



Curriculum Development for Adult Learners

Principles of Adult Learning

1	<p><u>Adults are autonomous and self-directed.</u> Application: involve them in what they want to learn and the actual learning process</p>
2	<p><u>Adults have accumulation of life knowledge and experience.</u> Application: build on their background and previous knowledge and expertise on the subject</p>
3	<p><u>Adults are goal-oriented.</u> Application: they need to see the big picture and understand how education material is relevant to them</p>
4	<p><u>Adults are practical.</u> Application: Focus on material that is useful for their day to day work or they can integrate into their current practice</p>
5	<p><u>Adults use critical thinking.</u> Application: During the education, illicit their previous knowledge, ask questions, provide exercises that allow them to explore the new information, help them to see and understand themes/patterns.</p>

Things to think about when you present/distribute material

1	<p><u>Flesch-Kinkaid (Microsoft Word) readability test</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Only 38% of Canadian adults are able to read and write at a grade 12 level and 19% at a university educated level ◆ Curriculum Development for ESL and less than 8 years of formal education: Grade 4-6 ◆ Curriculum Development LPNs as a target audience: Grade≈ 8
2	<p><u>Keep Handouts simple:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Use plain language; user friendly and practical ◆ Use short words and short sentences ◆ Keep verbs as verbs, don't change them to nouns (ie. inspect and inspection) ◆ Clear headings with clear points for emphasis ◆ Use subsections and indent to enhance appearance ◆ Use New Times Roman font for handouts and font size 12-14 for content and 14-16 for headings ◆ No "ALL CAPITALS"

3	<u>Keep Power Point presentations simple:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Use headings ◆ 4-6 bullets per slide ◆ One concept per slide ◆ Verdana or Tahoma font for Power Point ◆ Dark colour background for contrast
4	<u>Presentation style:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Connect with people's daily lives (ie. relevance) ◆ Keep it interactive ◆ Use questions and answers to engage audience and build on what they already know ◆ Use sharing and storytelling ◆ Minimize the use of didactic/lecturing styles ◆ Consider other learning methodologies (video, case study, role play, group discussion, debate, group work, brainstorming, quiz, interactive handouts, simulation/games)

Things to think about when you teach

1	Content should be based on perceived need and actual learning need of the learner
2	Base learning needs on developing learning objectives and learning outcomes
3	There are 4 elements of learning that need to be addressed to help adults learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <u>Motivation</u>: learners need to see the benefit of learning and relevance to their practice ◆ <u>Reinforcement</u>: ie. positive feedback ◆ <u>Retention</u>: to benefit from learning, participants need to retain information ◆ <u>Transference</u>: the ability to apply new knowledge to current practice

Final Notes

1. Stand alone education without support, facilitation, review has poor sustainability
2. Adult learners only remember **20% of what they hear**

Reference: Preceptor Resource Guide: Supporting Clinical Learning. VCHA: Learning and Career Development; Carol Wilson. 2005. Plain Words: A "How-To" Workshop. VCHA: Health Care Professional and Patient/Client Education; Stephen Lieb. 1991. Principles of Adult Learning. Arizona: Arizona Department of Health Services.