Motivational Framework

Enhancing Motivation in Adult Learners
Andragogy: Theory of Adult Learning

Core Principles of Adult Learners

- Learner’s Need to Know
  - Why, What and How
- Self-Concept of the Learner
  - Autonomous and self-directing
- Prior Experiences of the Learner
  - Resource, mental models
- Readiness to Learn
  - Life related, developmental tasks
- Orientation to Learning
  - Problem-centered, contextual
- Motivation to Learn
  - Intrinsic value, personal payoff
A Key Relationship: Culture and Motivation

“Intrinsic motivation is governed to a large extent by emotions, which in turn are socialized through culture.”

Through relationships and teaching strategies, we access the adult learner’s prior knowledge as expressed through their cultural perspectives, in order to build bridges between what learners know and their new learning.
WHY IS CULTURE IMPORTANT

• “Culture permeates us as human beings, and it is the lens through which we see everything, and the lens through which we understand everything and it is also the largest reason why we are attracted to things, repulsed by things and compelled to learn things.”

• Raymond J. Wlodkowski
WHAT IS CULTURE

- A fish examines everything but the water in which he swims. (Unaware, but controls everything in the fish’ life)
- The afternoon knows what the morning never suspected.
What Motivates Adults to Learn? (A few general characteristics)

- To use relevance (what matters most rather than what is playful or stimulating) as the ultimate criteria for sustaining their interest
- To be reluctant to learn what they cannot endorse by virtue of its value, usefulness, or contribution to their goals
What Motivates to Learn
(A few general characteristics)

- To be sensitive to and require respect from their tutors/teachers/mentors as a condition for learning

- To want to actively test what they are learning in real work and life settings
What Motivates to Learn  
(A few general characteristics)

- To want to use their experience and prior learning as consciously and as directly as possible while learning

- To want to integrate new learning with their life roles as parents, workers, etc.
Key Points About Adult Learners

- Adults want to be **successful learners**

- *If adults have a problem experiencing success or even expecting success, their motivation for learning will decline.*
Key Points About Adult Learners

Therefore, adult education practitioners should attempt to plan some kind of authentic performance task as soon as possible. Competence is such a high priority and so motivating for adults, that the sooner they experience it, the deeper their learning and motivation will be.
Wlodkowski’s Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching

- The framework to enhance adult motivation consists of four conditions:
  - Establish Inclusion
  - Developing Positive Attitudes toward learning
  - Enhancing Meaning in Learning
  - Engendering Competence
Establishing Inclusion

- Inclusion is the awareness of adult learners that they are part of a safe learning environment in which they and their instructor/tutor/mentor are respected by and connected to one another.
Establishing Inclusion (Beginning learning activities)

- Motivational Purpose:
- To engender feeling of connection:
- To create climate of respect
Develop Positive Attitudes Toward Learning

- The two most important criteria for developing a positive attitude
  - Relevant learning – irrelevant learning is likely to annoy and frustrate
  - Volition (willingness, choice) – owning and accepting responsibility for the learning.
Develop Positive Attitudes (Beginning Learning Activity)

- Motivational Purpose
  - To build a positive attitude toward the subject
  - To develop self-efficacy for learning
  - To establish challenging and attainable learning goals
  - To create relevant learning experiences.
Enhancing Meaning in Learning Activities

- Unpacking information
- Ordering of information that provides identity and clarity
- Recasting information in the context of goals, concerns, and problems relevant to the adult learner can infuse the learning with deeper meaning.
- Adults create meaning through “their cultural, symbolic and spiritual experience, as well as cognitive” (Tisdell, 2003, p. 42)
Enhancing Meaning in Learning Activities (during learning activities)

- **Motivational Purpose**
  - To maintain learners’ attention
  - To evoke and sustain learners’ interest
  - To deepen learners’ engagement and challenge
  - To enhance learners’ engagement, challenge, and adaptive decision making
Enhancing Meaning in Learning Activities

- **Important Note about meaning**
  - Though adults learners may feel included (inclusion) and have a positive attitude, their involvement (and thereby, motivation) will diminish significantly, if they cannot find the learning meaningful.
  - Making the learner’s goals, interests, and cultural perspectives the context of challenging and engaging learning experiences, instructors/tutors/mentors can secure the learner’s continuing participation.
Engendering Competence

- Confidence builds confidence
- Competence is the desire to be effective at what we value
- Our socialization and culture largely determine what we think is worth accomplishing
- Awareness of competence is a powerful motivating force on human behavior
  - Adults who are learning and can feel their progress are usually well motivated to continue
Engendering Competence (Ending learning activities)

- Motivational Purpose
  - To engender confidence with assessment
  - To engender competence with transfer
  - To engender competence with communication and rewards
Motivational Strategies to assist in the use of the Motivational Framework

- **Inclusion:** awareness, feeling of connection, safe learning environment, climate of respect
- **Attitude:** build positive attitude, develop self-efficacy, challenging and attainable learning, create relevant learning experiences
- **Meaning:** maintain learners' attention, sustain learners' interest, deepen learners' engagement and challenge
- **Competence:** competence with assessment, transfer, communication and rewards

| Use critical questions to stimulate engaging and challenging reflection and discussion |
| Share something of value with your adult learners |
| Help learners effectively attribute their success to their capability, effort, and knowledge |
| Use authentic performance tasks to deepen new learning and help learners proficiently apply this learning to their real lives |
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While instructing, use humor liberally and frequently

Provide positive closure at the end of significant units of learning

Provide effective feedback

Explicitly introduce important norms and participation guidelines

Provide frequent response opportunities to all learners
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Help learners understand and plan for the amount of time needed for successful learning

When necessary, use constructive criticism

Uses simulations and games to embody the learning of multiple concepts and skills that require a real-life context and practice to be learned

Effectively praise and reward learning

Use the K-W-L strategy to introduce new topics and concepts
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Concretely indicate your cooperative intentions to help adults learn

Eliminate or minimize any negative conditions that may surround the subject

When issuing mandatory assignments or training requirements, give your rationale for them
Four Questions to Ask Yourself When Planning Instruction

- Establishing Inclusion: How does this learning sequence create or affirm a learning atmosphere in which we feel respected by and connected to one another? (emphasis on beginning activities)
- Developing Positive Attitude: How does this learning sequence make use of personal relevance and learner volition to create or affirm a favorable disposition toward learning? (emphasis on beginning activities)
Four Questions to Consider When Planning Instruction

- **Enhancing Meaning**: Are there engaging and challenging learning experiences that include learners' perspectives and values in this learning sequence? (emphasis on main activities during instruction)

- **Engendering Competence**: How does this learning sequence create or affirm an understanding that learners have effectively learned something they value and perceive as authentic to their real world? (emphasis on ending activities)
Summary

“When you do the best you can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life, or in the life of another.” Helen Keller

The Motivational Framework – inclusion, attitude, meaning and competence – work in concert to elicit enhanced adult motivation for learning throughout the entire learning sequence.
Principles of Adult Learning Scale (PALS)

- Tool to assess your teaching style as an adult educator
- 7-Factor Assessment
  - Learner-Centered Activities
  - Personalizing Instruction
  - Relating to Learner experience
  - Assessing Student Needs
  - Climate Building
  - Participation in the Learning Process
  - Flexibility for Personal Development
References/Resources


- Website: [https://sites.google.com/site/adultlearnerspeak/](https://sites.google.com/site/adultlearnerspeak/)
  - Observation Guide for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning (Mary Ginsberg)
  - List of 60 Motivational Strategies to aid in instructional design