



LEARNINGOUTCOMES | 
Learning outcomes in adult education

PODCAST 1

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS: MASTERING INTERPERSONAL SKILLS



Co-funded by
the European Union

EVACO

Kompleksowe Wyposażanie Obiektów Gastronomicznych
Szkolenia Kwalifikacyjne i Zawodowe

IMPULSI
EST 2000

Podcast: Interview with Biljana Velevska – Master trainer for trainers and expert in organizational development, and Katerina Zlatanovska Popova, a certified trainer for adults, both with international training experience

“In order to understand better the challenges of trainers working with adults, could you elaborate on the distinctions between training adults and students?”

Katerina: Regarding training, adults differ from students in several key ways. Adults typically have more life experience, diverse backgrounds, and professional responsibilities compared to traditional students. They are often motivated by practical relevance and the desire to apply new knowledge directly to their personal or professional lives. Additionally, adult learners tend to prefer self-directed learning approaches and value flexibility in their learning experiences. Trainers must consider these differences when designing and delivering training programs, ensuring that the content is relevant, engaging, and tailored to meet the unique needs and preferences of adult learners.

“What specific considerations are involved in training adults and working as a trainer with adult learners?”

Katerina: Firstly, recognizing the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and learning styles of adult learners is essential. Tailoring training materials and methods to accommodate these differences ensures maximum engagement and effectiveness. Additionally, understanding the motivations and expectations of adult learners is crucial for designing relevant and impactful training experiences. Moreover,



fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment where adult learners feel respected and valued promotes active participation and enhances learning outcomes. Lastly, being adaptable and responsive to the needs and feedback of adult learners throughout the training process is vital for facilitating their growth and development effectively.

"What strategies do you employ to keep adult learners engaged and motivated during training sessions?"

Biljana: To keep adult learners engaged and motivated during training sessions, I employ a variety of strategies. Firstly, I ensure that the content is relevant and applicable to their professional or personal goals, making connections to real-world scenarios whenever possible. I also incorporate interactive activities, group discussions, and hands-on exercises to encourage active participation and facilitate peer learning. Additionally, I regularly check in with learners to gauge their understanding and address any questions or concerns they may have. Creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment where participants feel valued and respected is also crucial for maintaining motivation. Finally, I leverage technology and multimedia tools to enhance engagement and cater to different learning preferences.

"Could you provide an example of a time when you successfully tailored training materials and methods based on participant backgrounds and expectations?"

Biljana: Preparing to work with diverse groups requires flexibility, openness, and continuous improvement. By undertaking these, trainers can effectively support the development and learning of all participants, regardless of their background.



Before initiating the training, take the time to understand your participants by gathering comprehensive information through surveys or registration forms, covering aspects such as cultural backgrounds, education, professional experiences, and training expectations. This knowledge will enable you to tailor materials and instructional methods effectively. Additionally, promote inclusivity and cultural awareness by acknowledging the diverse contexts that may influence group interactions. Avoid assumptions and stereotypes, and familiarize yourself with participants' cultural norms and values to ensure that everyone feels respected and valued throughout the training process.

“What would be your key suggestion for trainers working with adult learners?”

Katerina: My final recommendation for trainers working with adults is to prioritize flexibility and adaptability in your approach. Tailor your training methods to accommodate these differences, offering a mix of instructional formats and opportunities for self-directed learning. Additionally, foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment where adult learners feel empowered to engage actively and contribute to their own learning journey.

Biljana: In my opinion, the key recommendation for trainers working with adult learners is to prioritize relevance and practicality in your training content. Adult learners are often motivated by the desire to acquire knowledge and skills that they can immediately apply in their personal or professional lives. Therefore, ensure that your training materials are directly applicable to their goals and challenges, providing real-world examples and scenarios whenever possible.



Additionally, address the following:

- **Resistance to Change:** Some adults may have fixed mindsets or feel resistant to new methods and technologies, especially if they have been out of an educational setting for a long time or have established ways of doing things. Overcoming this resistance and encouraging openness to new ideas and practices can be a significant hurdle.
- **Technology Utilization:** In today's digital age, many training programs incorporate online learning platforms and digital tools. Trainers must ensure that all participants are comfortable with the technology used, which can vary widely among adult learners based on their exposure and access to technology.
- **Time Constraints:** Adult learners often manage multiple commitments, including work, family, and social obligations. Trainers face the challenge of designing courses that are flexible and concise without compromising the depth and integrity of the educational experience.

Finally, continue to stay updated on emerging trends and best practices in adult education, incorporating new technologies and methodologies to enhance the effectiveness of your training programs.

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