

Human Resources Training and Individual Development



Adult Learning
February 2nd, 2004

Go to the people,
Live with them, learn from them, love them.
Start with what they know, build with what they have
But with the best leaders,
When the work is done, the task accomplished,
The people will say, 'We have done this ourselves!'

Lao Tzu (500 B.C.)

Class Overview

- Learning experience exercise
- Adult learning theory
- Kolb's learning modes
- Adult learning: Case analysis
- Self-directed learning model
- Team project
 - Instructions
 - Suggestions/topics

What is Learning?

- A relatively permanent change in human capabilities that is not the result of growth processes.
- In what life periods do we learn more?
- How do we learn?
 - Proactive vs. reactive learning

Teaching vs. Learning

Teaching is something you do to somebody.
Learning is something that happens within a self. In one sense teaching doesn't exist.
Only learning exists and, more often than not, exists in spite of teaching.

- W. Smith and G.M. Timčák

Adult Learning Theory

It is based on several assumptions about how adults learn. Adults:

- need to know why they are learning something.
- need to be self-directed.
- bring more work-related experiences into the learning situation.
- enter into a learning experience with a problem-centered approach to learning.
- are motivated to learn by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators.
- resist change
- fear failure
- can be learner and trainer
- have different learning styles

Learning Styles

- Kolb
 - Diverger
 - Assimilator
 - Converger
 - Accomodator
- Sensory
 - Visual
 - Auditory
 - Kinesthetic

<http://www.howtolearn.com/personal.html>

<http://www.rccc-online.com/~psych/LSInventory.html>

Effective Adult Learning

- Learning must be personally meaningful (learning goals) if individuals are to become actively involved.
- We require an understanding and supportive social climate in order to learn and grow.
- We need to feel free to communicate honestly with fellow human beings.
- We require understanding of the nature of learning and of our behavior as learners in order to make effective use of the learning process.

Learning Goals

If you wish to build a ship, don't start assembling the wood, cutting the boards and distribute the work ...but...wake in your men the longing for the wide open seas

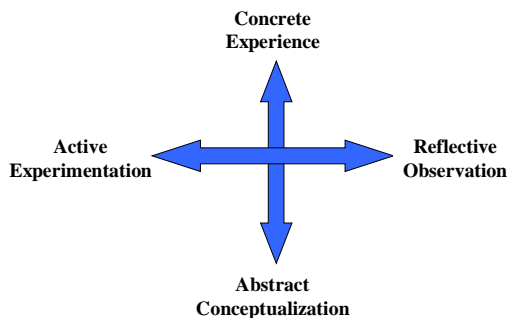
- Antoine de Saint Exupéry

Kolb's Learning Cycle

“Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.”

David A. Kolb (1984)

Kolb's Learning Cycle



Implications for Training

- People (I) tend to teach in their preferred learning style.
- If trainees' (your) learning styles are not met, trainers lose the majority of the audience.
- Balancing individualized style with the need to teach people with different learning styles.

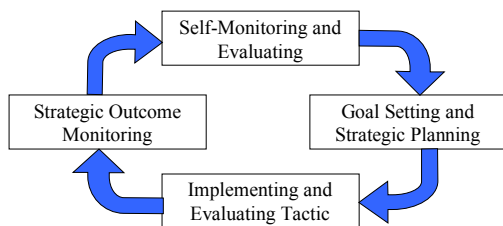
Implications for Training

- Tailor presentations to adult learners
 - Have meaningful goals, clear and measurable objectives
 - Create atmosphere of interaction and hands on learning
 - Foster openness for sharing opinions and experiences
 - Provide suggestions and examples to facilitate transfer of knowledge to the job or other life aspects
 - Adjust to different styles of learning

Case Analysis

Self-Directed Learning Model

Definition - Any learning that occurs without the presence or guidance of a teacher.



So What?

- Important Skills in Today's Economy
 - All employees (Carnevale et al., 1990)
 - **Learning**
 - Interpersonal (communication, negotiation, teamwork)
 - Higher-order thinking skills
 - Managers (VanVelsor & Leslie, 1995)
 - **Develop and adopt**
 - Build and lead teams
 - Build and maintain interpersonal relationships
 - Achieve business objectives
- More than 70% of the U.S. population engages in self-directed learning (where adults initiate the learning themselves)

Self-Directed Learning Report

- You have the opportunity to practice self-directed learning.
- You choose your topic and learning goal.
- Use various strategies to achieve your learning goal.
- Share what you learn with the class.

SDL Presentation Rating

1. Did the presentation include an effective introduction (summarizing what was to come) and conclusion (summarizing what had been said)?
2. Did the presentation clearly provide a statement of the learning goal?
3. Did the presentation clearly describe the learning strategies used?
4. Did the presentation clearly describe what you learned about the topic (including definitions and how you will use what you learned)?

SDL Presentation Rating

5. Were transitions between speakers managed effectively?
6. What was the overall effectiveness of the presentation?
7. Was the communication style engaging (did it keep your attention through eye contact, voice tone, proper posture, appropriate hand gestures)?

Topics for SDL Project

- Select a theory or concept that it is not discussed in depth, in class, such as those listed below, and learn how it works, what it predicts or how can it be applied to training
 - Transformational leadership: can such leaders be trained?
 - Leader behaviors: consideration and initiating structure
 - Career anchors – implications for motivational systems
 - Resource allocation theory (motivation)
 - Emotional intelligence
 - Emotional vs. cognitive intelligence: relevance for training
 - Training emotional intelligence

Topics for SDL Project

- Select a theory/concept/method related to the class lecture/discussion and learn how it is used/applied at a certain organization/job
 - Develop a competency model for a specific job
 - Additional reading:
 - Mirabile, R. J. (1997). Everything you always wanted to know about competency modeling. *Training and Development*, 51, 73-77.
 - Needs assessment in a local company
 - Needs assessment at General Motors
 - Virtual training at _____
 - Career ladders: Lansing Public School District
 - Training students for the job search process (interview)

Selecting a Topic

Next Time

- Topic: Motivation
 - Expectancy Theory
 - Goal Setting Theory
 - Social Cognitive Theory (self regulation)
 - Office Space video case
- Read
 - Noe, Chapter 4
 - Latham, 2000