How to plan and deliver an interactive lesson

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CIVIF, 29 June 2017

Teramo, 28-29-30 June / 5-6 July, 2017
International Centre for Veterinary Training and Information (CIFIV)

Objectives

At the end of this lecture

you will be able to:

- know the main elements to plan a lesson
- distinguish different lesson approaches and their *pros & cons* in relation to the target audience
- introduce elements of attractiveness into your lessons

What does an effective lesson means?

- Think on a lesson you had that you remember as effective in you life:
  - What are the main elements you remember?
  - Why, in your opinion?

How to plan a lesson

- Lesson outline

"Three stories from my life"

(linear lesson plan, logical tree, structured in blocks, ...)

- Engaging structure

Easy to follow. A key point (mini-message) at the end of each section.

- Take-home message

"I wish that for you: Stay hungry. Stay foolish."

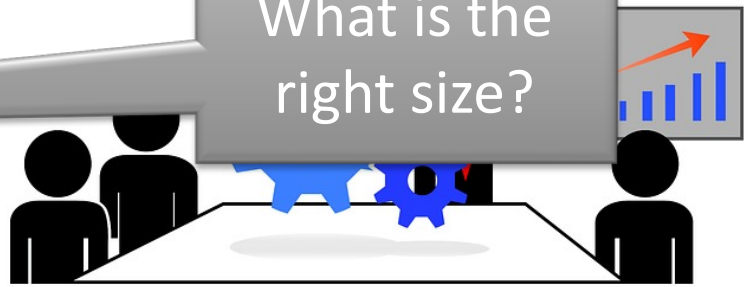
What is a lesson?

It has to be planned and prepared

- a **period of time** in which a **person** is taught **about** a **subject** or **how to do** something

(Cambridge Dictionary)

Or a group. What is the right size?



to transfer skills

to transfer knowledge

A lesson aims to ….

….Transfer information and elements of knowledge and skills from a teacher to an audience

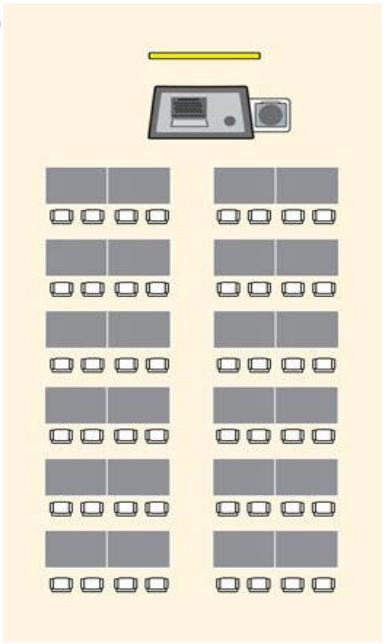
So we should define ….

Who → How many

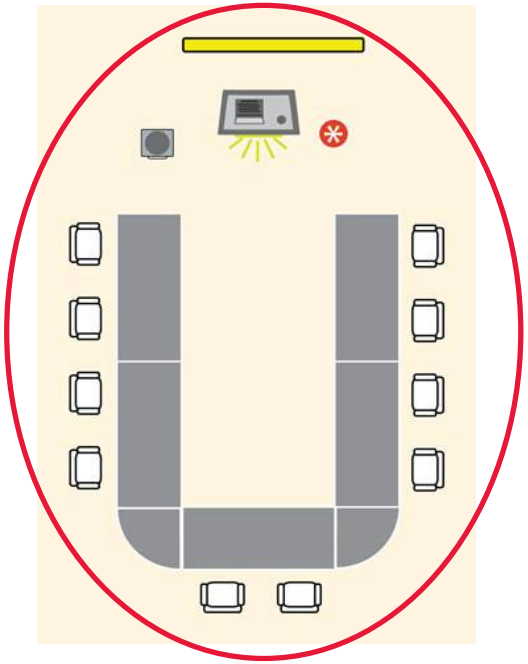
- < 6 participants — meeting
- 6-20 participants — interactive lesson
- > 20 participants — conference lecture

Based on current literature, the best class size estimate is approximately 15 adult students per classroom if you are teaching face-to-face

