

Parents as Learners

Fulfilling the Promise

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Principles of Adult Education

- 1. Adults have a foundation of life experiences and knowledge. They relate new knowledge and information to previously learned information and experiences.**

Therefore, help relate new material to what is already known; tap into experience.

- 2. Adults are generally autonomous and prefer self-directed learning**

Therefore, provide for some choices and control over the place, pace and options for learning.

- 3. Adults are goal-oriented; they have a purpose, goal or need for learning.**

Therefore, the more relevant the learning is, the more learning will take place.

- 4. Adults are practical; they want to learn something they can apply;**

Therefore, show the relationship between what they are learning and how they can use it. Provide opportunity for adults to practice and reflect and help them discover why the content matters to them, their clientele and their communities.

- 5. Adults are people whose changing physiological needs (vision, hearing, and physical comfort) impact learning. Learning can be impacted as much as 25% by the physical effects of the learning environment.**

Therefore, attend to such physical considerations as learning spaces/rooms, adequate lighting, comfortable room temperature and air flow, a good sound system, seating arrangements that encourage interaction and foster a sense of community, comfortable chairs, room set-ups that allow for movement, refreshments and readily available drinking water.

- 6. Learning is an active process and adults prefer to participate actively.**

Therefore, make provision for active participation and hands-on learning.

- 7. Learning that is applied immediately is retained longer and is more likely to be used.**

Therefore, employ techniques that allow adults to immediately apply material in a practical way.

- 8. Learning is facilitated when adults are aware of their progress.**

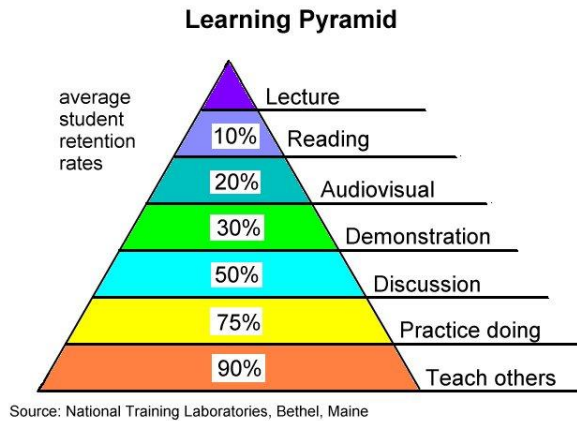
Therefore, use techniques that provide opportunities for self-appraisal.

Organizing a Presentation

Joseph Levine, Michigan State University suggests adult educators follow the following six basic principles in organizing presentations for adult learners.

1. Tell the adults what you're about to tell them.
2. Organize your material for presentation in a logical order.
3. Don't feel that you have to tell them everything.
4. Understand what you want the adults to do with the information you are presenting.
5. Know when to teach and when to learn.
6. Help the adults transfer the concepts to their own situations.

Learning – Retention



Teaching Tools & Techniques

Analogies, Story Telling, Quotes
Brainstorming
Case Studies
Demonstrations
Discussion
Exams/Quizzes
Exhibits
Field Trips
Films/Video/Cassette Tapes
Flip Charts/Chalkboard
Games, Brainteasers
Guest Speakers
Handouts/Fact Sheets
In-Basket-Question/Answer
Independent Study
Lecture/Mini-Lectures
Listening
Logs and Journals
Music-Listening & Singing
Newspaper & Magazines
Panel Discussion
Pictures
Presentations-Speeches, Team Teaching
Props/Imagery
Questioning
Reading/Books
Research
Role Playing Skits and Pantomime
Small Group Work
Television/Satellite Broadcasts

Ice Breakers

Why use an icebreaker?

1. Create a positive group atmosphere
2. Help people to relax
3. Break down social barriers
4. Energize & motivate
5. Help people to think outside the box
6. Help people to get to know one another

When you are planning to use ice breakers ask yourself these questions:

1. Why am I thinking about using an ice breaker?
2. What would be the result if I didn't use an ice breaker?
3. What ice breaker could create the experience needed?
4. How will this group react to the ice breaker? (Sometimes you may go in with a plan and decide ... "no it won't work with this group".)
5. How should I introduce it, facilitate it, and close it?
6. How will I know if it is successful?
7. What's the worst that could happen?
8. How much time do I have for an ice breaker?
9. Is the ice breaker appropriate for diverse audiences?
10. Am I prepared to deliver the ice breaker – am I comfortable with the activity, do I have the supplies etc.?

