

INTRODUCING THE VICTIMS CHARTER AS A FOUNDATIONAL COURSE

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Overview

- Background about NPS and training undertaken
- Training undertaken
- Approach to include Victims Charter as a foundation
- Methodology used
- Feedback on training
- Recommendations

BRIEF BACKGROUND

Research conducted by the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) in 2005 found that (1) in every (5) South Africans is still a victim of crime, and had no confidence in the Criminal Justice System

Research also showed that victims who's matters ended up in court were less confident in the Criminal Justice System than those whose matters did not.

Previous studies of the perceptions of court users have confirmed that negative experiences at court directly affect peoples perceptions of the CJS and decrease their willingness to report crime and testify in court

- Schonteich, M (2003) "NPA in the Dock"
SA Crime Quarterly, No 3, March 2003

CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE

As customers of the CJS, citizens have particular interactions with the NPA

- Firstly, as people vulnerable to crime
- Secondly, as victims of crime
- Thirdly, as witnesses

SERVICE DELIVERY TO CUSTOMERS

Improvement strategy *inter alia*:

- Empower victims, complainant, witnesses and the vulnerable and treat them with dignity and respect
- Enhance the experience of the CJS for victims, complainants and witnesses at court
- Promote service standards for victims of crime

- Ensure secondary victimisation is eliminated
- Improve customer satisfaction

ADDRESSING THE NEED

1. Prosecution:

(process of instituting and conducting criminal proceedings against persons charged with the commission of crimes)

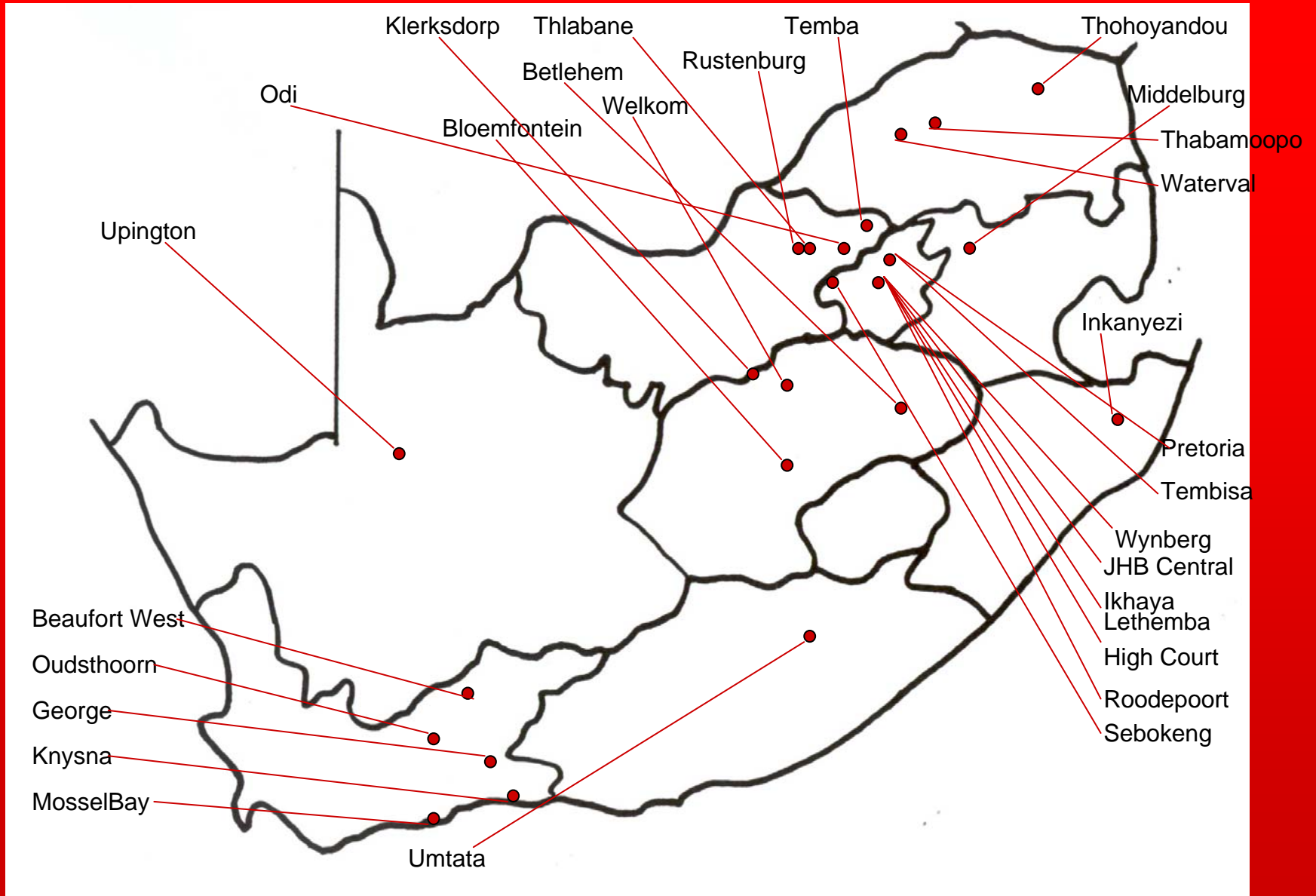
2. Court preparation:

(Victims and witnesses are the key beneficiaries of court preparation, customer care initiative)

TRAINING UNDERTAKEN

- NPS has trained 68 Court Preparation Officials with a further 72 in phase 2 and 3 (to be appointed)
- Identified sites for the training are both local (cluster) and national workshops
- Alignment process in place to comply with SAQA's requirements
- Education Training & Development Practitioner(s) in process of accreditation

Court Preparation Officers Nationally



- Cluster training includes relevant prosecutors and court preparation officials at local level:

Number of local training interventions
X 21

- National Workshops include external and internal trainers for court preparation officials.

Number of National Workshops X 2

TYPES OF TRAINING

- Relevant legislation, policies and procedures, namely the Victims Charter
- Information on victims rights and responsibilities
- Preparation of the witness for giving of evidence in a credible and reliable manner (without going into the merits)

Types (continued)

- Stress Management (Witness & CPO)
- Core function content (developmental stages and admin)
- Standards and protocol for service delivery

(Minimum Standards for Court Preparation in process of development)

- Appropriate referral system
- Public Education and awareness programmes (Schools & Courts)

Model

- P.E.A.C.E.
 - Adopted for our South African court context
 - Provides a framework within court structures
 - Interview model used by Police Services
 - Pioneered by Professor R. Bull and Gary Shaw, University of Portsmouth, UK

