

Assessing Principles of Adult Learning

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Abstract: Good assessment is a collaborative process involving the assessor, learners and others, where appropriate. Your assessment process should be transparent and allow for ongoing feedback from and to the learners. Remember these adult learners want to improve their skills in managing money and are not necessarily interested in formal recognition or being ranked against their peers in the group. Where possible, presenters should emphasize from the start that no-one is going to ‘fail’ the program. Even where students are seeking formal certification of their achievement, presenters can advise that there is no competition between the learners in the group or between an individual and the topic material – it’s all achievable and everyone can make it work for them. Your program should employ methodologies so that your trainers establish a friendly, open atmosphere that shows the participants they will help them learn rather than present as ‘experts’ imparting knowledge. No-one engages well with a trainer/teacher who is just ‘showing off’ what they know. Financial services have a plethora of jargon and complicated ideas that can put many lay people off. Exposing this sort of terminology and explaining it in simple terms – or deciding whether some of it needs exposure at all – is paramount to keeping your learner’s trust and interest.

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Introduction:

Adult illiteracy is like a disease that infects virtually every dimension of Kentucky life. Adult illiteracy saps the energy and capability of Kentucky’s people and its economy. Adult illiteracy feeds the state’s unemployment, its welfare rolls, and the correctional institutions. Adult illiteracy severely hinders the life chances of young children, undermines school reform, and limits the opportunities for postsecondary education.

Despite landmark reforms in public schools, too many Kentuckians continue to drop out of school, thereby perpetuating the chronic problem of adult illiteracy. Too many young Kentucky parents are unable to read and lack the basic literacy necessary to provide the necessary stimulating, supportive family environments for young children. It is known that children’s literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational level of their parents and that children of parents who are unemployed and have not completed high school are five times more likely to drop out.

The field of adult education and literacy is plagued by confusion about definitions. Over the years definitions have evolved from provisions in federal law and initiatives of groups advocating particular methodologies or the needs of specific adult populations. The result is that definitions tend to merge statements about the goals to be achieved (e.g., improving the literacy of a particular population) with a particular means (e.g., adult basic education) to achieve the goal. Therefore, it is helpful to distinguish

between at least these dimensions of the issue:

1. “Education attainment” usually refers to the numbers of years of schooling completed or the level of credential (e.g., high school diploma or associate degree) an individual has obtained. Despite concerns about the meaning of credentials, there is a strong correlation between educational attainment and literacy.

2. Other literacy initiatives are defined in terms of a particular educational service, strategy, or means to address a target population’s literacy problems. “Adult basic education” and “family literacy” are examples. These initiatives are often defined in terms of a particular configuration of services for the target population (e.g., assessment and information and counseling services).

Goal six of the National Education Goals illustrates a broadly stated goal that incorporates expectations about both adult literacy and the kinds of policies and services that should be in place to improve literacy. Goal six, “Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning,” states that, “By the year 2000, every adult will be literate and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.”

Classification of Adult Education

1. reading and writing literacy level
2. Technical and professional education, people are ready for work

3. in the field of health, behavior and health in the family
4. tutorials political, social, religious. Operating political social goals
5. to satisfy emotional needs and entertainment, like art, literature and the like

Adult education goals:

a) Literacy goals:

1. To provide primary education and to allow other adults to learn skills during childhood and youth have been deprived of them.
2. Increase the ability and skills for adults over the executive government and community programs.
3. Preparation of programs and classes that form the adult intellectual development is dedicated to the goal, get a job or degree is better.
4. Increased confidence in adults, through increased awareness and knowledge.
5. raising awareness of adult interest to participate in decision-making
6. to raise awareness of citizens rights, their duties and responsibilities
7. Adults develop abilities to solve problems of personal and social
8. to inform adults the skills and talents.
9. Spread knowledge about their heritage

b) Vocational training objectives:

1. Adults equip the skills necessary for subsistence.
2. To provide staffing to promote industry and economy, the third
3. the elimination of class differences and achieve social equality
4. Training of workers with their employment conditions and industrial variables are consistent.

Principles of Adult Learning

1) PURPOSE

The Financial Literacy Foundation has prepared this document to provide education materials developers with information on the key principles of adult learning. It is a short summary of a very broad area of research and advice, prepared with the input of Adult Learning Australia, the national peak body representing organisations and individuals in the adult learning field.

2) NEEDS, WANTS, CONCERNS AND ABILITIES OF YOUR LEARNERS

Assess the needs, wants, concerns and current abilities of the target learners. Each target group will

have their own special needs and probably expect different outcomes from undertaking your training program. Common themes you can prepare for are:

Why are you here? - no-one readily admits to not knowing something fundamental that may impact on their life chances. Therefore program material, particularly that designed for adult learners should always treat aspects of why learners are in the training sensitively. Describe the outcomes expected from the training in positive, enhancing terms and not as redressing a weakness or failure on the part of the learner. For example, "Undertaking this program will improve (rather than redress a failing) the way you manage your money".

