

Vignette on andragogy and education for volunteering

CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

1 Make training practical and specific



Trim excess theoretical content when working with adults, retaining only essential parts. Enhance training with simulations and real-life case studies for effective knowledge transfer.

! Make sure to provide opportunities to apply new knowledge and skills, fostering effective integration into their lives.

2 Use personal experience as a valuable resource



When working with adults, integrate their life experiences. Expect initial resistance if new knowledge clashes with their existing understanding; guide them in finding fresh perspectives on familiar concepts.

! Make sure to use learner experiences as a basis for building new knowledge, making its long-term retention more effective.

3 Provide the "why" behind the change



Maturity, diverse personal and professional experiences and self-defence mechanisms may lead to rigidity or mistrust, which is the enemy of learning.

! Make sure to connect new knowledge to existing ones, and encourage the exploration of new ideas.

REFLECTING ON THE PRINCIPLE

In a sustainability training, Sam and fellow learners actively seek the practical relevance of new knowledge in their lives. The facilitator empowers them to choose real-world examples, fostering autonomy in connecting the concepts to their unique personal and professional experiences. The session becomes a collaborative exploration, allowing Sam and others to independently discover the applicability of the training in their own contexts.

? So, you should ask yourself: Which training strategies can I use to support my learners to apply new knowledge and skills into their life?

In a sustainability training, Alex, an adult learner and a long-term volunteer in a local NGO, faces resistance when confronted with the principles of a circular economy, challenging his current understanding. The facilitator initiates a dialogue, attempting to connect the new concepts with Alex's prior knowledge. Despite efforts, a tension persists, highlighting the challenge of aligning established beliefs with presented concepts.

? So, you should ask yourself: How can I manage such resistance? How can I provide opportunities for the learners to share their experiences and contribute to their knowledge increase?

In a volunteers management training, Sarah, an experienced coordinator and mentor, expresses skepticism about the external expert's guidance brought in for the organisation's expansion. Doubting the effectiveness and relevance of the proposed changes, she challenges the need for external input, asserting that they already possess comprehensive knowledge. The facilitator faces the conflict, aiming to convey the "why" behind the change and illustrate the potential benefits.

? So, you should ask yourself: How can I navigate skepticism from experienced learners when introducing external expertise in training, particularly in areas crucial for organisational growth?

TEACHING AND TUTORING PRINCIPLES

in adult education on how to train and upskill adults belonging to vulnerable social groups