



# **Adult Learning Techniques**

*Lauren Warren-Fields, MEd, BA* has the following disclosures to make:

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- No conflict of interests
- No relevant financial relationships with any commercial companies pertaining to this educational activity



# Objectives

At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to...

- differentiate between the basic adult learning principles and techniques, such as:
  - learning styles
  - communicating effectively
  - engaging participants
  - tools for teaching
  - considering a target audience
  - collecting/identifying resources



# **SECTION 1:** **Adult Learning Overview**



# Introduction to Terms

- Pedagogy:

- the function or work of a teacher; teaching
- the art or science of teaching; education; instructional methods

- Andragogy:

- the methods or techniques used to teach adults

*Source: Dictionary.com*

*<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/pedagogy>*

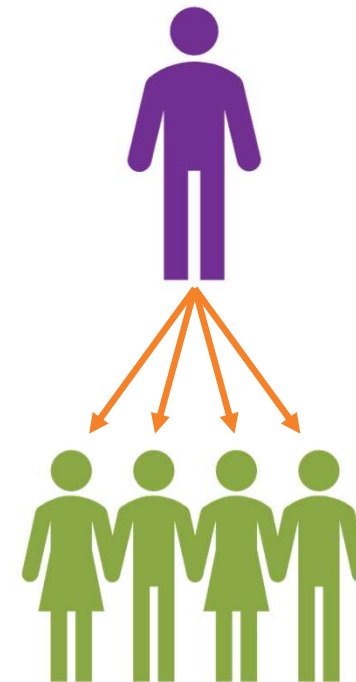
*<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/andragogy>*



# Pedagogy vs. Andragogy

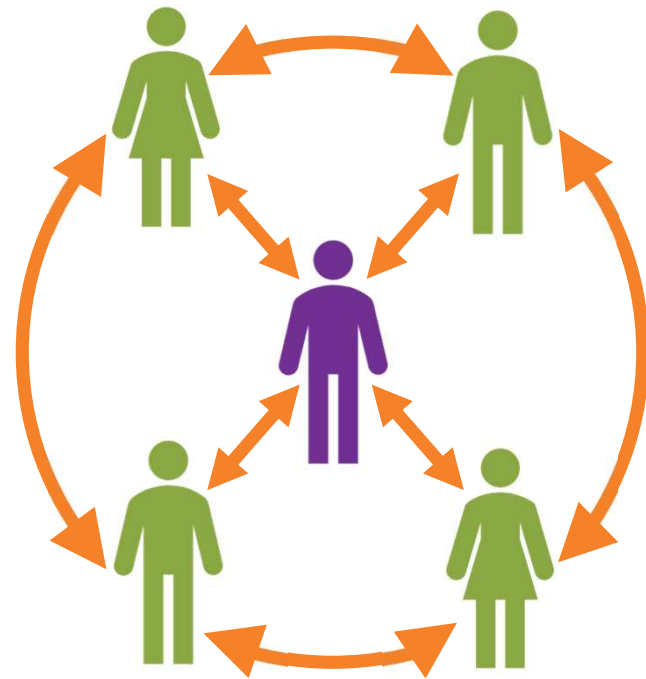
- Pedagogy:

- teacher-centered
- extrinsically motivated
- focused on ***acquisition*** of new knowledge from the instructor



# Pedagogy vs. Andragogy (cont.)

- Andragogy:
  - learner-centered
  - intrinsically motivated
  - focused on ***integration*** of new knowledge with existing knowledge from the instructor and other learners



# **SECTION 2: Learning Styles**





# Learning Styles

- Learning style: a set of behaviors and attitudes that influence how students learn and interact with teachers and peers.
- Learning styles are cognitive, affective, and physiological behaviors that serve as indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment.

*Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization –  
International Bureau of Education*

*<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/glossary-curriculum-terminology/I/learning-styles>*



# Learning Styles (cont.)

- There are four primary learning styles:



# Learning Styles (cont.)

Retain information best when  
presented visuals

Graphs, Charts, Diagrams, Symbols,  
etc.



Retain information best when  
presented vocally

Audio books, Lectures, Discussions,  
Read aloud's, etc.



Retain information best when  
presented with the written word

Note-taking, Worksheets,  
Presentations, Text-heavy resources,  
etc.



Retain information best when  
physically active or doing activities

Building, Creating, Demonstrating,  
Moving, etc.



# Assimilation Theory of Learning

- Theory developed by American educational psychologist David Ausubel in the 1960s
- “Learning... occurs through development of new cognitive structures that hold newly acquired information.”
- Meaningful learning is “well anchored and integrated in the cognitive structure.”

