

Adult Learning Principles

Andragogy, pioneered by Malcom Knowles (Harvard Educated, Adult Educator, who became famous for adopting the theory of andragogy) is the concept of Adult Learning Principles. Adults learn differently than children. These are the six characteristics of adult learners to consider when designing and delivering professional learning for the adult learner:

1. ***Adults are autonomous and self-directed.*** They need to be free to direct themselves.
2. ***Adults have accumulated a foundation of life experiences and knowledge*** that may include: work-related activities and previous education.
3. ***Adults are goal-oriented.*** They usually know what goal they want to obtain.
4. ***Adults are relevancy-oriented.*** They want to know the reason for learning something. Instructors must identify objectives for adult participants before the course begins.
5. ***Adults are practical.*** They focus on the aspects of a lesson that are most useful to them in their work.
6. ***Adults need to be shown respect.*** Facilitators must acknowledge the wealth of experiences that an adult participant brings to the classroom. Adults should be treated as equals in experience and knowledge and allowed to voice their opinion freely.