

In-service Training via Conference Call and Internet Streaming. (A04-mask175509-Oral)

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Abstract:

It is increasingly difficult for Extension systems to adequately fund staff development for county agents. This is particularly true for large states where travel costs are significant. Fewer staff at all levels within Extension prohibit extended time away from the office. Technology advances offer training opportunities that combine low-cost, time savings, and staff convenience. Telephone conferencing is a low-tech, low-cost two-way communication that fosters feedback between trainers and participants. This method is especially appropriate for multiple sessions. This can also be combined with PowerPoint presentations placed on the web. Videoconferencing involves using Internet infrastructure and appropriate equipment to provide interactive face-to-face dialogue. Videoconferencing can be recorded to use later in other media (i.e., web, video, and PowerPoint presentations). While videoconferencing equipment is expensive (4000 dollars per site), savings from reduced travel of 14 people pays for one site. Agents responded positively to these techniques because of their time-savings and convenience.

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