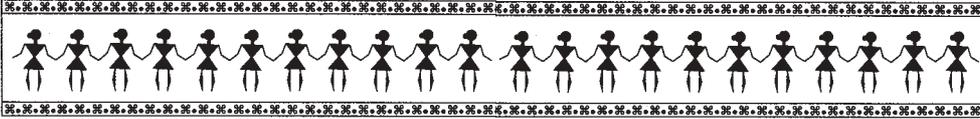


The Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurial Competencies: Lessons for the Trainer



General Objectives

After studying this Unit, you should be able to help participants in your training session to describe the actions of an entrepreneur and the role of a facilitator in the development of an entrepreneur.

Specific Objectives

This Training Unit will help you to enable trainees to:

- Learn the entrepreneurial characteristics;
- Identify and overcome their constraints; and
- Assist women to build their business skills, and attitudes involved in training for enterprise development.

Planning

- Time** : One hour thirty minutes
- Training methodology** : Discussions, group exercise
- Training Materials** : Chart paper, markers
- Trainer's Preparation** : Trainer lists out on chart papers the competencies required to be an entrepreneur and those which are not so desirable.

Trainer to draw picture of tree on a separate chart paper and keep it ready for conducting the group activity.

Background Material

Introduction

Economic development plays an important role in the development and growth of any society. The importance of promoting women, making them entrepreneurs to engage in economic activities is being increasingly realized in all developing countries. The need is two fold:

- i) to empower women by bringing them into the mainstream of development by improving their economic status; and

- ii) to provide new employment opportunities by way of income generation, self-employment and entrepreneurship to women from different socio-economic sectors.

This has led to **entrepreneurship development** as the most effective way of fulfilling these needs. Experience demonstrates that there are a large number of women in most developing countries, capable of and willing to be involved in economic activities. However, in many situations there is a lack of integrated and need-based training programmes and a paucity of skilled trainers and facilitators. This inhibits the efforts in promoting women entrepreneurs.

Enterprise: This refers to any economic activity in which goods or services are sold with profit.

Entrepreneur: A person who initiates, owns, and manages any business activity, which involves selling a product/service on profit.

Entrepreneurship: The creativity or innovativeness reflected by an entrepreneur in initiating, managing or running an enterprise.

An Ideal Entrepreneur

Here is a list of the essential characteristics of an ideal entrepreneur:

- Identifies market needs;
- Invests money and puts together the resources to produce a product or a service;
- Manages the business to maximize profits;
- Takes calculated risks to achieve success;
- Makes decisions and is responsible for them;
- Constantly seeks opportunities to grow;
- Foresees changes in the market and adapts business accordingly; and
- Looks at time as a valuable resource.

Entrepreneurial Competencies

What are the entrepreneurial competencies? Here is a useful list.

1. Achievement Orientation	9. Concern for quality
2. Self confidence	10. Problem solving
3. Initiative	11. Positive mental attitude
4. Willingness to take risks	12. Information seeking
5. Opportunity scanning	13. Persuasive ability
6. Leadership	14. Persistence
7. Commitment to honour word	15. Goal setting
8. Using influencing strategies	16. Systematic planning
	17. Networking

Concerns of a Woman Entrepreneur

Only a few women are able to face successfully the challenges of becoming an entrepreneur. Some women are either not interested, others do not have the inherent competencies. Still others face external problems. These problems are compounded in the case of women because of social and cultural background and gender relationships.

Important Factors Responsible for Entrepreneurship in Women

Many of the factors mentioned below are applicable to both men and women.

- Lack of time for enterprise activities due to burden of household work;
- Care of family seen as primary role of women;
- Social conditioning of women leading to a perception of “good” women as opposed to “successful” women;
- Lack of promptness in decision making;
- Lack of access to peer support;
- Lack of training opportunities;
- Lack of exposure to business ideas leading to lack of experience;
- Strong fear of failure within women;
- Fear of success, leading to guilt feelings about neglect of family;
- Low levels of education;
- Low income levels which result in low savings and low investment capacities; and
- No inheritance rights leading to non-availability of collateral for obtaining credit.

Majority of women who do take up entrepreneurship activities do so on a small scale and are limited to microenterprises. The typical profile that emerges is low investments, low returns, low growth and low skills. Add to that the characteristic of them being traditional activities.

Many of the enterprises started by women are in the realm of “traditional” and “socially approved” category. These invariably are limited in their growth, investments and use of technology. Women’s role is perceived as supportive or dependent and is perceived as a “choice taker” and not a “choice maker”. Hence, in attempts to develop entrepreneurship in women, a thrust needs to be given to stimulation, support and sustaining the activities. Stimulation can be provided by NGOs, support can come from other entrepreneur groups, and sustenance can be provided by peer groups and networking efforts.

Certain activities used by the facilitator or trainer could help in translating theory into practice and also explain how entrepreneurship is developed.

Work Plan for Your Training Session

Group Activity

Draw on the blackboard a tree with a few branches and no leaves. Ask the prospective or existing entrepreneurs to:

- Come up and add leaves to the tree, each leaf representing one quality that they feel a successful entrepreneur should have.

