

Designing with Adult Learning Theory

Adult learners need to know why they should learn something. Adults spend considerable effort exploring benefits and cost of learning new information or skills prior to investing time in learning. Training adults is based on valid needs of the target learner. All information provided about the training, including lesson plans, should include reasons and benefits for learning. Activities should be based around real work experiences.

Adults learners desire self-directing. Adulthood has built in a deep need to be viewed as responsible and self-sufficient. Trainers should design training situations that are self-paced where learners control the experience including the direction amount of knowledge to c and the path for the learning. Incorporate as much search and discovery into the training as possible for experienced learners. Present training with as many options for learning as possible.

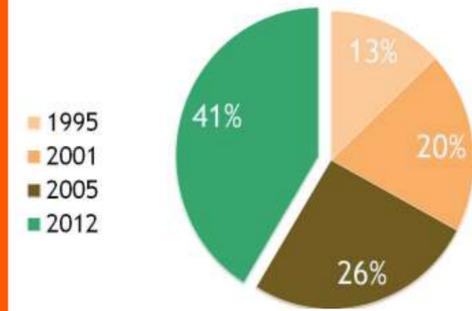
Adults have a higher volume and different quality of experience than youth. Adults bring into the learning situation a background of experience full of rich resource for deeper meaning of content. Bridging the gap between the old and the new through discussions and reflections allow for permanent learning.

Life situations ready adults to learn what they need to know or be able to do for effective performance. Adults again must see a need for training before learning will take place. Provide training, as close to the time needed as possible. Don't do an information dump on learners, calling it training, and tell learners they need to know the information for future use.

Adults enter a learning experience with a task/problem-centered orientation to learning. Adults with life and work experiences develop a task-centered or problem-centered orientation to learning. If training is developed around problem solving, then adults will learn content with the intention of using it. Design training so that learners solve real life scenarios, with information as reference material. Teach learners how to use the information to successfully complete the problem solving activities.

Adults are motivated to learn by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. Adult learners respond to extrinsic motivators such as promotion, bonuses, etc. up to the point that they are reasonably well satisfied. However, the more potent and persistent motivators are such intrinsic motivators as the need for self-esteem, broadened responsibilities, power, and achievement. Learning activities should clearly demonstrate to the learner where he or she would benefit in their jobs. Quality training built around the concept of nourishing those intrinsic motivators' help adults learn. Learning feeds on itself and suggests to the learner to become even more proficient in the job.

% of adults participating in adult learning programs



Theories applied to Adult learning Theory			
Orientation	Assumptions on Learning	Instructor's Role	Emphasis
Humanist	Learners naturally progress toward higher competencies	Facilitator of learning	Helping learner discover learning on their own
Behaviorist	Direction and content of learning is controlled by stimuli from external environment, not the learner	Focus on specific goals and objectives	Environment is controlled by selecting positive stimuli and reinforcing desired responses and negative responses are discouraged
Social Learning	People learn through observations and Interactions with other people in a social context	Model or provides applicable models or facilitates social interactions	Social setting and interactions
Cognitive	Learning is a process happening within learner who attempts to make sense of their world and applies meaning to their experiences	Creates proper conditions for learning	Materials are organized and structured for learners to assimilate meaning and gain knowledge
Critical Reflective	Learner involvement with critical reflection for them to identify and evaluate assumptions, beliefs and values of their thoughts, feelings and actions that lead to learning beyond cognition	Critical analyst and simulator of critical reflection who challenges assumptions	Learner and instructor are equal with the educator simultaneously falling on the instructor and the learner

Andragogy Defined

The term **andragogy** is based on the Greek word **aner** that means man not boy. Therefore the term andragogy is the art or science of teaching adults and helping them learn. **Pedagogue** is the art and science of teaching children and helping them learn as **paidagogia** is Greek for the office of a child's tutor.

Interactivity

To involve adults in their own learning and adhere to adult learning principles, **introduce interactivity** wherever possible into your instruction.

