

PROFESSIONAL ADULT TRAINER: EFFECTIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS



THE TERM “ADULT”

01

The term "adult", allows for many interpretations and can vary depending on the social and cultural context in which it is studied.

04

Many people think of adults in terms of the chronological age of an individual, which gives a very limited range, since the age criterion varies from society to society and can change over time.

02

UNESCO, aware of the ambiguity surrounding the term 'adult', adopted the term 'education for young people and adults' to refer to the learning and training of people of post-school age in the 15-year-old age group.

03

In addition to chronological age and the legal definition of adulthood, the term "adult" can be defined based on social and psychological criteria. From a social perspective, adulthood can be linked to the social roles that are expected, e.g. the role of an employee, spouse, parent, etc.



ADULT EDUCATION

The most commonly used definitions of adult education are provided by UNESCO and the OECD:

A

UNESCO definition: "The term 'adult education' means the whole set of structured educational processes, regardless of their content, level and method, formal or otherwise, whether they extend or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities, as well as apprenticeships, in which people who are considered adults by the society to which they belong develop their skills, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or give them a new direction and cause changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the dual perspective of full personal development and participation in sustainable and independent social, economic and cultural development".

B

OECD definition: "Adult education refers to any educational activity or programme deliberately designed by an education provider to meet any educational need or interest that may be experienced at any stage of life by a person who has passed the legal age for leaving education and whose primary occupation is no longer in education. Its scope therefore includes non-vocational, vocational, general, formal and non-formal studies, as well as education aimed at a collective social goal."

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ADULT LEARNERS AND CHILDREN

David C.M. Taylor and Hossam Hamdy defined the differences between adult learners and learners in six ways:

- the need for knowledge (why do I need to know this?);
- students' self-awareness (I am responsible for my own decisions);
- the role of students' experiences (I have experiences that I value and should be respected);
- readiness to learn (I have to learn because the circumstances in which I function change);
- learning mindset (learning will help me cope with the situation I'm in)
- motivation (I learn because I want to).



ANDRAGOGY

Andragogy as a science of adult learning was developed in Europe in the 1950s.

Its pioneer and promoter as a theory and model of adult learning in the 1970s was Malcolm Knowles, an American practitioner and theoretician of adult education.

According to Knowles, the term "andragogy" comes from the Greek root – agog – meaning "guidance". "Andra" was translated as "adult," which made andragogy an art and science to help adults learn, as opposed to pedagogy, which in Greek means to guide a child. It should be noted, however, that the term pedagogy has been used since the times of ancient Greece, and the German educator Alexander Kapp used the term andragogy for the first time only in 1833. Andragogy was thus defined by Knowles as the art and science of helping adults learn, and recognized adults as independent learners and teachers as facilitators of the learning process.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ANDRAGOGY AND PEDAGOGY

Researchers distinguish 6 basic principles by which the theory of andragogy differs from pedagogy:

01

Adults are intrinsically motivated and self-directed.

02

Adults bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences.

03

Adults are goal-oriented. Adult learners become ready to learn when they "feel the need to learn to deal with more rewarding tasks or problems in real life".

04

Adults are relevancy oriented. Adult learners want to know how what they are learning relates to what they want to achieve.

05

Adults are practical. Through hands-on fieldwork experiences and real-life situations, students move from classroom mode and manual problem-solving where they can recognize firsthand how what they are learning can be applied to life and work context.

05

Adult students like to be respected. The role of the educator is to facilitate the transition of students towards more independent and responsible learning, as well as to support their intrinsic motivation to learn.





THE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF ANDRAGOGY

Andragogy makes the following assumptions about the learning design called the 4 principles of andragogy:

01

Adults need to know why they need to learn something

02

Adults treat learning as problem-solving

03

Adults need to learn through experience

04

Adults learn best when the topic has direct value

In practice, andragogy means that adult education must focus more on the process and less on the content being taught. Strategies such as case studies, role-playing, simulations, and self-assessment are most useful. Educators take on the role of facilitator, not lecturer or evaluator.





CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS

Cechy dorosłych uczniów, opracowane przez Knowlesa i stanowiące podstawę modelu andragogiki:

- Concept of the learner – adults have the need and ability for self-direction and self-determination. Educators have a responsibility to encourage and nurture this tendency.
- The role of learners' experiences - the experiences and knowledge that adult learners bring to the educational process are a rich source of knowledge for themselves and for others. Adult educators respond better to learning that takes place through their active rather than passive participation. Therefore, it is more appropriate to use experiential techniques.
- Adults are goal-oriented – it is important for adult learners to see that the goals of the educational program coincide with their own.



CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS

Cechy dorosłych uczniów, opracowane przez Knowlesa i stanowiące podstawę modelu andragogiki:

- Willingness to learn – People become ready to learn something when they feel the need to learn it in order to be able to better cope with tasks or problems in everyday life. Adults need to understand why they are learning a particular topic.
- Learning mindset – emphasis should be placed on skills that students can apply to real-life situations, rather than abstract concepts. Adults are more focused on problems than content.
- Learning incentives – students' "perseverance" in learning is supported when their incentives to learn are internal rather than external.



CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS

According to Kokkos, adult students:

- Before starting the educational process, they set clear goals. Possible educational objectives include:
 - Professional development,
 - performing social roles (e.g. activities for parents),
 - Personal development,
- for status,
- have more life experience,
- have developed their own preferred learning style,
- tend to actively participate and expect active involvement in the learning process.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING

01

Another basic theory of adult learning is transformational learning, which is the latest and currently most widely reported theory. Instead of focusing on the characteristics of the adult learner, as andragogy does, transformational learning focuses on the cognitive process of meaning-making.

02

This type of learning is considered a theory of adult learning, since transformational learning depends on adult life experiences and a more mature level of cognitive functioning than in childhood.

03

Learning in adulthood is often about more than just adding information. It also allows us to make sense of our experience and can result in a change in beliefs, attitudes, or perspectives. Perspective transformation is key to this type of learning.





TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

In transformational learning theory, there are typical phases that learners in adult education go through. These phases are crucial when it comes to helping adult educators change their previous perceptions as they gain new information and insights.

- 01** A confusing dilemma
- 02** Self-examination
- 03** Critical evaluation of assumptions
- 04** Planning the course of action
- 05** Gain the knowledge or skills you need to execute your new plan
- 06** Exploring and trying new roles
- 07** Building self-efficacy in new roles and relationships



KOLB CYCLE

The learning styles proposed by David A. Kolb are widely used as one of the most well-known theories of learning styles.

Kolb's theory focuses on the student's personal development and perspective. Unlike the conventional teaching method, the student is responsible for directing his or her learning process through experiential learning.

Experiential learning allows students to apply knowledge in real-life situations.

Experiential learning encourages active participation, critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills.



KOLB CYCLE

Kolb's theory of experiential learning consists of two levels:

- cycle of four experiences and a combination of four,
- four distinct learning styles.

According to Kolb, learning is the acquisition of abstract experiences that can be flexibly applied to various situations. In Kolb's theory of education, the experiential approach provides impetus for the development of ideas and new concepts.



KOLB CYCLE

According to Kolb's theory, learning is a four-stage, never-ending process in which a person acquires knowledge by gaining new experiences. All these types of activities and the information obtained are part of holistic development, increase creativity and foster the emergence of new ideas.

According to David A. Kolb, we can talk about effective learning when a training participant or student goes through the next stages of the cycle, which are:

- experience,
- reflection,
- conceptualization and
- experimenting.





KOLB CYCLE

The Four Learning Styles by David A. Kolb:

01 **DIVERGENT**

03 **CONVERGENT**

02 **ASSIMILATION**

04 **COURTEOUS**



David Kolb's four learning cycles and learning styles can be used to apply new ideas to teaching techniques, according to students' choice of style:

01

Enables teachers to define more specific learning outcomes for students.

02

It enables the design of coaching exercises, instructional techniques, and training sessions that allow the lifelong learner to effectively understand information in formal learning situations.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE KOLB SERIES

03

Helps teachers personalize any instructional techniques for students according to the 4 stages of the Kolb experiential learning cycle.

