

A Comprehensive Literature Review and Discussion of Recommended Teaching
Practices for use in a Multicultural Training Program or
Educational Classroom Environment

by

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ABSTRACT

As the world continues to increase connectivity, people from different countries and cultures also will need to learn how to work together more effectively. In addition to the usual language barriers, people are increasingly finding it difficult to understand each other simply because they do not understand each other's culture and customs. To make matters more complicated, issues of race and ethnicity make it difficult for people to openly discuss how they can work together to understand each other. People generally fear what they do not understand.

This study is a review of teaching and learning methods and environmental factors that can facilitate this understanding. By being attentive to such factors as physical environment, emotional issues, and the agreement to general guidelines for class discussions, instructors and trainers can truly increase the effectiveness of their learning

programs. Also reviewed are five well-documented learning models which are particularly effective for teaching affective skills in all types of organizations. In many of these programs, students will learn from each other just as much if not more so than from the instructor alone.

Finally, comments and recommendations are given as to how to best implement these practices in current educational settings that serve a multicultural student base.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Introduction

Cultural diversity is a major educational issue in the United States today (Sturz, Kleiner, and Fernandez, 2005). Ethnic differences among different populations in the United States cause various degrees of misunderstanding, as each ethnic group has their own beliefs and cultural norms, and what is acceptable in one group may be entirely unacceptable in another. The background of any individual, their beliefs, values, morals, and personal goals also has a major impact on how that person will deal with others in their workplace and community (Morgan, 2002). For instance, in a business environment, if a person does not have the ability to understand a co-workers or a client's background, they may find it difficult if not impossible to communicate or collaborate effectively (Senge, Lichtenstein, Kaeufer, Bradbury, and Carroll, 2007). The more we understand each other, the more we will be able to work together better, even to the point of creating a significant strategic business advantage (Orenstein, 2005).

At the root of this issue is a simple lack of understanding and the many cultural differences that exist in our schools, our companies, and our communities today. "We know that culture is that deeply learned mix of language, beliefs, values, and behaviors that pervades every aspect of our lives, significantly influences our motivation" (Wlodkowski, 1999, p. 2). Indeed, many educational systems and technologies have taken a 'culturally neutral' approach. As a result, many of these diverse ethnic populations have not been adequately served (Thomas, Mitchell, and Joseph, 2002).

The question becomes: how can we better teach adults from different cultural backgrounds to understand and appreciate each other so that they are able to work together more effectively? How do we help these learners to break down the barriers of fear, suspicion and doubt? We know that the more that we understand and appreciate

each other, the better we will be able to work together. The challenge is creating a classroom environment where adults can safely examine and discuss these disparate beliefs in a way that allows them to finally overcome these prejudices and help them become better world citizens (Sturz et al, 2005).

Life experience plays a large part in people's behavior. Previous experience with education or training, like contact (or lack thereof) with other cultures, can have a tremendous impact on how the adult learner approaches a learning situation. An instructor or a trainer that in the past has inspired their learners or was able to deliver the information in a way that didn't downplay the learners ability will go a long way in helping that adult learner go on to more advanced educational and career successes. In addition, these experiences can also include previous instances of working with small and large groups or work teams, and whether or not these groups or teams were able to function in a healthy, productive way (Senge, et al, 2007).

Another issue to take into account is the pre-existing knowledge that the adult learner brings into the classroom and how the instructor or trainer takes this into account (Puurula, Neill, Vasileiou, Husbands, Lang, Katz, Romi, Menezes, and Vriens, 2001). Does the learner already have knowledge of the topic? How comfortable are they with this topic? How can the instructor or trainer use this knowledge to facilitate learning? How will the adult learner react if something they are taught contradicts a deeply held belief? Especially when it comes to multicultural curriculums, these issues need to be addressed up front, long before the class even enters the classroom or training room for the first time.

