

SEMINAR REPORT

STARTING FROM STRENGTHS SEMINAR

ORGANISERS

The Seminar was organised jointly by the Wales Youth Work Partnership and the Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work at the Pencerrig Hotel, Nr. Builth Wells, Powys on 10 December 1986.

AIM

The aim of the seminar was to explore the central ideas within the report 'Starting from Strengths' and their application in practice. 'Starting from Strengths' is the report of the panel to promote the continuing development of training for part-time and voluntary youth and community workers and is published by the National Youth Bureau, 17-23 Albion Street, Leicester LE1 6GD, price £2.55.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience was staff within the statutory and voluntary youth service in Wales who have responsibility for managing or delivering training for part-time and voluntary youth and community workers.

MATERIALS

A pack of relevant materials was made available to participants when they registered for the seminar.

Participants and Staff were as follows:

Name	Job Title	Authority/Organisation
Geoff Harrington	Secretary & Field Officer	Boys' Brigade
Tom Bevan	Leisure Centre Manager Senior	Gwent County Council
Norman Bifield	Youth Leader	West Glamorgan CC
Betty Gumming	General Secretary	Guides Cymru
Des Davies	Warden	Preseli Youth Wing, Crymych
Mark Edwards	Deputy Manager	Gwent County Council
E. Gwyn Evans	Area F.E. Officer	Mid Glamorgan CC
John Evans	Deputy Manager	Ebbw Vale Adult Education Centre
Alun Griffiths	Leisure Adviser (Youth)	Gwent County Council
Geoff Hollett	Manager	Tredegar Leisure Centre
Muriel Howells	Deputy F.E. Officer	Mid Glamorgan CC
Alwyn James	Assistant Youth Officer	Clwyd CC
Rev. Hugh James	Youth/Community Officer	Provincial Council of the Church-in-Wales
Nicholas Jones	Youth Chaplain	Llandaff Diocesan C-in-W
Bill Morris	Youth/Community Adviser	South Glamorgan CC
David Peters	Area Community Ed.Worker	Powys County Council
Les Price	F/t Youth Worker	Clwyd County Council
Tudur Pritchard	Youth Officer	Gwynedd CC
Andy Pudduck	Senior Youth Leader	West Glamorgan CC
Bryan Roberts	Area Comm. Ed. Worker	Powys CC
Marion Roberts		Presbyterian Church Youth Committee
Roy Skelton	Manager	Liswerry Leisure Centre, Newport
Colin Thomas	Area F.E. Officer	Mid Glamorgan CC
Alwyn Williams	National Development Officer	Urdd Gobaith Cymru
J. Michael Williams	Youth Worker	Clwyd County Council
Veronica Wilson	Project Officer, Alcohol, Substance & Drugs Misuse	Council for Wales of Vol. Youth Services

CETYCW SERFF

Steve Bolger	Senior Training Adviser
Don Grisbrook	Director
Miriam Jackson	Training Adviser

PARTNERSHIP

Debra Lewis	Field Information Officer
Pamela Osborn	Clerical and Administrative Assistant
Jim Rooney	Training and Development Adviser

Apologies received from:

Linda Gainsbury HMI Gareth
Harris (Wales YFC) Alan
Higgins HMI Jane Lewes
(CWVYS)

PROGRAMME

10.30	Registration and Coffee
11.00	Introduction : Jim Rooney and, in Welsh, Alwyn Williams
11.15	Presentation : Steve Bolger
11.45	Small Groups
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Presentation : Steve Bolger
2.00	Small Groups and action plans
3.30	Plenary discussion
4.00	Tea