BARRIERS TO ADULT EDUCATION

There are three basic categories of barriers to adult education:

- **Institutional** barriers.
- **Situational** barriers.
- **Internal** barriers.

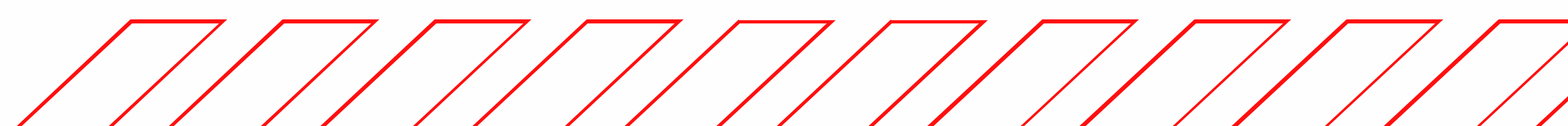


BARRIERS TO ADULT EDUCATION

Researchers point out that internal obstacles play a key role in a student's decision to continue an educational program and invest in learning.

Intrinsic barriers play a key role in adult learning and are classified as barriers that stem from pre-existing knowledge and those that relate to emotional factors:

- **Prior knowledge** - adult participants of the training have already invested emotional capital in acquiring this knowledge and experience. They will spend much more to defend the integrity of this knowledge, so new changes in teaching will sometimes face strong resistance.



BARRIERS TO ADULT EDUCATION

- **Emotional factors** – anxiety is defined as an emotional reaction often occurring in adult students, which can be attributed to, among other things:
 - negative self-image,
 - fear of failure,
 - fear of criticism,
 - fear of disappointment and fear of the unknown.

In addition, the anxiety experienced by adult learners may relate to situations that arise as part of social roles or specific to the situation they are taking on at a given moment (e.g. parent, unemployed, refugee, service recipient, etc.).





LEARNING STYLES

People learn best in different ways. Learning styles indicate the most effective teaching methods for different types of learners. When developing training content and delivery methods, recognizing these differences increases the effectiveness of training.

The three different learning styles are:

- Visual.
- Auditory.
- Kinesthetic.

Although we learn through all styles, each person has one dominant learning style.

Visual learners absorb more from the material they see, auditory learners from the material they hear, kinesthetic learners – from performing a task.



PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING

Adults must have a desire to learn before learning can take place. In order for an adult to be motivated to learn, the following criteria should be met:

01

the relationship of the course to the goals of the adult.

02

"comfortable" learning atmosphere.

04

respect for the participant's life experiences.

03

the participant's sense of maintaining control over learning.





PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING

Participation

Adults learn best when they can participate in the learning process. Participation helps all students, regardless of their learning style. Their participation contributes to their commitment to learning on the course.

It should be noted that students generally remember:

- 50% of what they hear and see,
- 70% of what they say,
- 90% of what they do and talk about.

Active participation in the learning process ensures that participants acquire and retain as much information as possible from the class.





PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING

Self-discovery

Good training programs allow participants to discover the answers on their own.

Self-discovery differs from standard training participation in that participants may be asked to complete activities before presenting content. Thanks to self-discovery, participants draw on their own experiences and knowledge to create their own new knowledge.

For example, the instructor can provide self-discovery opportunities as part of a course that introduces audit procedures. The instructor can arrange an audit for students before attending the course, assign specific topics for students to explore, and allow them to share what they learned about the audit at the beginning of the class.





PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING

Early achievement

Adults should experience positive achievements at the beginning of the training. The instructor can create this opportunity by offering a simple task in the first hour of training and providing positive feedback to participants on how the task has been completed.

Achievement at an early stage of training creates a positive atmosphere conducive to adult learning.


This atmosphere reduces the anxiety of adults who are concerned about their ability to learn new information or cope in the classroom, especially among higher-ranking participants. Therefore, the instructor must ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate and succeed at the beginning of the class. Early achievements also give the instructor the opportunity to praise and give positive feedback. By observing that the instructor is open-minded, positive, and provides supportive feedback, the adult learner can begin to relax and be open to learning.






PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING

Positive reinforcement.



The instructor should provide positive reinforcement throughout the course to ensure that you are constantly motivated to learn. All students like to be told that they did a good job or gave the correct answer. Adult learners need to know that they are going through the course correctly to prevent concerns about their performance, which interferes with the learning process. Positive reinforcement confirms that the participant is making adequate progress.



The instructor imparts positive reinforcement through tone of voice, enthusiasm, and word choice. The tone of voice should convey the same message as the words. Few words filled with great enthusiasm are far more motivating than long praises delivered in a monotonous tone. The instructor gives positive reinforcement to individuals and, if necessary, to the whole group. During each activity, thank each person or group for their contributions. At the end of each module, the instructor summarizes the achievements of the groups and praises them for what they have learned.

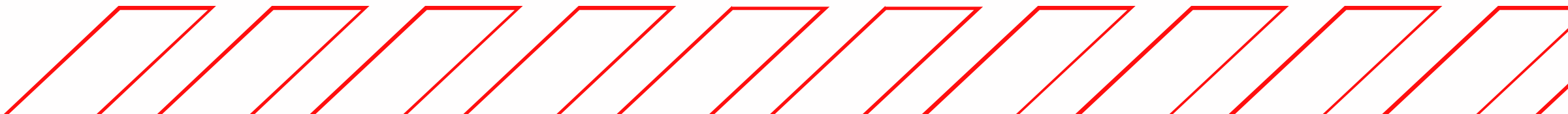


PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING

Cultural differences

Cultural differences affect the way participants learn and the methods used by the instructor. In some cultures, people don't respond well to public positive reinforcement and prefer to have these remarks made in private. In other cultures, it is inappropriate to discuss with an instructor. If cultural differences are not taken into account, a barrier to learning can arise.

Understanding customs, acceptable practices, and traditions is the responsibility of the instructor.



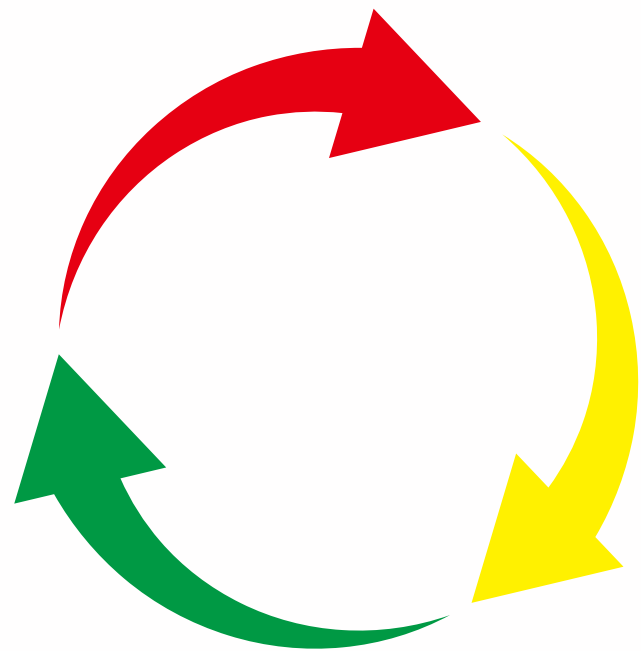


STAGES OF THE LEARNING PROCESS:

Kurt Lewin's three-step learning process formulation provides adequate insight into designing an effective training program.

The theory proposes the following three stages of the learning process:




- Unfreeze.
- Transfer.
- Refreeze.

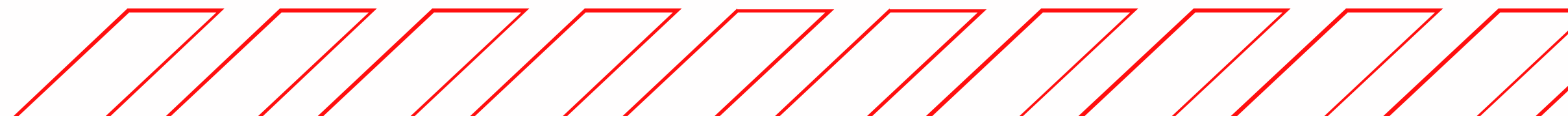


PRESENTATION - FACILITATING THE LEARNING PROCESS

The purpose of any speech or informative presentation is to facilitate the learning process.