The issue of language, aside from being perhaps the most obvious barrier, also includes non-verbal communication, which can mean many different things in a variety of cultures. Clichés, local expressions, or figures of speech can confuse people who are

not familiar with local language and customs. Verbal expressions can come across in a different way than what someone intends. This may also be the case for written materials. It is important to remember to use simple, generally acceptable language, and use examples that are easy for everyone to understand, and that are not easily misinterpreted.

To complicate matters even further, with the aging of the general population, the effects of age such as failing sight, hearing, or loss of other faculties can have a major impact on the learner's abilities (Purdie and Boulton-Lewis, 2003). What are the barriers that older adults run into when it comes to learning new information? Is it possible that the physical environment is too cold, too warm, too noisy, or otherwise uncomfortable for them? If so, this may distract from their attention or ability to concentrate. What control does the instructor or trainer have over these environmental factors, if any? Can any of these factors be changed, or is a new classroom setting necessary? Can learners see and hear both the instructor or the trainer and each other to facilitate a good group discussion? What can be done to facilitate learning for these people? Some older adults may also take longer to process the information especially if it is new, or contradicts some long-held belief.

In addition to these factors, life experience also might affect that person's ability to learn. For real, effective learning to take place, the instructor or trainer must provide a safe, comfortable, environment for all learners, regardless of race, culture, age, or gender (Kreitz, 2008). Anything less will negatively impact the learner's experience, from a minor annoyance to open hostility. When discussing sensitive subjects such as prejudice or discrimination, which many adult learners have already experienced, it can be challenging for many learners to share their experiences, although these can be some of the most powerful lessons of all.

Another factor to consider is: what is the learning style of the learner? Instructors or trainers must balance their instructional design between visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, and Krathwohl, 1956). All learners will favor some portion of each, but the effective instructor or trainer must take all of these styles into account, and at least attempt to cover some of each. In addition, a good balance of individual as well as team or group projects will help learners that have a preference for extraversion (those who prefer to work with others) or introversion (those who prefer to work alone).

In order to develop more effective training programs, it can also help when the instructor or trainer shares their own personal experiences when appropriate (Coleman, Collins, and Baylis, 2007). This will help the learners to understand that the instructor also has life experiences to share, and it sets a good example for the rest of the class. The instructor or trainer also needs to actively listen to learners who are speaking, not only to value the learners input, but again to set a good example for the rest of the class. The instructor or trainer also needs to know when to encourage the learner and when to step back from a potentially uncomfortable situation. Such is the nature of many of the discussions that occur when discussing sensitive, personal subjects.

In general, it is important that instructors or trainers give clear instructions about the topic (Puurula et al, 2001). It is also important to develop a multi-faceted approach to teaching the subject, treating learners as humans, and giving them options. Ask learners what they want to get from the training program, and what they are currently struggling with. Get feedback from the groups both during the course and also at the end. It is important to note that many courses only get feedback at the end of the course, which is too late. If there is continuous feedback from learners, changes in the course structure can be made immediately to improve learning even while the class is still in session.

The instructor or trainer needs to facilitate the conversation to make sure that learners stick to the topic and have a good discussion. Also, it is important to know when to take breaks to help the learner get what they want from the training. “The teacher’s role is to design an environment that elicits desired behavior toward meeting these goals and to extinguish undesirable behavior” (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, p. 253). The more that the instructor or trainer follows these guidelines, the more effective and enjoyable the class will be for everyone involved.

Statement of the Problem

The world has become a multicultural place. In order for people from multiple cultures to work together, the need to understand more about each other. At some point, a course will need to be created to help learners from multiple cultures learn from and about each other (Kreitz, 2008). Teaching about multicultural issues is a sensitive project at best. To help instructors or trainers get their information across to adult learners, they need to help create a safe and comfortable environment for learners and people to open up. With the advent of a global economy, it is not uncommon for any organization to have to deal with these issues, and a program needs to be developed in order to facilitate the learning about and from people from many different cultures (Morgan, 2002).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to review and recommend potential strategies for improving a multicultural training or educational classroom environment.

