

Adult Education New Teacher Training

Module 3

Orientation & Career Services

Goals of Orientation:

You should offer the student so much information that when you are done with orientation, the student should be able to answer the questions...Should I be here? Is this the right time?

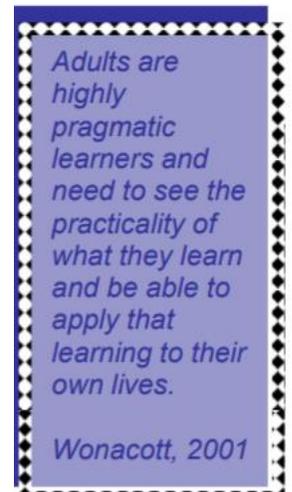
- Introduce ABE Program and the Requirements
- Find out why the student is enrolling
- Defuse myths and fears
- Establish rapport
- Determine it is a good time to start
- Give either a student handbook or give a program description and schedule. Go through their schedule and the programs to see where it fits
- Complete an intake form
- Schedule a time to begin a Career Services Course

Understanding the Adult Learner



There are several aspects of adult learning that set it apart from traditional K-12 education that warrant discussion. Malcolm Knowles, considered a pioneer in the field of adult education, popularized the term “androgogical” (learner centered) as it made sense to have a term that would enable discussion of the growing body of knowledge about adult learners parallel with the “pedagogical” (instructor centered) methods of childhood learning.

According to the American Council on Education (2003), each year more than 860,000 adults take the General Educational Development (GED) Test worldwide, and adult education has become an established field of practice and study. Defining the adult learner provides some challenges because a “one-size fits all” definition is not only unavailable but also impractical as the term is culturally and historically relevant (Wlodowski, 1999). Ambiguity exists in our society as to when an individual is officially an adult. According to Malcolm Knowles (1989), one criterion to determine adulthood is the extent to which an individual perceives himself or herself to be essentially responsible for his or her own behavior. At that point, individuals develop a deep psychological need for others to perceive them as being capable for taking responsibility for themselves. They resent and resist situations in which they feel others are imposing their will on them (Knowles, 1999).



Adults are highly pragmatic learners and need to see the practicality of what they learn and be able to apply that learning to their own lives (Wonacott, 2001). More specifically, adult education students often need to understand the reason for acquiring knowledge and skills they see as academic as they attempt to assess themselves and their own skills realistically. Steven Lieb (1991) lends further support to these findings as he states four principles of adult learning:

- Adults are autonomous and self-directed.
- Adults are relevancy-oriented.
- Adults have a foundation of life experiences.
- Adults are practical.



The National Center for Research in Vocational Education at Ohio State University offers further descriptors. Their findings indicate that not only are adults more often intrinsically motivated, their readiness to learn is linked to needs related to their roles as workers, parents, and community members. Additionally, they found that adults learn best when they see the outcome of the learning process as valuable (Cave & LaMaster, 1998).

There is consensus among researchers about the role of intrinsic motivation in adult learning. One study found that while adults are responsive to some extrinsic motivators (such as better jobs or salary increases), the more potent motivators are intrinsic motivators (increased self confidence, self-efficacy, job satisfaction) (Knowles, 1989). Adult learners’ intrinsic goals for success motivate them to engage in certain activities and move them in particular directions toward the attainment of those goals. In yet another study, researchers identified a similar set of concerns and concluded that among the most important factors that motivate adult literacy learners are the quest for self-esteem, competency, and the enhancement of general knowledge (Demetron, 1997).

