

Vignette on andragogy and education for volunteering

DISCUSSION GROUPS

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

1 Opt for small groups



Break down the participants into small groups. They feel more comfortable discussing with each other and everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the debate.

! Make sure you have enough material (e.g., chairs, flipcharts) for all groups before breaking down the participants.

2 Give a real-life situation to discuss or solve



Assign each small group of learners with a real-life environmental challenge to tackle. Learners should work on a practical problem, make decisions and implement ideas.

! Make sure you provide guidance and resources to help them identify relevant solutions.

3 Have the groups select a lead speaker



Appoint a speaker from each small group to present their main findings to the entire group. Speakers should share the progress, outcomes and why the group's findings are relevant to others.

! Make sure that after each speaker's presentation you take on their key takeaways and provide a reflection summary to the entire group.

REFLECTING ON THE TECHNIQUE

You have a group of 20 adult learners and you would like them to discuss sustainable practices. You ask them to pull down a chair and sit in a circle. You believe starting a group discussion is a good idea to understand their perspectives and viewpoints regarding this topic. You start asking questions to stimulate the debate, but realise that only a couple of learners are actively participating in the discussion.

? So, you should ask yourself one question: **Are all my learners comfortable enough speaking in front of such a large group, even though they would like to contribute to the debate?**

You are passionate about teaching about the importance of sustainability practices and usually ask your learners to further elaborate on that as part of a smaller group. Discussions are usually focused on their experience and improvement actions. However, you start noticing that your learners are not fully engaged, that their understanding of sustainability practices is limited and, therefore, discussions are not constructive.

? So, you should ask yourself one question: **Is this a good way for having my learners sharing knowledge and stimulating each other to become agents of change?**

When teaching about sustainability, you prefer practical techniques such as group discussions, as you believe this way learners can learn from each other. Discussions are important tools to make them understand how to apply sustainability concepts to their daily lives. However, with limited time and 20 adult learners, at the end of the class, you realise that it is very difficult to have enough time for everyone to speak about what they have learned with the discussions.

? So, you should ask yourself one question: **Is this a good way to expose key findings, ensure collective understanding and encourage sustainable practices adoption?**

EFFECTIVE ADULT TEACHING TECHNIQUES

for raising awareness and delivery of sustainability and circular economy education