CAPOD Funding Report

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<tr>
<th>Event /Course Title</th>
<th>Thinking on the Spot/ Government Knowledge</th>
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<td>Date of event</td>
<td>6th September 2016</td>
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1. **Brief description of Event (50-100 words):**

The event was a training course in Edinburgh at which the presenter outlined a number of tips and techniques for answering questions. These tips and techniques involved pausing for thought, using set methods for answering questions to give structure and practicing those methods with other participants. Participants were from all sectors but mainly the public sector and included many Universities.

2. **What were the benefits of attending and what did you gain from the experience in terms of transferable skills and knowledge.**

The course delivered on its brief of providing many tips and techniques of “thinking on the spot”. The practical exercises were well thought out, structured and, for the most part, fun. This made them memorable. The course made use of real life examples (mainly of prominent politicians) of when and how these techniques have been used to great effect. The benefits of the course is that you will have a good understanding of some of the most commons techniques. The course contained knowledge and skills which can be used in many ways, and with practice, hopefully reduce the amount of rambling that I have tended to do in the past whilst looking to answer questions.

3. **What actions will you be taking as a result of attending or by making new networking contacts.**

As a result of the course, I will be practicing to use these techniques in an authentic way. This will mean trying to find opportunities to consciously use the techniques so that I can practice them until they become more natural.

4. **Can you share any additional resources produced in connection with the event (e.g. feedback from participants, training resources, website links, and additional materials.**

A copy of the course notes is available from the following site (and they have been downloaded for future reference).

http://www.equalta.co.uk/course-downloads/thinking-on-the-spot-GOV.html

5. **Tips/experience learned from the event**

There was plenty of opportunity to practice the techniques. There was a lot of participation required and the homework that was given in advance was essential to get the best out of the day.
I particularly like the Past, Present, Future approach to answering questions that was discussed. This was supplemented with other techniques such as Benefits, Concerns and Ideas approach to answering questions. Acknowledge, Ask, Adapt, Announce, The Magic of Three. These are all explained in the course manual.

6. Any additional comments or information regarding the event
The presenter was good but quietly spoken. The venue was warm and noisy (as the windows had to be open) which sometimes made it difficult to hear the presenter.

I think I benefitted from the course more having on ‘assertiveness’ type courses in the past. Many of the approaches involve being assertive. Having said that, even without this prior knowledge, the time to think about how to organise one’s thoughts to make it coherent to others was invaluable.

As with all of these types of courses, they are only the starting point and require a commitment to start using them/ trying them out. It was great to meet with lots of different people with different backgrounds which added value to the day. The format of this course was, most definitely, effective and can be used in everyday situations.