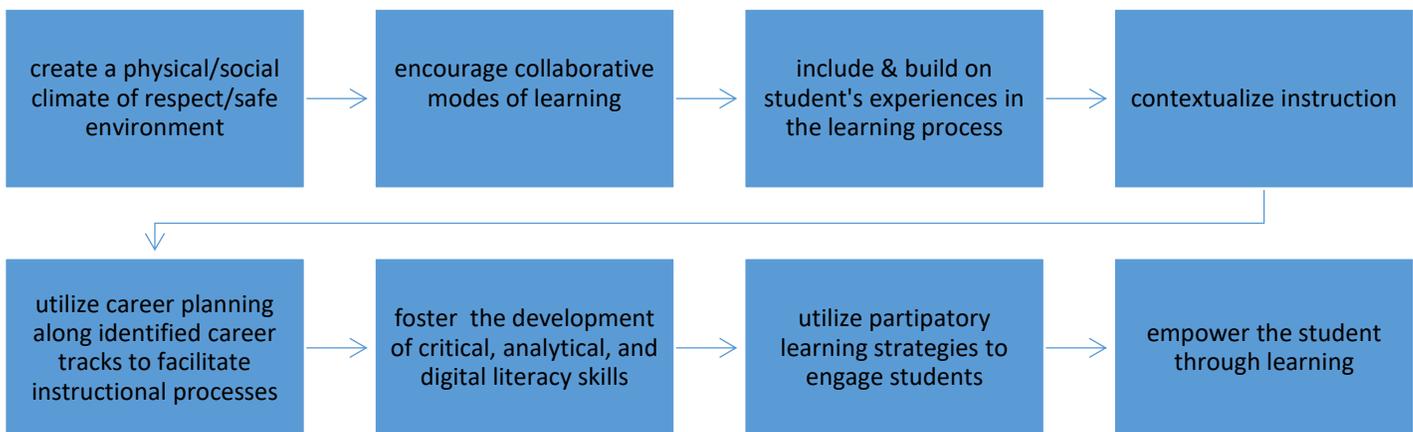
There exists some incompatibility between theories of adult learning and expectations of students who return to the classroom as adults. Adult education researchers have noted that attitudes toward learning in formal institutions may be formed early in development, and there may very well be some direct connection between these early years and non-participation (in formal education) in adult years (Quigley, 1992).



It should come as no surprise that adult students, as products of an educational system that has traditionally placed responsibility for the learning process on the instructor, who do venture back into the classroom are initially likely to expect to be passive recipients of knowledge. Since research has shown that this is not the most effective environment for adult learning, students will need to adopt different methods (Wlodkowski, 1999). Moving from a dependent student role towards a role as an independent and engaged learner is the adult student’s first step in taking responsibility for his or her education (Howell, 2001). It follows, then, that the teaching of adults should be approached as different from teaching children and adolescents (Imel, 1989). Most of the literature on adult education seems to agree.

There are several important aspects of learner-oriented education that merit note. First of all, effective approaches to helping adults learn include contributions from the student and their involvement in what is being taught and how it is being taught (Howell, 2001). Knowles suggests establishing a classroom climate to help adult students to feel accepted, respected, and supported so that “a spirit of mutuality between the instructor and student as joint enquirers can take place.”

There are several approaches through which instructors can facilitate learner-centered classrooms:



Career Services

Career services, as identified in sec. 134(c)(2) of WIOA, consist of three types:

(a) **Basic career services** must be made available and, at a minimum, must include the following services, as consistent with allowable program activities and Federal cost principles:



- (1) Determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs;
- (2) Outreach, intake (including worker profiling), and orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system. For the TANF program, States must provide individuals with the opportunity to initiate an application for TANF assistance and non-assistance benefits and services, which could be implemented through the provision of paper application forms or links to the application Web site;
- (3) Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive services needs;
- (4) Labor exchange services, including -
 - (i) Job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including -
 - a) Provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations (as defined in sec. 3(23) of WIOA); and
 - b) Provision of information on nontraditional employment; and
 - (ii) Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services other than those traditionally offered through the one-stop delivery system;
- (5) Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the one-stop delivery system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
- (6) Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including -
 - (i) Job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
 - (ii) Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and
 - (iii) Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for those jobs;
- (7) Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of education, training, and workforce services by program and type of providers;
- (8) Provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's one-stop delivery system;
- (9) Provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including: Child care; child support; medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program; benefits under SNAP; assistance through the earned income tax credit; and assistance under a State program for TANF, and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program;
- (10) Provision of information and meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation.
 - (i) "Meaningful assistance" means:
 - a) Providing assistance on-site using staff who are well-trained in unemployment compensation claims filing and the rights and responsibilities of claimants; or
 - b) Providing assistance by phone or via other technology, as long as the assistance is provided by trained and available staff and within a reasonable time.
 - (ii) The costs associated in providing this assistance may be paid for by the State's unemployment insurance program, or the WIOA adult or dislocated worker programs, or some combination thereof.
- (11) Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA.

