Andragogy as a Guide for Serving Adults in the Online Environment

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Inquiring Minds Want to Know!

What are your goals for attending this presentation?
Focus on learner’s interest:
Tale of two Instructors
Unemployment rates and earnings by educational attainment, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate (%)</th>
<th>Median Usual Weekly Earnings ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1,883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1,497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s degree</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than a high school diploma</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 3.0%  
All workers: $969

Note: Data are for persons age 25 and over. Earnings are for full-time wage and salary workers.  
Pedagogy vs. Andragogy

- Teacher-oriented
- Dependency
- Subject-centered
- Externally motivated

- Self-oriented
- Self-dependent
- Problem-centered
- Internally motivated
Teachers help guide learners to develop their own potential.

**4 PRINCIPLES OF ANDRAGOGY**

1. **INVOLVED ADULT LEARNERS**
   - Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.

2. **ADULT LEARNERS’ EXPERIENCE**
   - Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities.

3. **RELEVANCE & IMPACT TO LEARNERS’ LIVES**
   - Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life.

4. **PROBLEM-CENTERED**
   - Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented.
   - (Kearsley, 2010)

In 1984, Knowles suggested 4 principles that are applied to adult learning.
Applying Andragogy to Online Courses
Assumption # 1
Adult learners are self-directed

Learners establish learning goals within the course objectives
Curriculum focused on process versus content
Facilitator empowers learners
  • As equal and respected persons
  • With facilitator as expert
Safe environment where learners not afraid to share ideas, experiences, and learning
Setting Goals Example

Self-Direction Brought to Life

Creating and Co-Creating Learning Goals
Collaborative Content Creation
Choosing Projects that Matter
Decision Trees
Industry Focus
Assumption # 2

Adults bring life experience to learning environment

Structured to share experiences through use of group projects and interactive discussions

Learners share their personal experiences and knowledge

Learners feel free to express opinions, share ideas, and discuss information

Course content should be allowed to evolve as opposed to being tightly scripted
Experiential Learning
Interdisciplinary Example

*Bringing Experiences into the Classroom*

Leverage community/natural disaster experience in task force work

- Communications: tweets, press releases, video
- Journal article in fictitious journal

Leverage pandemic experience in classroom consulting work

- Taking employees remote
- Article for fictitious journal

Authentic and professional voice

Explore differing experiences across disciplines to break down silos
Assumption 3: Adults enter environment ready to learn

- Personal desire to learn or because course is required by an employer or institution
- Facilitator must take steps to help learners identify learning needs
- All student supports should be accessible via phone and online
- Learners can accomplish individual goals within framework of the course.
- Learners with similar goals (or needs) should be encouraged to share ideas and experiences
Lifeline
Survey Says...

What are your goals for attending this presentation?
Assumption # 4
Adult learners are problem oriented

Curriculum should be process based vs content based

Allow learners to develop content in accordance with their specific needs

Connection between every-day life and learning can be applied in current professional or life situations

Course assignments and group projects should seek to have learners draw on their personal experiences and needs
Creating Meaning in the Online Classroom
Assumption # 5

Adults are intrinsically motivated

Recognize need to appreciate and respect learners to foster an environment conducive to learning from each other

Enhance learner self-esteem through acknowledgement of contributions to the course

Draw on learner’s background during a course and respect for the knowledge they possesses.
Learn it today, use it tomorrow
References