INTERVIEW MODEL University Portsmouth UK

- **P PLAN & PREPARE**
- **E ENGAGE & EXPLAIN**
- **A ACCOUNT & ASSESS**
- **C CLOSURE & CONTAINMENT**
- **E EVALUATE**



METHODOLOGY

- Active participation & experiential learning

If I hear it, I remember it

If I see it, I remember it

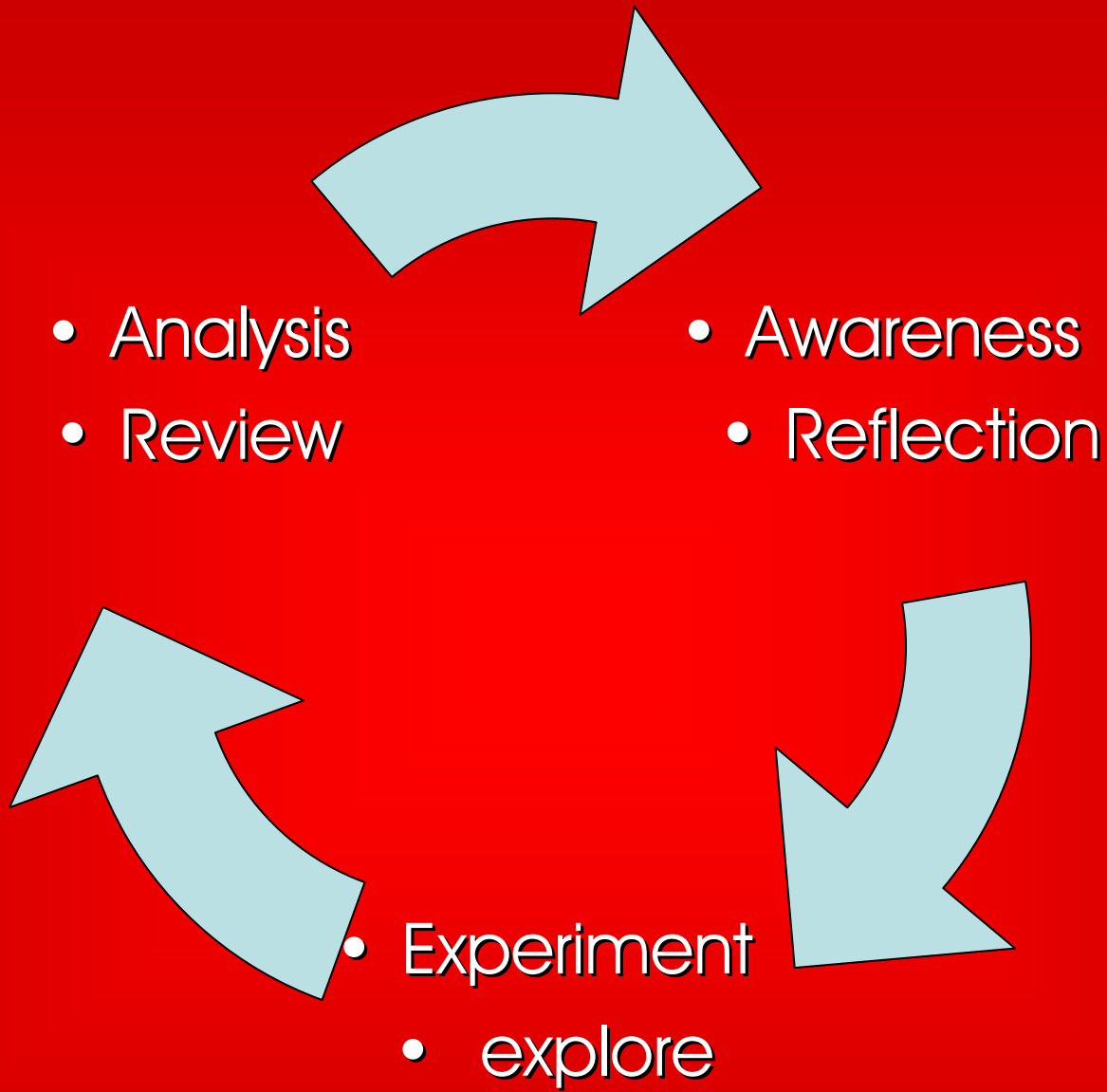
If I do it, I know how !!

- Andragogics (learning styles)

Auditory

Visual

Kinesthetic



Training Plan (W;W;W;W;H)

- Purpose
- Specific outcomes
- Order of training
- Assessment strategy
- Formative assessment activities:
 - > Role – play
 - > Questionnaire
 - > Observation
 - > Puzzle
 - > Group activities
 - > Open ended question

Feedback on Training

(Verbal and written format from learners, facilitators, supervisors. Pre –Post)

Strengths:

- Appropriate content for on the job skills development
- Applicable to witness needs
- Knowledge and insight as to roles and responsibilities of other role- players
- Good activities and group participation

Weaknesses

- Not comprehensive enough
- Only one part of the training module relevant to Victims Charter
(learners requested more time allocated to the Victims Charter during training)

Opportunity

- To engage the witness fully in the decision making process and of the CJS as a whole
- Correctly refer the witness for appropriate assistance / interventions
- Improved intersectional co-operation
- Transform abstract rights provided in the Victims Charter to real benefits for victims of crime

Threats

- Budget constraints
- Training time limited (out of court hours)
- Lose momentum of the importance of the Victims Charter
- Policy priority changes

Recommendations

- Inter - departmental training meetings / forum
- Improved communication strategies (pamphlets / handouts / contact details of other departments in the field)

“All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing”