There are three ways to do this:


-  **01** Learners should be helped to become receptive to new information.
-  **02** Help your audience understand the material.
-  **03** Learners should be helped to assimilate the material.






PRESENTATION SKILLS

Facilities




Adults must have appropriate facilities to enable learning. Inadequate facilities can be an obstacle to effective adult learning.



As an adult learner, they are easily distracted by discomfort, so the right accommodations, including seating and lighting, can make a difference in how well they can concentrate on their studies.



Adults need easily accessible bathrooms, snacks, breaks and smoking areas.



The instructor should ensure that the facilities meet the needs of adult learners as much as possible. The way the instructor sets up the tables and chairs also affects the usability of the object for the student. If possible, arrange tables and chairs so that each participant can see the instructor and most of the other participants. This encourages more discussion and interaction between participants.







PRESENTATION SKILLS

Making a positive impression on participants


Making a positive impression on participants at the beginning of the training session sets the tone for future education. The relationship between the instructor and the participants and directly between the participants are important elements required in the learning process. Building friendship and trust with participants begins at the moment they enter the class and continues throughout the training.



Establishing friendships and trust - The instructor should immediately establish friendly relationships and inspire confidence in the participants as soon as they show up for the class. A well-prepared classroom provides time for the instructor to greet the arriving participants. It's a good idea to shake hands with participants or use another appropriate greeting. You should make the participant feel comfortable during a casual conversation. Using a participant's name helps them feel important.



Appearance - The instructor should be neat, clean and well-groomed. Clothing should be appropriate for the situation. In general, the instructor should be dressed a little more professionally than the participants. Instructors should maintain dignity and authority in the classroom.




Enthusiasm - The instructor should be full of enthusiasm and energy. Should show willingness to share content with participants.







PRESENTATION SKILLS




Gestures - gestures should be positive and appropriate to the situation. Hand gestures should enhance the presentation, not make it worse. Instructors need to avoid distracting gestures during presentations, such as playing with keys in a pocket or with a marker.



Posture – Good posture expresses the confidence of the participants. Slouching, leaning against a wall for support, or grabbing the podium can distract students. Stand up straight with your shoulders facing back to show off a confident image



Eye Contact – Instructors should make eye contact with participants during the initial introduction and throughout the presentation. Eye contact is a way of connecting with people that supports the learning process and helps the instructor determine if the learner understands the content being presented.




Names – using participants' names during the initial presentation and addressing them by their first names during class builds friendship and trust with the student







PRESENTATION SKILLS - THE CREDIBILITY OF THE COACH




The credibility of the trainer affects how well adult learners perceive the information presented during the training.




Adult learners may tend to ask questions about whether the instructor knows enough to teach the class.



Adult learners want to know that the trainer has enough knowledge and experience to teach the course. They don't want a person who has less knowledge of a given topic than them to teach.



Adult learners value the years, as well as the quality and depth of the experience related to the presented content. The instructor may have 20 years of experience in an area unrelated to the topic presented and not gain credibility among the participants.




Instructors should present their experience at the beginning of the training to build a foundation of trust and respect from the participants. Building these foundations enables learners to see the instructor as credible on the subject, which increases their engagement in learning.






PRESENTATION SKILLS - THE CREDIBILITY OF THE COACH



By conducting classes, instructors gain the respect of the participants, building trust and respect among the participants and properly preparing for the class




The key to the success of the classes is the relationship established between the instructor and the participants and between the participants of the classes. The instructor's appearance should not distract students. If the instructor is not neatly dressed or looks tired and slouching, students may be distracted. A positive attitude, high energy, tone of voice, choice of words, facial expressions and gestures can positively affect the appearance of the instructor. Conversely, a negative attitude towards students, low energy levels, bad tone of voice and choice of words can create a bad learning environment and lower the credibility of the trainer.