Developing Entrepreneurial Qualities and Motivation



- Also draw leaves dropped from the tree, representing qualities that they need to shed in order to become successful entrepreneurs.
- During this process, encourage the entrepreneurs to think of various possible qualities and ensure that the following qualities — desirable and not so desirable are shown:

Desirable Qualities

Good planning	Self-reliance
Confidence	Credibility
Persistence	Innovativeness
Oriented towards achievement	Seeking information
Time consciousness	Setting goals
Risk taking capacities	Good leadership
Good management skills	Clarity about vision
Persuasiveness	Opportunity seekers
Analytical skills	High level of commitment
Attention to details	Courageous
Hard working	Business knowledge
Positive mental attitude	

Not so desirable Qualities

The opposites of all the above would obviously be not so desirable qualities. In addition the following could be added:

- Impatience;
- Insensitivity;
- Low credibility;
- Authoritativeness; and
- Inability to work in a team

Lessons for a Trainer

Experience suggests that the success of a woman's enterprise development programme conducted by you depends largely on your ability as a trainer to understand, plan, implement, manage and monitor it. Therefore, your roles and responsibilities need to be clearly understood.

The Trainer's Roles and Responsibilities

Encouraging women and developing them into successful entrepreneurs calls for the adoption of a systematic approach, including the provision of training as well as follow-up support, which can help to link women-owned and women-managed enterprises with credit, marketing and other support services and activities.

The job demands of a trainer/facilitator comprise a variety of tasks. As a trainer, you should be able to act as a friend, mentor and guide. You are the programme manager in charge of conducting the entire entrepreneurship development process. You have to play a multi-dimensional role of administrator, liaison officer, training manager, trainer, counsellor, technical adviser, and motivator.

Your primary role is to facilitate the enterprise development process and, therefore, the you need to:

- Understand the aspirations of the target group of potential women entrepreneurs;
- Identify and understand the potential of the target group; and
- Plan appropriate actions to enable them to accomplish their aspirations.

The objectives and the process of entrepreneurial development indicate that the work area of a trainer is very large. You would be expected to conduct needs assessment studies, identify and select potential women participants, impart training and motivate and help women to set up micro/small enterprises. Hence, it is crucial to have an understanding of the role and the qualities of the trainer involved in the process of developing entrepreneurship among women.

The role of a trainer is multi-dimensional. The following table presents particulars of “Women’s entrepreneurship development programme needs” matched with “the job and role requirements of a trainer”.

Women’s Entrepreneurship Development Needs	Trainer’s Job	Trainer’s Role
1. Needs assessment study	To identify women’s needs by scanning and assessing local environment and potentiality of women	Development Officer
2. Awareness building and forming institutional linkages (networking)	To create conducive environment and motivate potential women using effective promotional tools and techniques	Promoter, Liaison Officer, and Organizer
3. Identification and selection of women entrepreneurs	To assess entrepreneurial motivations and competencies, skills, and knowledge through selection tools	Motivator, Counsellor, and Selection Expert
4. Designing and organizing training	To design need-based developmental inputs	Administrator and Co-ordinator
5. Conducting training	To implement training with support of experts and faculty	Trainer, Counsellor, and Motivator
a. In selecting business opportunities	To provide business opportunity guidance	Analyst, Counsellor, Liaison officer
b. Project report preparation	To train, assist, and counsel women in formulating their project plans	Trainer and Counsellor
c. Providing technical training	To arrange field visits and technical training	Co-ordinator
6. Providing post-training support to ensure success	Organize follow-up meetings and escort services for finance, raw material, machinery and for market linkage & monitoring	Co-ordinator, Liaison Officer, and Troubleshooter

In order to effectively carry out these job functions, the trainer should possess the following three skills and knowledge.

- A. Conceptual knowledge of entrepreneurship programmes;
- B. Training skills; and
- C. Managerial skills.

A. Conceptual Knowledge of Programmes

The trainer should be well acquainted with the concept of women's economic development activities in relation to income generation, self-employment and entrepreneurship. To strengthen conceptual ability, the trainer should have a clear understanding about:

- Processes of women entrepreneurship programme planning;
- Processes of enterprise creation;
- Stages involved in becoming entrepreneurs;
- Gender issues in the process of women's economic development;
- Functions involved in enterprise initiation and management;

B. Training Skills

The most demanding role is that of being a good trainer. A good trainer should have:

- Presentation and communication skills;
- Awareness of adult learning processes;
- Sensitivity to the needs of other people;
- Technical skills;
- Counselling skills; and
- Training implementation and administration skills.

C. Managerial Skills

In women enterprise development programmes, the trainer has to integrate various resources to manage the whole programme successfully.

Therefore, the trainer has to have the following managerial skills:

- Interpersonal skills;
- Co-ordinating skills;
- Monitoring skills;
- Problem-solving ability; and
- Leadership ability.

Often, all these basic requirements described may not be found in one person, and hence a team of 2 or 3 persons may work together. In order to achieve good results, one core or main trainer will be needed.