

Successful Strategies in Forestry Extension: A World View

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Extension education is becoming increasingly important in our changing world, through the provision of opportunities that empower local people to take a stronger role in managing their natural resources for economic development and environmental protection. Throughout the world there are many different models for organizing extension programs, many of them are tailored to meet local needs and are highly effective. In October of 2003 the IUFRO Extension Working Party hosted a conference in Troutdale, Oregon, with a focus on successful extension strategies from throughout the world. At this conference 35 papers were delivered, and a collection of 119 “best practices” were distilled from these papers. These were further condensed into three groupings as follows: practices associated with learners (16), practices associated with extensionists (7), and practices associated with the educational approach (22). Following this process, the 500 members of the IUFRO Extension Working Party, representing 70 countries, were surveyed to determine the degree of adoption of these practices, which we came to call “successful strategies”, as in each of the originating papers these strategies in some way led to the success of the program. Extensionists were asked to indicate the use and appropriateness of each strategy to their programs. In this paper the results will be summarized and discussed on a world basis, using the 110 responses received. Some of the strategies were widely adopted throughout the world. For example, for the strategy *deliver practical up-to-date information*, 97 percent they use often or sometimes (85 percent often and 12 percent sometimes); however for the strategy *hire learners to work on projects to build trust and spend funds locally*, only 32 percent indicated they use the strategy often or sometimes (12 percent often and 20 percent sometimes). Additionally, barriers to adoption were provided via open-ended questions in the survey. Common barriers included lack of funding, time, and human resources.