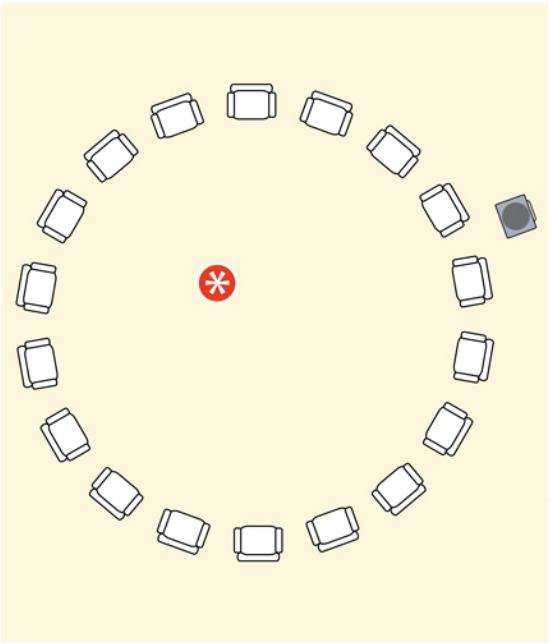
Where → the room setup



Classroom



U-shape



Circle

Classroom layouts can influence:

- the view of the screen and/or the flipchart
- the students participation (they see one each other?)
- the control of the situation by the teacher/instructor

How → to increase retention

People often remember more when they practice or use their learning compared to when they just read or hear information. The amount of information we remember is in direct proportion to the amount of involvement we had in the learning.

Coming back to the Cambridge dictionary, a lesson is also …

- an **experience** that teaches you how to **behave** better in a similar situation in the future

(Cambridge Dictionary)

How → Methods

Main methods adopted in adult education are:

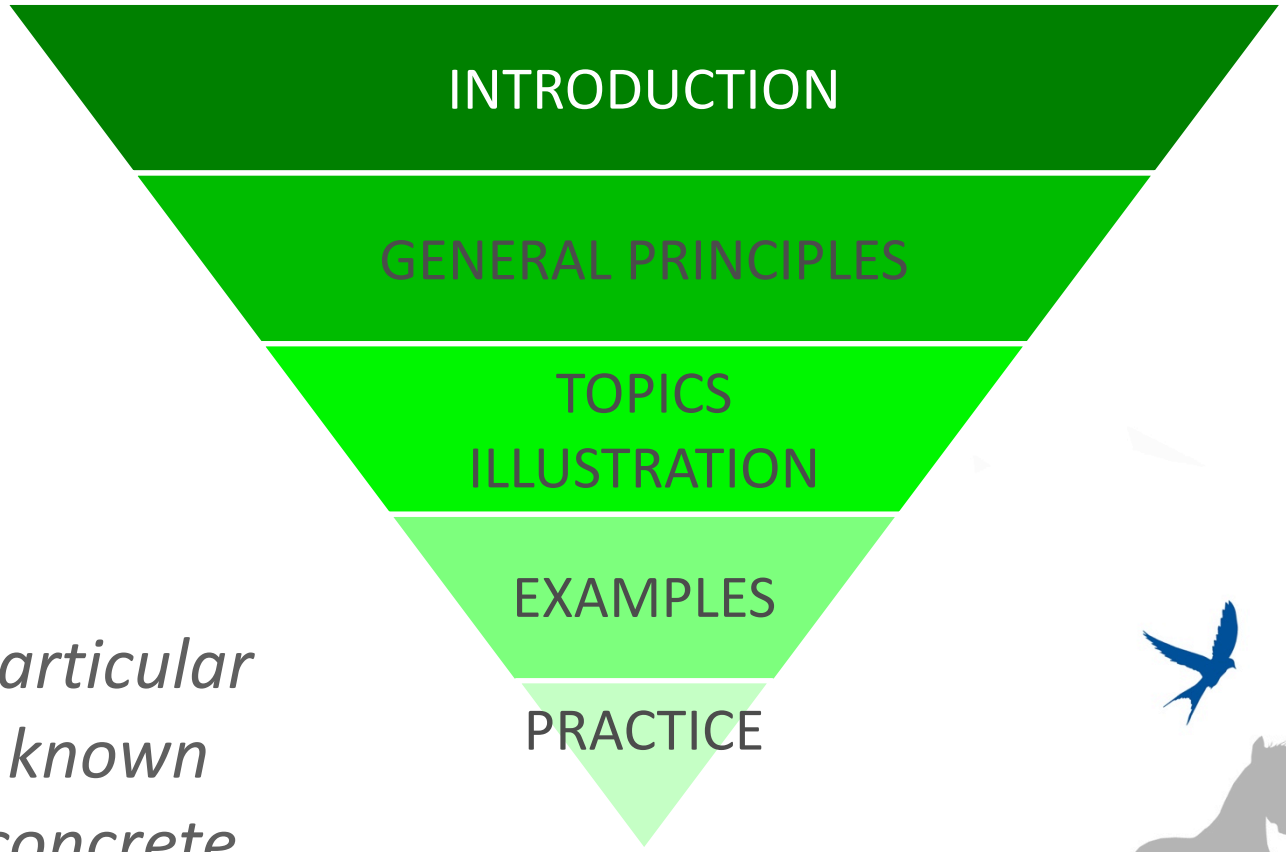
- ✓ Deductive method
- ✓ Inductive method
- ✓ Problem-based method

