

PRINCIPLES OF ADULT EDUCATION





Purpose

To understand how adults learn and thereby equip an individual training adults with the necessary tools to successfully train adults.



Introduction

- Reference is “**The Eight Principles of Adult Education**” Published May 19, 2009 by: [Maxwell Calloway](#)
- Adult education, formally known as “Andragogy”, can be defined as the set of specific skills and associated knowledge geared towards the educational development of adults.
- Adults don't learn in the same way as children do because their personality structure is almost fully developed at that stage in their lives, along with a series of habits and practices that have been acquired during their lifetime.
- Therefore, the learning process must take into account how an adult perceives not only what is being taught, but also themselves; this includes, but is not limited to: considering their previous learning experiences, considering their temporal perspective - especially when it comes to short term application of what is being taught, and matching education to their problems, needs, interests and expectations.



Eight Principles of Adult Education

- Adults will only learn when they want to.

Simply put, no adult will learn under pressure. They must be motivated to want to acquire new knowledge or skills that will help them in their work or day-to-day life. Thus, their desire to learn can decrease or increase depending on the approach and methodology that is being used.

- Adults will only learn when they feel they need to.

Basically, any attained knowledge will only "make sense" if the adult can see the applicability of what is being learned, and this will usually have to happen at a very early stage in the learning process in order to keep interest alive. Adults only really want to learn that which will help them in the short term.



Eight Principles of Adult Education

- Adults learn by doing.

No adult enjoys being fed vast amounts of theory with little or no practice. As we grow older, we much prefer a "hands-on" approach to things. The learning will be much more effective if we can take an active role in the learning process. Thus it's important to encourage objective discussion both in analyzing the problem and coming up with a solution.

- Adults will only learn by solving problems they can associate with their reality.

If they can't apply what is being learned to some issue they have to deal with in their lives, the learning process will be significantly hindered. Thus adult education must pay less attention to analyzing documented case studies and imaginary scenarios and focus on "real world" problems and practical assimilation of what is being taught.



Eight Principles of Adult Education

- Experience will interfere in adult education.

No person likes to be told that their "tried and tested" way of doing things is "wrong". Thus, any new information being presented must be integrated with their own experience in such a way as to complement or even supplement what they already know. Categorically labeling something as the "right" or "best" way is a pitfall that should be avoided.

- Adults learn better in an informal environment.

At this point in their lives, adults won't put up with a "schoolhouse lecturer" who demands that they sit up straight in their desks. They require a more relaxed atmosphere; one that will stimulate them to participate, thus allowing them to accept every ounce of new knowledge as a product that will solve an issue they are dealing with.



Eight Principles of Adult Education

- Adults need feedback.

If one thing is preserved from their childhood days, it's the constant need to know how well they are doing. So, it's important that learning process provide adults with constructive feedback, through the use of artifices such as self-evaluation questionnaires and activities.

- Adults require a variety of teaching methods.

It's important that different approaches be used when trying to pass on knowledge to adults. The use of audiovisual materials is highly recommended; as is the use of interactive activities such as role-playing, mock classes and presentations from the students.

One of the most effective techniques that can be used to finish off a training program is to have the adults, either individually or in groups, prepare a small (5 minute) presentation on some aspect or subject that was covered in the course. This will help the instructor to get an idea of how well the information has been absorbed, as well as allow the "students" to put into practice some of what they have learned in a controlled environment.



How Adults Learn

Percent Retained	Method	Learning Style
10%	Reading	Verbal (Passive)
20%	Hearing Words	Verbal (Passive)
30%	Looking at Pictures	Verbal (Passive)
50%	Watching a Movie	Verbal (Passive)
50%	Watching a Demonstration	Verbal (Passive)
70%	Participating in a discussion	Participating (Active)
70%	Giving a talk	Participating (Active)
90%	Doing a dramatic presentation	Participating (Active)
90%	Simulating a real experience	Participating (Active)
90%	Doing the real thing	Participating (Active)



Classroom management

- Reference **“Classroom management with "difficult" students”** by [Calsue Murray](#)
- The most important realization is that you, nor anyone else, can control and manage the behaviors of students for them.
- Students have to be motivated, from within, to control and manage their own behaviors, because that is what they want to do.
- “Forced” compliance is not for adults and only lasts as long as the “enforcer” is present.



Classroom Management cont.

- The most "difficult" students are often likely to be the most intellectually capable. It is probable that their high intelligence is what enables them to succeed at being devious, deceitful and manipulative.
- "Difficult" students are quick to learn. They are quick to "take charge". They are quick to take advantage of situations. They are good leaders. They are good listeners and anxious to be listened to.



Classroom Management cont.

- Many "difficult" students have deficiencies in basic reading, writing and mathematical skills. They are likely to be ashamed and sensitive about their deficiencies. They are desirous of overcoming their deficiencies, but they don't want to be embarrassed, in the process. They appreciate teachers who can and will teach them without making them feel more ashamed than they already are.



Classroom Management cont.

- These "difficult" students become less and less "difficult" as more and more of their ideas and suggestions are incorporated into the management of their classrooms. Students who help to establish the standards of operation for their classrooms are the best ones to help in the orientation of new students.
- The majority of "difficult" students are avid learners. They are curious and creative. They do not hesitate to accept intellectual challenges and are proud of their ability to solve problems. They are also proud of their academic achievements.



Classroom Management cont.

- Collaboratively establish “ground rules”
- Use tools to share “talk time” toss a ball
- Co-opt difficult students to help you
- Co-opt students that show promise in subject matter
- Acknowledge opinions, ideas, and contributions
- Get a gun 😊