Peripheral Learning Tools

Peripheral teaching-learning tools are resources for communicating content in a non-conscious, non-directive way. Brain-and-learning research suggests that up to 99% of learning is non-conscious. We're not aware of learning taking place. Peripheral learning tools are used to contribute to and reinforce learning.

Compliment learning by creating and using resources that are colorful, engaging, and entertaining, using quotations, cartoons, images, photographs, graphs, etc. in interesting yet readable fonts, that help to reinforce the content being addressed.

Select content that:

- Is relevant and critical to the learner
- Can be communicated in brief statements, thought-provoking questions, and/or images
- Is likely to stimulate reflection, discussion, and co-learning

Post content on:

- Large easy-to-read posters for mounting on walls
- Table tents
- Learners' nametags
- Welcome signs at meeting space entrance

Asking Questions

As educators we tend to ask questions in the "knowledge" category 80% to 90% of the time. These questions are not bad, but using them all the time is. Try to utilize higher order level of questions. These questions require much more "brain power" and a more extensive and elaborate answer. Below are the six question categories as defined by Bloom. From Bloom, et al., 1956

- **KNOWLEDGE**

- Remembering;
- Memorizing;
- Recognizing;
- Recalling identification and
- Recall of information
 - Who, what, when, where, how ...?
 - Describe

- **COMPREHENSION**

- Interpreting;
- Translating from one medium to another;
- Describing in one's own words;
- Organization and selection of facts and ideas
 - Retell...

- **APPLICATION**

- Problem solving;
- Applying information to produce some result;
- Use of facts, rules and principles
 - How is...an example of...?
 - How is...related to...?
 - Why is...significant?

- **ANALYSIS**

- Subdividing something to show how it is put together;
- Finding the underlying structure of a communication;
- Identifying motives;
- Separation of a whole into component parts
 - What are the parts or features of...?
 - Classify...according to...
 - Outline/diagram...
 - How does...compare/contrast with...?
 - What evidence can you list for...?

- **SYNTHESIS**

- Creating a unique, original product that may be in verbal form or may be a physical object;
- Combination of ideas to form a new whole
 - What would you predict/infer from...?
 - What ideas can you add to...?
 - How would you create/design a new...?
 - What might happen if you combined...?
 - What solutions would you suggest for...?

- **EVALUATION**

- Making value decisions about issues;
- Resolving controversies or differences of opinion;
- Development of opinions,
 - Judgments or decisions
 - What do you think about...?
 - What is the most important...?
 - How would you decide about...?

Additional resources on Adult Education and Engaging Learners:

Bloom, B. S. (Ed.). (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives, the classification of educational goals, handbook I: Cognitive domain*. New York, Toronto: Longman, Green.

Robinson & Russell D. (1994). *An introduction to helping adults learn and change*, West Bend, WI: Omnibook Company.

Canadian Literacy Enhancement Society (n.d.) *Exercises for the brain*. Retrieved February 15, 2006, from http://www.literacyplus.ca/LFL/brain_exercises.htm

Levine, S. Joseph, Ph.D. Michigan State University, Principles for Teaching LearnerAssociates.net

Rutgers Cooperative Research & Extension, www.rce.rutgers.edu

University of Minnesota Extension Service (1999). *Facilitation resources* (Vol. 1-8). Minneapolis: Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.

Warmups for Meeting Leaders, Sue Bianchi, Jan Butler, David Richey, University Associates, Inc. 1990.

The big book of icebreakers. Edie West, McGraw-Hill, 1999. LEADS Curriculum Notebook. Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension, June 2002.

Warm Ups & Wind Downs: 101 Activities for Moving & Motivating Groups, Sandra Peyser Hazouri & Miriam Smith McLaughlin, Educational Media Corporation, 1993.

Get Things Going! 50 Asset Building Activities for Workshops, Presentations & Meetings, Search Institute, 2000.

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