Assumptions of the Study

It is assumed that instructors and trainers will approach either the course or training program with an open mind and a willingness to learn from learners as well as discuss their own experiences in an honest and open way.

Definition of Terms

Culture: The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought.

Diversity: the fact or quality of being different.

Ethnocentrism: belief that one's own ethnic group is superior

Heterogeneous: consisting of dissimilar elements or parts

Macrocontexts: complex problems explored over extended periods of time from different perspectives

Multicultural: or, relating to, or including several cultures

Race: A local geographic or global human population distinguished as a more or less distinct group by genetically transmitted physical characteristics.

Racism: The belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in scope to university or corporate training courses that focus on helping people from different cultures understand each other and work together better.

Methodology

This study will be an extensive literature review of learning models for the adult learner. The first part of this literature review will focus on the learning environment and conducting an effective learner needs assessment. The second part will focus on adult learning theory, specifically the taxonomies of Bloom and Krathwohl. The last part of this literature review will focus on five different learning models: cooperative learning, cognitive apprenticeships, anchored instruction, problem-based learning, and the ADDIE model. Recommendations will then be made as a result of this research.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Introduction

Cultural diversity is a major educational issue in the United States today (Sturz, Kleiner, and Fernandez, 2005). Ethnic differences among different groups in the United States cause various degrees of misunderstanding. Each ethnic group has their own beliefs and cultural norms, and what is acceptable in one group may be entirely unacceptable in another. The background of any individual, their beliefs, values, morals, and personal goals also has a major impact on how that person will deal with others (Morgan, 2002). For instance, in a business environment, if a person does not have the ability to understand a co-workers or a client's background, they may find it difficult if not impossible to communicate or collaborate effectively (Senge, Lichtenstein, Kaeufer, Bradbury, and Carroll, 2007). The more we understand each other, the more we will be able to work together better, even to the point of creating a significant strategic business advantage (Orenstein, 2005).

At the root of this issue is a simple lack of understanding and the many cultural differences that exist in our schools, our companies, and our communities today. "We know that culture is that deeply learned mix of language, beliefs, values, and behaviors that pervades every aspect of our lives, significantly influences our motivation" (Wlodkowski, 1999, p. 2). Indeed, many educational systems and technologies have taken a 'culturally neutral' approach. As a result, many of these diverse ethnic populations have not been adequately served (Thomas, Mitchell, and Joseph, 2002).

According to one research project, "Our results indicate, despite considerable apparent differences at the national level, broad agreement at the practitioner level, but that certain areas of affective education continue to need development" (Puurula et al,

2001, p. 181). It is the intention of this literature review to examine the current state of research in the field of creating an effective classroom environment for such training or educational programs.

The first part of this literature review will focus on the learning environment and conducting an effective learner needs assessment. The second part will focus on adult learning theory, specifically the taxonomies of Bloom and Krathwohl. The last part of this literature review will focus on five different learning models: cooperative learning, cognitive apprenticeships, anchored instruction, problem-based learning, and the ADDIE model.

Learning Environment

The environment of the classroom is just one of the factors that can have a major impact on the learning experience. “Adequate lighting, comfortable temperatures, and clean, tidy classrooms support learning. A safe environment and appropriate room arrangements do the same thing. Out of whack, any of these factors can devastate the learning experience” (Powers, 1992, p. 61).

This discussion will focus on three factors that can impact the learning environment: the physical environment, the facilitation of adult learning based upon sound adult learning concepts, and the emotional environment. Every learner needs to feel safe and comfortable in any learning environment, especially during the discussion of sensitive subjects like race, ethics, culture and many more, and the development of an environment of trust is critical (Erdem and Ozen, 2003). The instructor or trainer of a course that covers the subject of cultural, racial and gender issues needs to create an environment where productive dialogue can grow and flourish (Morgan, 2002). According to Powers (Powers, 1992), this will help learners to open up and take part in discussing difficult issues.