PRESENTATION SKILLS


Ideas for Creating Good Presentations:



Dress comfortably and appropriately. Avoid giving presentations in clothes that make you feel uncomfortable or unattractive. Wear your most attractive, professional and comfortable outfit.




Use your own style instead of copying other speakers. Think of a dynamic speaker you admire. You can apply some of his/her techniques without imitating the speaker. Rely on your own personality to create an interesting and unique image.




When you speak, face the audience. When writing on a flip chart, stand so that participants can see what you're writing, then turn around and talk to them.



Change activities every twenty minutes or so, as this is the typical attention span of participants.



Respiration. Before addressing your audience, take a few deep breaths to make sure your voice sounded strong and that you have plenty of oxygen.



Calm your nerves before speaking. Try a relaxation technique by taking a few deep breaths through your diaphragm. Breathe through your nose, hold your breath for a count of three, exhale through your mouth. Repeat this 10 times. Also, do some quick, simple exercises, such as neck and shoulder rolls. This exercise usually relieves last-minute tension.



PRESENTATION SKILLS - CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKER

Effective public speaker:

- Understands the needs of its audience.
- It tries to meet these needs as effectively as possible.
- He is an expert in his field and has extensive knowledge in other areas.
- Constantly develops and improves in understanding their areas of specialization and the ability to present material effectively.
- He is enthusiastic about his subject and sincerely conveys his message to the audience.
- It has a pleasant voice and appearance.
- It uses examples, illustrations, analogies, and stories to make information more interesting and exciting.
- Sets the pace of the program to keep it lively and interesting.



PRESENTATION SKILLS - CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKER

Effective public speaker:

- Uses the right level of humor and drama.
- Encourages engagement and participation in the group.
- It makes information as practical as possible by telling people how to use it.
- It uses in-depth and broad knowledge to accurately answer a wide range of questions.
- He admits when he does not know the answer to a question, but offers to examine the answer and pass it on to the participants. Can ask other participants if they know the answer.
- Helps listeners understand and retain information through the use of attention-grabbing verbal and visual means such as repetition, graphics, and audience participation.





FACILITATION

A very important aspect in teaching adults is facilitation, i.e. conducting the work of the group, which is focused on using the potential of all its members.

Facilitation skills are useful for delivering new content, helping participants to have a deeper understanding of the content presented, and as a model of communication skills. Often, participants benefit most from new information when they have the opportunity to process it or take an active part in discovering new information.





FACILITATION

The so-called facilitation of a training session differs from a standard presentation and requires additional skills:

- effective communication skills,
- providing feedback,
- tailoring training to the audience.

Facilitation has many benefits for the learning process.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FACILITATION SKILLS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

- **Engage** participants.
- **Participants** involved in the learning process tend to remember more of what they have learned. Because the brain processes information so quickly, a participant involved in answering questions asked by the facilitator is better able to focus in class. Engaging participants ensures that they are accountable and active in their own learning process.
- **Building** student responsibility.
- **When** participants are in charge of their learning, they work harder to gain something from the class. Being responsible for our learning may be a new idea for some participants who expect a facilitator or instructor to be responsible for allowing them to learn something. The more actively participants participate in the classes, the more they stay in them after the classes are over.



THE IMPORTANCE OF FACILITATION SKILLS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

- Instructor-to-student relationships and between participants.
- **Research** on classroom relationships indicates that one of the most important aspects of an effective learning environment is the strong relationship between participants and the strong relationship between the instructor and each participant. These relationships are strengthened when the instructor asks students for feedback or encourages them to talk about the content.
- **Assessing** the instructor's understanding of the topic.
- **Instructors** can measure the degree of understanding of the topic by asking them questions. Asking questions helps the instructor determine if they need to explain something further or explain it in a different way so that the learners understand it better.



FACILITATION - COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Effective communication skills for facilitation include:

- Ask questions,
- Listening and
- Summarize.



