and Amy who had to be the “experts” because the purpose of the course was to give the participants updates on federal and state regulations. However, it’s very hard to get the people involved when they have the mindset of “I know all this already.” I think Ben did a good job of getting them involved, because he let them know by asking the question early on “how many of you have been through this training three or more time already?” that he recognized the fact that he wasn’t necessarily the only “expert” in the room and that he would respect and appreciate their input. By Ben asking questions as he showed slides of different buildings affected by asbestos, MADE them become involved. Because most of these participants had been in MSU courses before, Ben was able to address each of them by their first name and talk about incidents that have occurred in their hometown or was able to apply an example of a regulation to something they were currently working with. As the program progressed, more and more participants began to have questions and comments at different times. The only problem with this is that unless Ben pulled them back to the main topic/focus, the questions and comments put Ben and Amy behind the allotted time for each section of the training. Therefore it forced them to cram the remaining information in at the end instead of giving it the appropriate time that had been allotted.

The class materials were at each participant’s seat with an agenda on the top so that each participant knew what the timeline would be for the morning. The program objectives were listed and carried out. I know this to be true because before the exam, Ben took 15 minutes to review all questions that pertained to the exam and asked for any questions that had not been answered previously. There were none.

After the exam, participants were asked to fill out a summative evaluation sheet (see attachment) and given the opportunity to make additional comments.

My personal opinion of the program was that it was very good. I would have done one thing differently... at the beginning of the program, I would have asked each person to introduce themselves including who they worked for and which state they were from. One participant was from Alabama and one from Tennessee. The remainder was from Mississippi. Participants represented business, industry, and IHLs. This information would help the instructor(s) (should he/she be a new participant) and the other participants to understand why they ask the type of questions that they do.

The room setting was good for the number of participants attending. The lighting and heating/cooling was comfortable, and refreshments were good. You must always remember with refreshments, that not all people like coffee, so have an assortment of soft drinks, juice, coffee, and water.

The technology used was sufficient for the objectives of the course. Ben used a slide presentation while Amy used a PowerPoint presentation and a whiteboard. The slides provided appropriate visuals so that Ben could make his points during his presentation. The good thing about Amy’s PowerPoint presentation is that she used a few bullets per page and elaborated on each bullet/point so as not to be reading all the information from the slide. She provided all participants with a copy of the slides so they could make notes beside each slide as she

conducted the training. All course materials were clear and professional looking and organized in a folder with a writing pad and pencil.

I liked the summative evaluation in that each instructor was evaluated separately and that it gave room for comments, and was a quick evaluation to complete (see attached).

What I didn't like was that when Amy was presenting, several times Ben would answer a question from the floor before Amy could respond. He would also stop her in the middle of a point she was making and tell her to go more in-depth. This to me made it seem as though Amy was not as "qualified" or "knowledgeable" as Ben. It would have been an insult to me if I were Amy. I noticed that as time progressed during Amy's presentation, that when questions came from the floor, most all the people would look to Ben for the answer, before turning to Amy, even though she was conducting the instruction at the time. It wasn't that Amy did not know her material – she did! It was Ben interrupting her and not letting her present HER section of material that she was responsible for. This may be one reason why Ben always scores higher on his evaluations than Amy. Again, he just made her look "not-so-knowledgeable" and as if he was "bailing her out" if a tough question came along. Ben owes her the professionalism to respect her time in front of the participants and let her "just do it!"

Team-teaching can be much harder than meets the eye. You must respect each other while at the same time providing support and supplemental comments/information when appropriate to make the training more educational for the participants. Ben "commented" too much!