To begin with, the instructor or trainer must take into account the physical design and size of the room (Sturz, et al, 2005). This may include spending time in the room by checking out the size and layout of the room, noting the range in temperature, equipment, lighting and so forth (Powers, 1992). Instructors or trainers will often check their rooms before each classroom session, and will do what they can to create the best room arrangement possible (Powers, 1992). Each instructor or trainer needs to ask: is the room large enough for the class? Is there physical room for each activity? Or, is the room so large that the learners will be too far away from each other to facilitate inter-group discussions? Is the lighting sufficient for the task at hand, does the multimedia equipment work properly? It will be hard for learners to learn (perhaps even just to stay awake) if the room is too warm, and other distractions such as noise or bad lighting will only make a difficult teaching job more so (Levack, 2007). "When people worry about their comfort and safety, they tend to find it very difficult to focus on anything else" (Powers, 1992, p. 61).

Once the instructor or trainer has taken the physical characteristics of the room into account, the next task is to consider the arrangement of desks, chairs, and tables. The room arrangement will be determined by course objectives, lessons or activities, the number of participants, the type of class, and even the availability of classroom space within your facility (Powers, 1992). If learning exercises are collaborative, or if a discussion is necessary, the desks, chairs, and tables should be set up to promote these exercises (Sturz, et al, 2005). According to Powers (1992) for initial classroom setup, there are four common arrangements: the U shape, the classroom, the circle, and the theater. Theater style is usually used for large groups, which is set up so that the learners can see the instructor or trainer as they walk around the front of the room.

The U shape is ideal for small to medium-sized groups because it makes it easier for learners to interact with one another (Levack, 2007). The classroom style is a

variation of the old schoolroom setup and, although it is useful for standard lecture, it is not the best arrangement for a discussion group, as it makes it difficult for learners to have conversations with one another. A circle or a semicircle will help to encourage such dialogue. Such close proximity will also encourage dialogue, even making it easier for learners to read each other's non-verbal cues (Powers, 1992).

Dialogue is a critical part of any class where the learners have as much to bring to the class as the instructor does. According to Vella (1994, p. 3), "Dia means "between"; logos means "word." Hence, dia + logue = the word between us." In order to facilitate effective dialogue, all of these physical environmental factors need to be considered to improve any adult training or education classes (Powers 1992).

One other consideration to keep in mind when discussing environment is that some adult learners might have special needs such as decreased visual or hearing abilities and these needs may have to be taken into account (Purdie and Boulton-Lewis, 2003). Can the learners see the instructor or trainer well enough to facilitate learning? Can they see the screen for any visual presentations? Can they hear well enough to feel comfortable participating in a small group discussion? How are all these factors going to affect the individual learner? (Mucciolo, 1998).

Finally and perhaps most importantly, is the issue of the emotional environment. Dealing with issues such as race, culture, or other sensitive issues among people with differing viewpoints can create some very delicate situations. "Many people choose to learn more about other cultures and get involved. Others fear it and stay away from it as much as possible" (Sturz, et al, 2005, p. 58). Since we often fear what we do not understand, and with issues such as ethnic identity and discrimination being so highly emotionally charged, how can an instructor or trainer effectively manage this emotional environment in the classroom? Fear can be a crippling emotion in the best circumstances,

and in the classroom or a training setting, it can shut down any productive conversation (Puurula et al, 2001).

Ellsworth (1989, p. 298) writes: “key assumptions, goals, and pedagogical practices fundamental to the literature on critical pedagogy—namely, ‘empowerment,’ ‘student voice,’ ‘dialogue,’ and even the term ‘critical’—are repressive myths that perpetuate relations of domination”. Learners may be so uncomfortable with such delicate issues in a classroom environment that they will simply choose not to participate.