FACILITATION - VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION

An inseparable element of all these skills are verbal and non-verbal elements of communication.

Dr. Albert Mehravian conducted a study on verbal communication and found that communication is broken down as follows:

- 55% non-verbal communication,
- 38% tone of voice,
- 7% of words.



FACILITATION - SKILLFUL ASKING OF QUESTIONS

Asking questions properly ensures that you will help participants learn most effectively. Participants need to feel that your questions are friendly, not "interrogatory".

Closed questions.

Closed-ended questions require an answer of one or two words. These questions are used to obtain specific facts or a yes/no answer from the participant. If these types of questions are overused, participants may feel "like they are being auditioned". Closed-ended questions often start with words or phrases: what, are, do you have, who or where.

Examples:

What is the answer to question 3? Are you prepared for the test? Do you understand the steps to process a transaction? Have you studied this topic yet? Who went with you? Where is the backend located in this diagram?



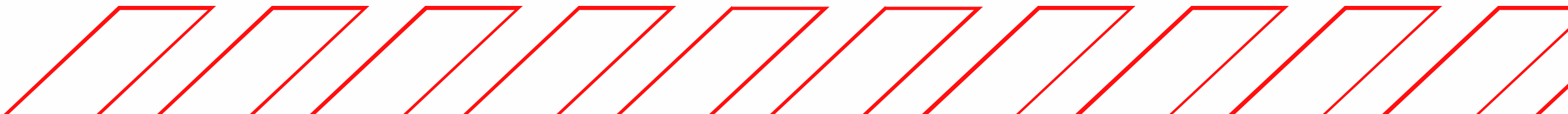
FACILITATION - SKILLFUL ASKING OF QUESTIONS

Open-ended questions.

Open-ended questions encourage participants to give longer and more complete answers. Open-ended questions often begin with words or phrases: describe, tell me about how, what happened, and why.

Examples:

Describe the situation to me. Tell me about the problem. How do you complete a task? What happened when you followed the new procedure? Why the training method was effective?



FACILITATION - SKILFUL LISTENING

Listening skills.

How well you listen to your attendees will affect how well you understand the content they present. Effective listening also builds a relationship with participants and helps formulate the next question to ask.

Keys to Effective Listening:

- Put aside other work and focus on the participant while listening,
- Listen to voice modulation, speed, and changes to detect any emotional issues the participant is facing,
- Allow the participant to finish speaking before you start speaking,
- Summarize often what you understood, what the speaker (participant).



FACILITATION - PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Feedback informs about the student's progress. Positive reinforcement motivates the student. Feedback can be positive or corrective and should provide clear and specific information regarding the results. Without feedback, an adult learner is lacking in direction and doesn't know how well they are handling the course content. Using feedback helps the participant assess progress and identify areas for increased focus or exercise.

Feedback should be:

- Immediate,
- Tangible,
- Specific,
- communicated in a positive and non-judgmental way,
- designed to give instructions on how to correct errors,
- used to encourage the participant to continue with the correct execution,
- respectful.



FACILITATION - TAILORING THE TRAINING TO THE AUDIENCE

Focusing on the needs of your audience during facilitation is one of the keys to your success as a facilitator. You need to pay close attention to what people do and say in class to ensure that you meet their needs.

Tailoring training to your audience can include one of the following:

- spending a little more time on a given activity than planned,
- Spending less time on a concept if the class already understands it,
- Spending more time explaining a difficult concept if participants have difficulty understanding it,
- providing more short breaks if better for participants than shorter and longer breaks,
- adapting to the audience's energy level. For example, if your audience has a very high energy level, you should show at least the same amount of energy. If your audience is bored or disengaged, you can switch to a tracking method that requires active engagement.



EFFECTIVE FACILITATIONS

Effective facilitators must have specific skills to be effective during training or workshops.

These skills are:

- understanding people and their behaviour.
- understanding group behavior.
- effective communication with people.
- presenting a credible image in front of a group of people.
- Effective use of the four basic functions of an effective facilitator:
 - emotional stimulation,
 - Care,
 - assigning meaning,
 - executive functions.



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YOU!**