*Source: Learning-Theories.org*

*[https://www.learning-theories.org/doku.php?id=learning\\_theories:assimilation\\_theory](https://www.learning-theories.org/doku.php?id=learning_theories:assimilation_theory)*



# Assimilation Theory of Learning (cont.)

- **CliffsNotes version:**

new knowledge/learning is best acquired and retained when anchored with *prior knowledge of broad concepts, prior learning experiences, AND the personal life experiences of the learner*



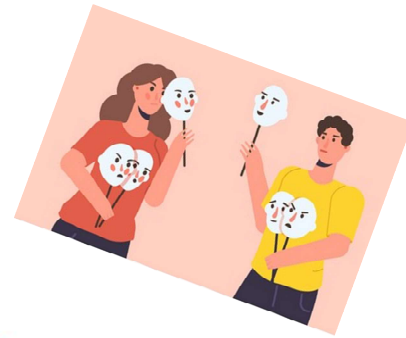
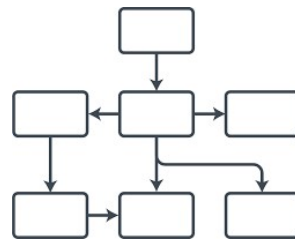
# Key Considerations

- People remember more when they practice or use their learning.
- The amount of information we remember is in direct proportion to amount of our involvement in learning.
- Choosing appropriate methods for delivery is critical in increasing retention.



## Key Considerations (cont.)

- Use a blend of training methods and materials to reach the greatest number of adult learners.



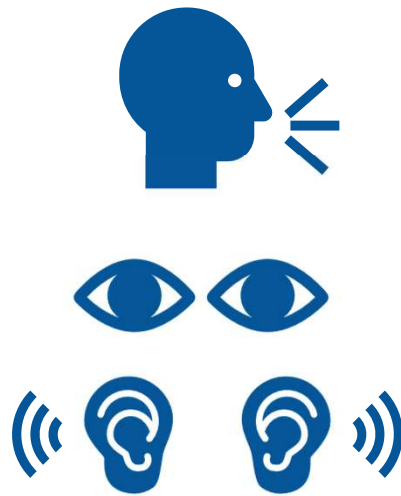
# **SECTION 3: Effective Communication**





# How Do We Communicate Effectively?

- Voice
- Eyes
- Ears
- Body Language



# Use the Following Tips

- Speak up
  - Make your message concise
  - Use appropriate language
  - Talk with your hands
  - Be direct and honest
- Maintain steady eye contact
  - Maintain an alert body posture
  - Focus
  - Avoid speech fillers
  - Move casually yet purposefully



# Effective Body Language...

- Conveys a friendly, enthusiastic facial expression
- Provides positive reinforcement
- Uses hands naturally
- Moves around the room:
  - To ease nervousness
  - To provide variety



# When Using Your Voice Effectively...

- Project your voice so everyone can hear you
- Vary your pitch
- Use comfortable and varied pace
- Speak at the audience's technical level
- Use a friendly tone
- Use a microphone if necessary



# When Employing Effective Eye Contact...

- Shows interest in the topic and audience
- Observe your participants and ask yourself:
  - Do my participants appear engaged?
  - Do my participants appear confused, or are they understanding?



# When Employing Effective Listening Skills...

- Use pauses to allow participants to ask questions and respond with comments
- Listen to what participants are saying:
  - Do they understand?
  - Are there concerns?
  - What are the needs of the participants?
- Use silence to manage the training



# **SECTION 4:** **Engaging Participants**



# What Keeps *YOU* Engaged?

- Eye contact
- Varied tone of voice
- Visual aids
- Exercises
- Walking around the room





# To Engage Your Participants...

- Create participatory learning situations
- Use variety of presentation styles, media, exercises, and activities to keep interest
- Change pace and/or activity every **30 minutes**
- Change location of seating arrangements
- Use examples that the participants can relate to their jobs/situations



## To Engage Your Participants... (cont.)

- Encourage the participants to contribute their experiences
- Use humor (*where appropriate*)
- Allow for differences of opinion
- Keep the participants alert





Boredom



# To Combat Boredom...

- Maintain a deliberate silence
- Repeat/Rephrase the question
- Use body language/eye contact
- Encourage answers/responses
- Give an example
- Answer the question yourself



# **SECTION 5:** **Tools for Teaching**



# Tools in Your Teaching Toolbelt



Know your audience



Keep in mind characteristics about adult learners



Be prepared to train



Manage the training



Communicate effectively



Engage the participants



# **SECTION 6: Considering Your Target Audience**



# Knowing Your Audience Helps You...


- Design your training to meet their needs
- Choose the right participants for the training
- Omit unnecessary content





# Getting to Know Your Audience

Take the time to learn the following about your audience:

- 
- Experience
  - Skills
  - Attitudes
  - Prior Knowledge
  - Job/Position
  - Education
  - New Responsibilities
  - Training Needs

# **SECTION 7:** **Resources**



# Helpful Resources

1. Biech, E. (Ed.), (2008). *ASTD handbook for workplace learning professionals*.
2. CDC TB Education and Training Network  
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/education/tbetn/default.htm>
3. Knowles, M. L. (2005). *The adult learner (6th Ed.)*.
4. Mager, R. F. (1997). *Preparing instructional objectives: A critical tool in the development of effective instruction*.
5. *Presentation Toolkit*, (2012). Northwest Center for Public Health Practice, School of Public Health, University of Washington.
6. PREZI <https://prezi.com/>
7. Schank, R. (2005). *Lessons in Learning, e-Learning, and Training: Perspectives and Guidance for the Enlightened Trainer*.



# Review

- ❖ Consider characteristics of adult learners
- ❖ Know your audience
- ❖ Use a blend of training methods
- ❖ Communicate effectively
- ❖ Engage the participants



?? Questions ??



# THANK YOU



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