INTRODUCTION

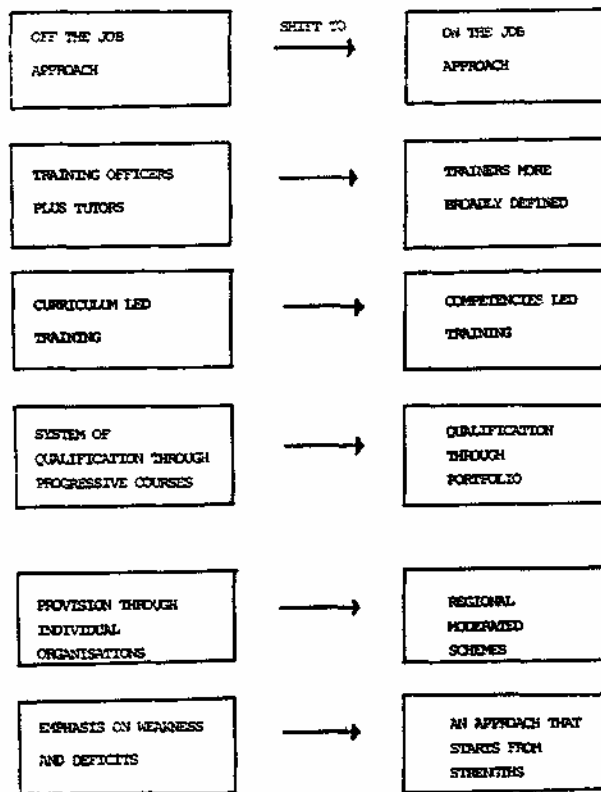
The introduction stressed the role of the Partnership in facilitating collaborative work, in bringing about a closer working relationship between the statutory and voluntary sectors, and contributing to the strengthening of the image and identity of the youth service in Wales. In introducing colleagues from CETYCW reference was made to the significant contribution made by CETYCW to work in Wales during recent years. This included the joint WJEC/CETYCW report on training for those who work full-time in the service, work on staff development policies for some local authority services, help with establishing the Partnership and in disseminating useful information about new funding arrangements for in-service training.

FIRST PRESENTATION

Steve Bolger's first presentation concerned the six central ideas within Starting from Strengths which took the form of a shift in emphasis in the training of part-time and voluntary youth workers as represented diagrammatically below.

STARTING FROM STRENGTHS

There are six central ideas in 'Starting from Strengths', They are represented below:



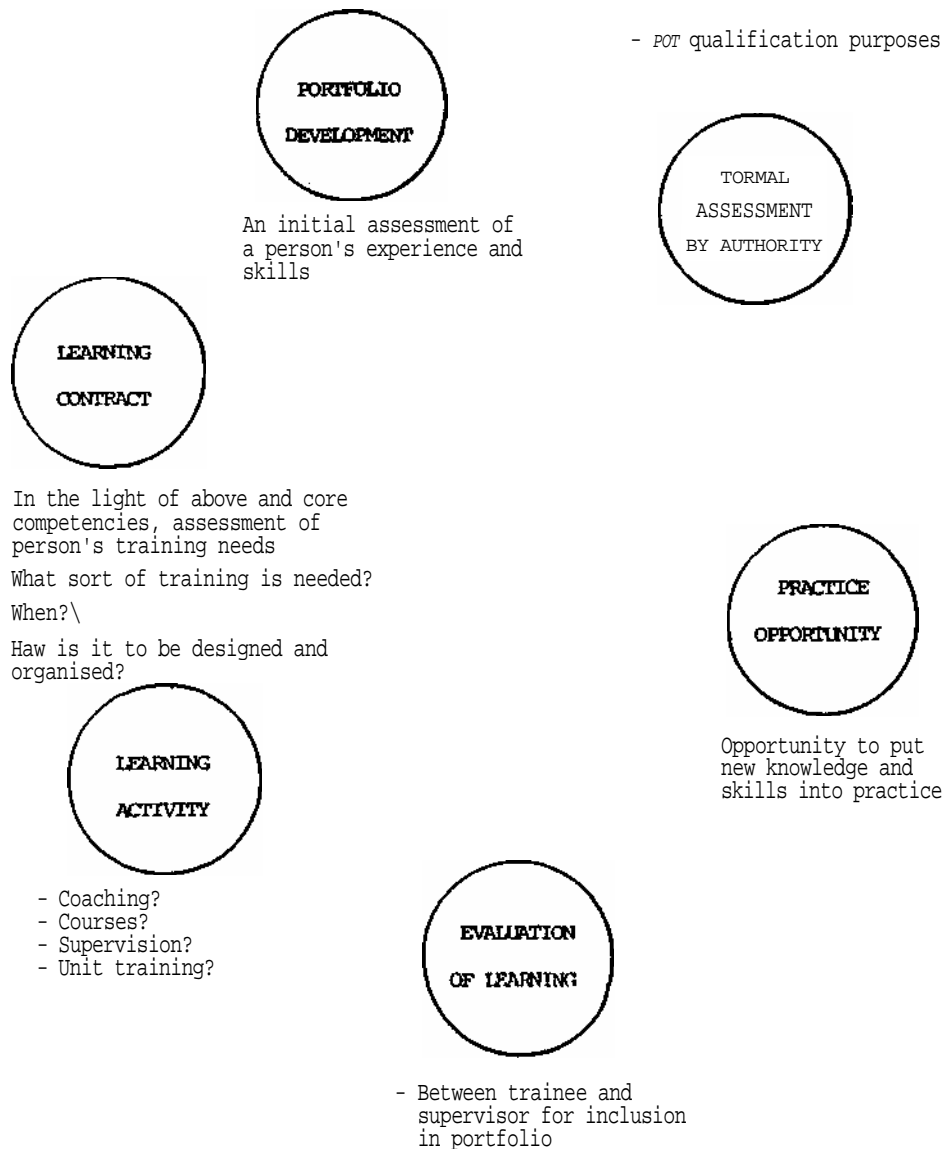
FIRST SMALL GROUP SESSION

The seminar divided into four small groups, one of which was conducted through the medium of Welsh. The task in the groups was to explore in detail these ideas and their relevance to participant's experience in Wales.

SECOND PRESENTATION

Steve Bolger's second presentation was concerned with the process of implementing portfolio-based training. The stages in the process are represented diagrammatically below.

STAGES IN THE TRAINING PROCESS



SECOND SMALL GROUP SESSION

In this session small groups were self-selecting on the basis of a choice of subject focus as follows:

Group (a) Identification of the core competencies of part-time youth workers. Facilitator: Miriam Jackson

This group focused on what a part-timer or volunteer needs to be able to do, needs to know, and the values which should inform their work.

Group (b) Examination of portfolios and how they may be developed. Facilitator: Steve Bolger

This group focused on the practical development of portfolios and the roles of people required to implement this method of training.

Group (c) Examination of the role of the personal training adviser/supervisor/tutor. Facilitator: Jim Rooney

This group examined the role of the personal training adviser as developed by one authority and related this to the current experience and practice of group members.

ACTION PLAN

Each individual received an action planning pro-forma which enabled them to address the following questions.

1. From the ideas generated so far, what piece of work would *I* like to take on?
2. Why?
3. What do I hope this work will achieve?

4. How will I know when I'm getting there?
5. What things have I got going for me? What things are in my way?
6. What concrete initiatives do I now take?
7. What support will I be needing and from whom?

PLENARY

The following points were amongst those raised in the plenary session:

- * There was a common concern about moving into a new area of work which participants hadn't experienced in their practice. The proposal to hold a pilot project in Wales was suggested.
- * A development of this kind highlighted further the need for a programme for training trainers in Wales.
- * In order to implement a portfolio method of training, the commitment of authorities and organisations to training would be crucial.
- * Currently six LEA's in England were implementing the portfolio approach and ten more were in the process of doing so. Motivation for so doing seemed to depend upon the level of dissatisfaction with current performance and the availability of energy and enthusiasm to implement change.

Welsh Office had indicated its willingness to make a financial contribution to the new Part-time Unit at CETYCW thereby opening the door to training delivery by the Unit in Wales. Steve Bolger invited youth service providers to make an approach to the Unit if they wished to have initial discussions about this.

It was clarified that the Welsh Office contribution to the Part-time Unit was on a similar basis to its contribution to other parts of CETYCW's work and that the role of the Partnership would be a negotiated role agreed between providers and the Unit.

It was stressed that to engage in a move towards portfolio-based training did not require commitment to a total package. The contract between the Unit and providers would take the form of a set of questions needing to be answered and a commitment to engage in a developmental process.

January 1987