

Writing clinics

Writeshops without presentations

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Summary

- ▶ Like a writeshop, but with **no presentations** and **no plenary discussions**.
- ▶ Authors bring manuscripts to **clinic appointments** with editors, who help them revise the text and plan illustrations.
- ▶ Authors **revise the manuscripts** while editors hold their next appointment.
- ▶ Authors meet the editors **3-4 times** to finalize text.

The situation

ORGUT Consulting AB ran a large, long-term, Swedish-funded integrated rural development programme in **Ethiopia** from 1997 to 2010.

The project was coming to a close, and needed a book to describe its activities, highlight its achievements, and offer lessons to government and other projects.

The solution

ORGUT hired two editors to produce the book.

It assigned 12 senior staff to draft chapters about the project's background, activities, achievements and lessons.

The editors stayed for 2 weeks at the project headquarters in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia.

They ran a series of **writing clinics** (a writeshop without presentations or discussions) to review, discuss, edit and rewrite the drafts.

Why no presentations?

- ▶ The authors had no time to attend presentations.
- ▶ They worked in different subject areas.
- ▶ They all knew each other.
- ▶ The project was nearing its end.

This meant:

- ▶ The authors could contribute little to each others' drafts.
- ▶ Mutual exchange, training and networking were not necessary.

Advantages

- ▶ Much cheaper than a full-blown writeshop
- ▶ No facilitator or logistics staff needed
- ▶ Not necessary to hire conference facilities

Disadvantages

- ▶ Not suitable if exchange and mutual learning among participants is needed
- ▶ Not suitable if in-depth analysis by groups is needed.

The book

	Pages
It's market day...	6
Providing secure land tenure	16
Improving farming methods	34
Creating jobs and income	20
Building and maintaining infrastructure	24
Promoting equality for women and men	14
Responding to the threat of HIV/AIDS	10
Decentralizing decision-making	20
Managing the SARDP programme	8
Analysing SARDP's achievements	10
Appendices	7
Total	170 pages



The editors meet authors individually to discuss their manuscripts

How long did it take?

Initial idea	Sep 2009
Clinics	Feb 2010 (14 days)
Book launch	Jun 2010
From idea to completed book	9 months



Plenary sessions are needed only for updates and coordination

How to do it

Initial preparation

- ▶ Identify audience and objectives
- ▶ Agree on structure and contents
- ▶ Identify topics and authors
- ▶ Provide guidelines and examples to authors
- ▶ Authors write first drafts

Writeshop

Preparation

- ▶ Plenary planning session to agree on audience, format and structure, and to explain clinic approach.
- ▶ Editors divide chapters between them.

Writing clinics

- ▶ Editors arrange appointments with individual authors in turn
- ▶ During clinic, each author meets with an editor for 2 hours
- ▶ The author and editor together review the draft manuscript, discuss the structure and content, and edit or rewrite.
- ▶ Author and editor commission artwork from artist.
- ▶ Author and editor agree on what changes need to be made, who will make them, and when to meet again.
- ▶ Author revises the text, while editor attends to next appointment with next author.
- ▶ 3-4 appointments are needed before the chapter is ready.

Plenaries

- ▶ 2-3 plenary sessions to update all on progress, get guidance and make general requests.

After writeshop

- ▶ Final editing
- ▶ Check final details with authors
- ▶ Get management approval
- ▶ Print, distribute

Building Ethiopia's future

The Sida-Amhara Rural Development Programme

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