Tell me more - learners may well enter programs like this with poor past experiences of money matters or at least some trepidation about handling personal finances in the future. Recognise this in the program introduction but individual learners should never be required to expose any of their negative experiences in a group. It might seem a good 'ice-breaker' to ask a new group of learners to share what they expect from the program but resist going too far when asking learners to talk about past problems they may have had with finances. Firstly, they may be uncomfortable doing this in a group and secondly you could start the program in a sea of negative views about financial matters generally. A successful program introduction will focus on where the learners will go rather than dwell too much on where they may have been.

What do you know? - Gauge the likely capabilities of your target groups. Overestimating their current skills in dealing with money could mean the program misses fundamental principles and understandings. Underestimating existing knowledge is also not good as plodding through basic material most already are familiar with will bore participants and the full program content will not be assimilated.

What will I be able to do? – above all these target groups will want to be hands on and demonstrate to themselves and their peers that that can do something they could not before the training; and do it well. Let them know right at the beginning that they will be able to do things that will be of great benefit to them, not just know more.

Build on small successes – if a target group of learners has had limited positives in their life or work experiences its important to provide small and regular 'success' points in the program. Simply exposing the content and assuming everyone is assimilating it, putting it all together holistically and building up their skills is not enough. The beginning of the program should be designed so that a discrete piece of learning that the learners can use right away builds their confidence to move on. The program should be a series of steps where the learners confirm their

progress and reinforce one new skill by relating it to another they can already confidently apply.

Testing! – many adults and people not regularly engaged in learning fear testing. Many may have had bad experiences of assessment in school and view the practice among peers as stressful. Make sure they understand that what they are in is a life skills program and no-one can ‘fail’ as such. In fact each can support others in things they do well that fellow learners may need help with so it’s a cooperative not competitive environment that they are learning in. Build in some teamed exercises and assessments to avoid people feeling isolated in their learning and fearful of failure in front of the group.

Special needs. You need to consider learners with special needs and those who have English as their second language. Reasonable adjustment should be made depending on each individual learner’s particular needs and abilities. Your program material should include advice to the trainer on how to determine the need to make adjustments which, depending on a learner’s abilities may include:

- providing interpreters for people who are deaf;
- ensuring access, for example by conducting training and assessment in facilities which have ramps for people using wheelchairs and adjustable desks for people with physical disabilities;
- allowing for access of personal assistants or note takers;
- allowing additional time for assessments;
- allowing oral instead of written responses to questions;
- adaptive technology such as screen readers, speech synthesisers, computer software or hardware; and,
- assistance with managing stress and anxiety.

3) HOW DO ADULTS LEARN?

Your program needs to account for:

- Motivation of the learner;
- Reinforcement of the skills and knowledge being developed;
- Retention of key learning; and,
- Transference of what is learnt to new situations.

Motivation - Adults learn most effectively when they have an inner motivation to develop a new skill or gain new knowledge. They resist learning material if it is forced on them, or if the only reason given is that the material will, in some vague way, be "good for them to know." Adults need to know why they are being asked to learn something; and they definitely will want to know what the benefits will be before they begin learning. This means the best motivators for adult

learners are explicit interest and self benefit. If they can be shown that the program will benefit them pragmatically and practically, they will learn better, and the benefits will be much longer lasting. Typical motivations include a desire for better handling of personal money matters, say in retirement, wanting a new or first job, promotion, job enrichment, a need to reinforce old skills in say, handling credit or learn new ones, a need to adapt to community changes such as on-line banking and so on. Remember the tone of the program should be motivating. Your program should employ methodologies so that your trainers establish a friendly, open atmosphere that shows the participants they will help them learn rather than present as ‘experts’ imparting knowledge. No-one engages well with a trainer/teacher who is just ‘showing off’ what they know. Financial services have a plethora of jargon and complicated ideas that can put many lay people off. Exposing this sort of terminology and explaining it in simple terms – or deciding whether some of it needs exposure at all – is paramount to keeping your learner’s trust and interest.

Conclusion:

In traditional programs that the principles of psychology and curriculum planning, less attention is the form of content presentation ie codification and providing books, original format and have the dominant form, while for adult content that could have valuable experience in addition to writing, other ways also be provided Affect the selection of pictures and images related to the concepts and content produced by including them.

Learning activities such as activities outside the classroom, dialogue, role playing and ... Another type of content is presented. Duties are placed on the learner, a resource for developing knowledge, skills and insights he considered.

Curriculum content only from the training provided to learners or not, but put together their learning through activities that can inform or does, skills and attitude to achieve. In this case, apart from learning that the essays taught learners directly to sustainable and effective learning occurs in his.

Another way of providing content that is educational activities outside the learning environment possible for learning more and better enables adult learners. For example, hits, field trip experiences for learners or transfer is provided, develop knowledge, insight and skills they will.

To ensure that science curriculum and educational aspects, according to community needs and audiences, application form is provided or not, the content selection criteria should be considered. These criteria is being include knowledge, effectiveness, flexibility, diversity, relevance and practical learning

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