(b) Individualized career services must be made available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These services include the following services, as consistent with program requirements and Federal cost principles:

- (1) Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
 - (i) Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
 - (ii) In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
- (2) Development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information about, the eligible training providers
- (3) Group counseling;
- (4) Individual counseling;
- (5) Career planning;
- (6) Short-term pre-vocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
- (7) Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers (as described in § 680.170 of this chapter);
- (8) Workforce preparation activities;
- (9) Financial literacy services as described in sec. 129(b)(2)(D) of WIOA and § 681.500 of this chapter;
- (10) Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; and
- (11) English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

(c) Follow-up services must be provided, as appropriate, including: Counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in adult or dislocated worker workforce investment activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment.

Federal Reporting on Career Services

At the end of each year, the State is required to complete Table SPR: Statewide Performance Report which mandates the State identify and report on the following:

- 1) The number of participants who received Career Services and
- 2) The funds expended for each student for Career Services



In order to properly report on Career Services, the State implemented [policy #0309020](#) to standardize the way hours are accrued for the Adult Education Career Services courses in Wyoming. New instructors are advised to read and understand this policy.

Components of the Adult Education Career Services Course in Wyoming

Each AE program in Wyoming has its own unique design for its Career Service course, but all programs are required to include each of the following in its course:

- a) NRS approved pre-test
- b) Career Explorations (including the use of a career assessment, meetings with WIOA core partners, if appropriate, college readiness)
- c) Establishing SMART goals
- d) Introduction to Participatory Learning Strategies
- e) Brain-based Learning
- f) Mindset
- g) Introduction to the use of academic and workforce standards for learning
- h) Referrals to help students overcome any barriers they may have to learning/employment
- i) Wyoming at work registration
- j) Learning styles inventories, aptitude tests, Powerpath screenings, if applicable, etc.
- k) Complete program paperwork as required
- l) Other program specific topics





Things to Keep in Mind When Initially Meeting a New Student

1. Don't have preconceived ideas about who the adults are that walk through your door. The last grade the student attended in school is not the grade level they may be functioning at right now. Go slowly and establish a foundation of success that the student can build on. Few things are as scary as stepping through the door to your future.
2. Retention is a concern of many programs. While the overall quality of programs influence attendance and retention rates, the orientation process and the Career Services course are key components to creating a positive learning environment, establishing clear expectations, and planning effective instruction. This is where they buy into what you have to offer.
3. The initial meeting and first few sessions in an adult program set the stage for success of adult learners and persistence in achieving their goals. Like any new experience, entering an adult education program is a change for the person. Each student will have varied emotions, questions, and concerns. Some have not had positive experiences in educational settings and are apprehensive they may fail again. For others, it has been a long time since they have had educational experiences, and they are concerned they will not be able to fit in or be able to complete the work. It takes a great deal of courage to walk through the door.
4. When students come through your door, it is critical to make them feel welcome and have the sense of safety and security in a learning environment. You are the first point of contact. Remember that many learners (up to 50%) who leave make the decision to do so after the first few meetings (Less than 12 hours). Making the first experience welcoming and positive can increase student comfort levels, reduce anxiety, and reinforce their decision to continue their education.