

THE ADULT LEARNER

ADULTS PREFER LEARNING SITUATIONS WHICH:

1. **ARE PRACTICAL AND PROBLEM-CENTERED, SO...**
 - Give overviews, summaries, examples and use stories
 - Plan for direct application of the new information
 - Include collaborative, problem-solving activities
 - Anticipate problems applying new ideas, offer suggested uses

☆ CAUTION: Guard against becoming too theoretical
2. **PROMOTE THEIR POSITIVE SELF ESTEEM, SO...**
 - Provide low-risk activities in small group settings
 - Plan for building success incrementally
 - Help them become effective and competent

☆ CAUTION: Readiness to learn depends on self-esteem
3. **INTEGRATE NEW IDEAS WITH EXISTING KNOWLEDGE, SO...**
 - Help them recall what they already know that relates to the new ideas
 - Help them see how the new information is relevant to them
 - Plan ways they can share their experience with each other

☆ CAUTION: Find ways to assess participant knowledge before an event
4. **SHOW RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL LEARNER, SO...**
 - Provide for their needs through breaks, snacks, coffee, comfort
 - Provide quality, well-organized experience that uses time effectively
 - Avoid jargon and don't "talk down" to participants
 - Validate and affirm their knowledge, contributions and successes
 - Ask for feedback on your work or ideas, provide input opportunities

☆ CAUTION: Watch your choice of words to avoid negative perceptions
5. **CAPITALIZE ON THEIR EXPERIENCE, SO...**
 - Don't ignore what they know, it's a resource for you
 - Plan alternative activities so you can adjust to fit their experience level
 - Create activities that use their experience and knowledge
 - Listen before, during and after the event

☆ CAUTION: Provide for the possibility of a need to unlearn old habits
6. **ALLOW CHOICE AND SELF DIRECTION, SO...**
 - Build your plans around their needs, compare goals and actual practice
 - Share your agenda and assumptions and ask for input on them
 - Ask what they know about the topic
 - Ask what they would like to know about the topic
 - Build in options within your plan so you can easily shift if needed
 - Suggest follow up ideas and next steps for after the session

☆ CAUTION: Match the degree of choice to their level of development