Deductive Method

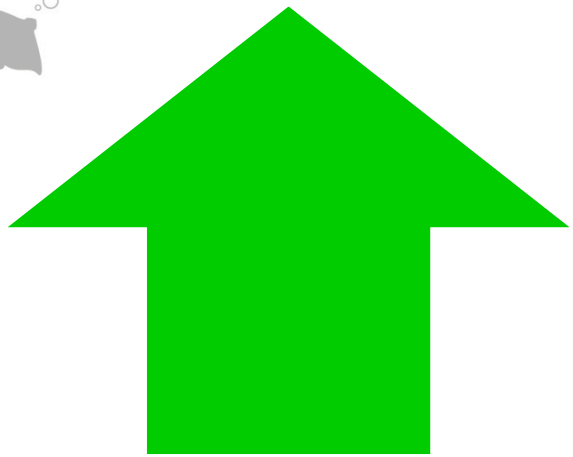
rule-driven

top-down

from general to particular
from unknown to known
from abstract to concrete



Pros and Cons



Effective to:

- transfer data and definitions
- Explain procedures
- Provide short information (time-saving)

- Difficulty to maintain the attention
- Too many information in a time unit
- Loss of divergent student thinking
- No emphasis on students reasoning and problem solving

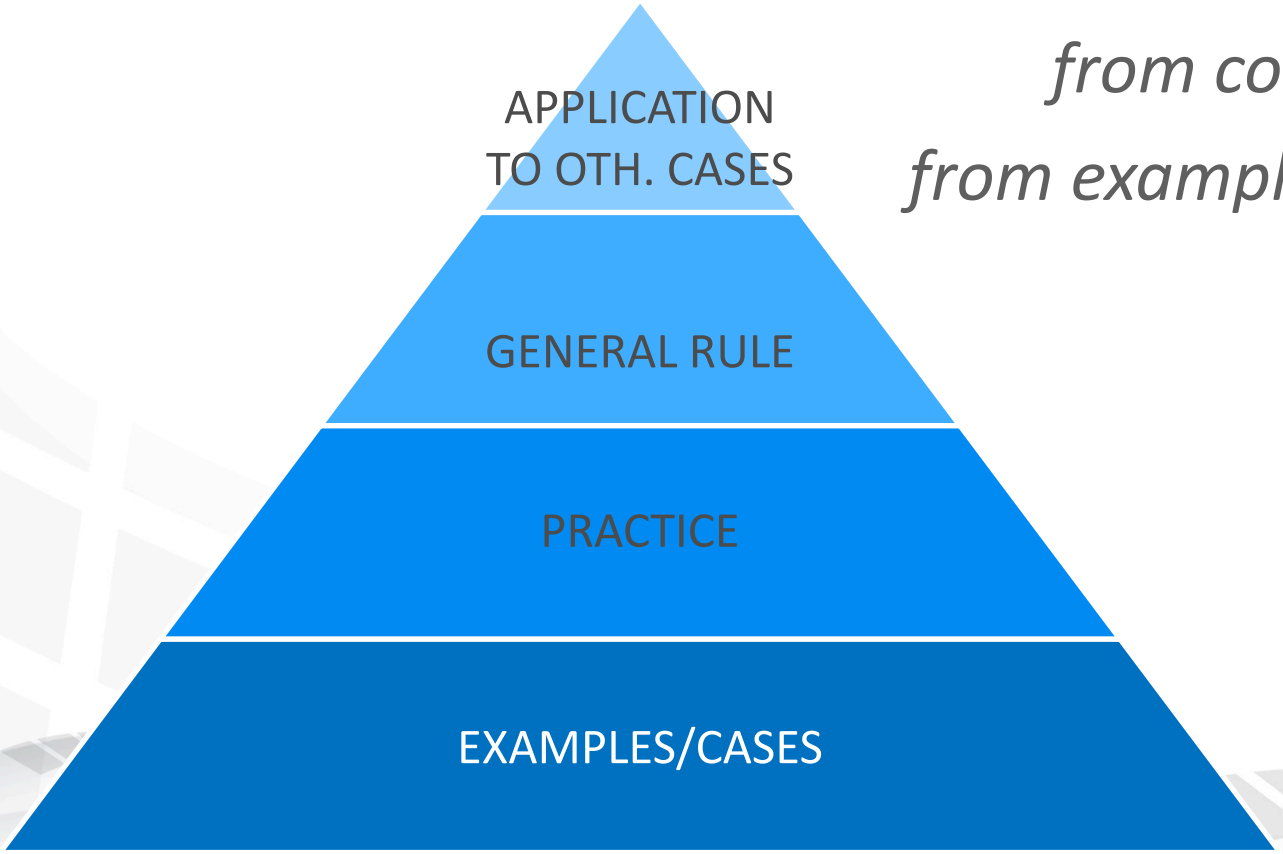
Inductive Method

example-driven

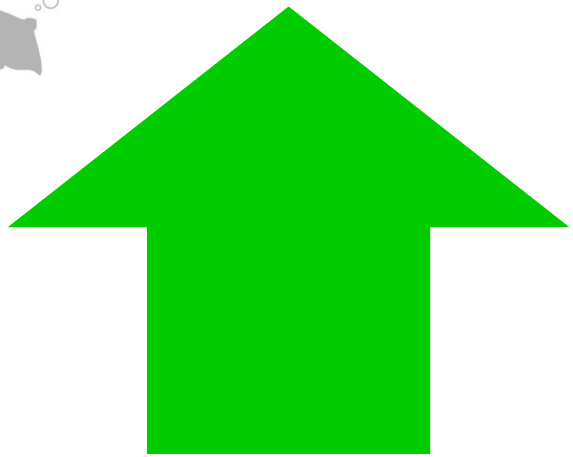
bottom-up

from concrete to abstract

from example to universal law



Pros and Cons



As the scientific principles are result of induction, this method is considered effective for science teaching (in general to explain complex concepts)

- Chatch the attention and facilitates retention

- Stimulates students actively involved (2 ways communication)

- Risk to reach false conclusions

- Does not fit with some learning styles (frustrating for theorists)

- Time consuming

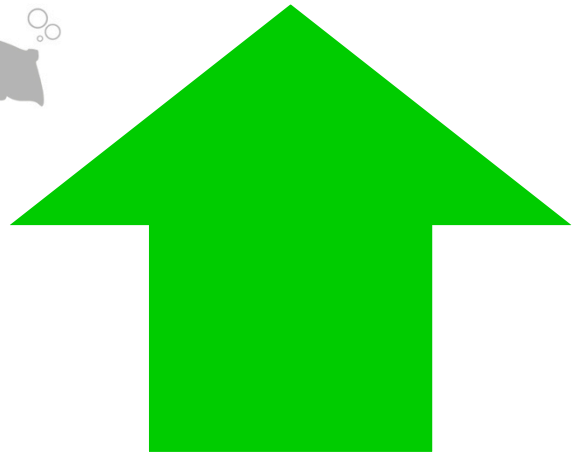
- More preparation work

Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Hands-on, active learning centered on the investigation and resolution of problems:

- Learning is driven by challenging, open-ended problems with no one “right” answer
- Problems/cases are context-specific
- Students work as self-directed, active investigators and problem-solvers often divided in small collaborative groups
- A key problem is identified and a solution is agreed/implemented
- Teachers adopt the role of facilitators of learning, guiding the learning process

Pros and Cons



- Develops critical thinking and creative skills
- Improves problem-solving skills
- Increases motivation and attention
- Helps students learn to transfer knowledge to new situations
- Mistake-driven learning as crucial in science teaching

- Difficulties to know what might be important to learn (teachers, as facilitators, must be careful to address and reconduct)
- Time consuming
- More work for planning
- More difficult to drive as method

J L, "Problem-Based Learning (PBL)," in *Learning Theories*, July 23, 2014.

What should not be missed

When preparing your lesson,
keep in mind:

- Clear **purpose**
- **Engaging** structure
- Appropriate **method**
- Use of stories/multisensoriality/interactivity
- **Take-home messages**

My take-home message

- No **ONE WAY** approach
- The best recipe is a balanced mix of approaches and tools
  - Different audiences with learning strengths and motivations
  - Different course durations
  - Diverse learning needs
  - …..