

Adult Learning Principles in Practice

Principles	Questions	Approach
Adult learners are self-directing . They learn best when they have some responsibility for what and how they will learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are ways you can incorporate opportunities for learners to make decisions about their own learning? (i.e. the type of task, order of activities, what learning goal to focus on)</i> 	
Prior experience shapes who the adult learner is and how he/she approaches problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are ways you can “tap in” to learners’ experiences? How can you use their experiences as a resource for learning?</i> • <i>What are ways you can connect prior experiences and learning with new knowledge?</i> 	
Adults are motivated to learn if it is relevant, practical , and will help them to deal with real-world situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What will the activity enable your learners to do in their regular practice?</i> • <i>How will the learning benefit them and help them achieve their goals?</i> 	
Adult learners are goal-oriented and interested in using learning to solve problems , rather than memorizing content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are ways you can make the activity applicable to challenges faced by the learner?</i> • <i>How can you present new knowledge and skills in the context of real-world problems?</i> 	

Resources:

Knowles M, Swanson RA, Holton EF, eds. *The Adult Learner*, 7th edition: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development. Burlington, MA: Elsevier Inc, 2011
 Collins, J. *Education Techniques for Lifelong Learning: Principles of Adult Learning*. RadioGraphics 2004; 24:1483-1489