“In experimenting with a college class on racism, Ellsworth discovered that she and the students were ill equipped to handle the unequal power relations in their own classroom. She writes, “Our classroom was not in fact a safe space for students to speak out or talk back about their experiences of oppression both inside and outside of the classroom. . . . Things were not being said for a number of reasons. These included fear of being misunderstood and/or disclosing too much and becoming too vulnerable; . . . resentment that other oppressions (sexism, heterosexism, fat oppression, classism, anti-Semitism) were being marginalized in the name of addressing racism;... [and] confusion about levels of trust and commitment surrounding those who were allies to another groups’ struggles” (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 297-324).

Safety in the classroom environment means that this is a safe place to discuss issues that otherwise might be too delicate to discuss otherwise. This is a place where attitudes and stereotypes can be examined and discussed, and special care must be taken here to make sure that people are free to share their own opinions and experiences without judgment or criticism from others (Sturz, et al, 2005). Other underlying cultural and ethnic issues will also need to be considered. “To provide a most enriching education, teachers must first understand stereotypes, ethnocentrism, and the prejudices that occur in many communities” (Vella, 1994, p. 3).

In order to facilitate such learning, at the beginning of any class or training seminar on such a sensitive subject, it will always be necessary to put into place some basic guidelines, and make sure that all learners not only agree, but will enforce such guidelines (with each other) during small group exercises and also for large groups too. It can be advantageous for instructors or trainers to have the learners either add to or modify these guidelines according to their particular needs. These classroom discussions are the beginning of the public world where members of a society can begin to learn to support and nurture each other (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). Creating this connected environment will help learners to develop their own voices and see themselves as capable of being part of the course, not merely just recipients of information (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999).

Needs Assessment

To begin with, every class or training session should begin with a needs assessment. According to one case study, “research indicates that practitioners are convinced of the value and recommend the use of needs assessment in adult education programming” (King & Jakuta, 2002, p. 170-171). An adequate needs assessment is a basic principle of adult learning, which takes into account the fact that many learners will register for the same program with different life experiences and differing expectations. When the instructor listens to learners’ wants and needs, it helps to tailor a program specific to those learners’ needs and they are more likely to appreciate and use the information presented. The WWW question: who as learners in need; what as needs; whom as definers; gives the instructor a unique insight into what issues and perspectives the students bring to the classroom. In doing so, the instructor can do a much better job to prepare the classroom for these adult learners. This will also automatically enhance the learners’ motivation, because the learners are learning more about their own lives, as the course has been specifically created in response to their needs. “People are naturally

excited to learn anything that helps them understand their own themes, their own lives” (Vella, 1994, p. 4-5).

The needs assessment creates the foundation for creating an effective curriculum for a course. “Busy managers attending a course on strategic planning, busy community people trying to learn how to organize for new legislation, families trying to learn how to communicate more effectively, individuals learning how to use a new word processing program—all need an accountable design and an accountable teacher to provide the necessary sequence and reinforcement tasks” (Vella, 1994, p. 5). An additional benefit is that as learners realize that the course curriculum has been tailored to their individual issues and needs, they will understand that someone has taken significant time and effort to understand their own situation, create a model for future class discussions, and design class exercises that are sensitive to differing cultures, races, and ethnic backgrounds.

Adult Learning Theory

To successfully teach adults, it is necessary to first understand that adults bring a great resource to the classroom: themselves (King and Jakuta, 2002). Each adult learner brings a lifetime of experience, education, and expertise that an instructor or trainer can draw upon to make any class more informative and effective.

There is, however, more than one type of learning. In the search to learn more about how people learn, Benjamin Bloom created what are known as the three domains of educational activities, now known simply as Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, Krathwohl, 1956). These three domains are the cognitive domain, the affective domain, and the psychomotor domain.

Beane (1990) writes “At that time also, many educators were infatuated with the recently published Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain.” “This popularity was mostly due to its explication of levels of thinking processes, its focus on behavioral objectives, and the relation of these to post-Sputnik

work on curriculum in subject areas, as well as the interest in “scientific” management of schools then (and still) in vogue”. “Eight years later, a second volume appeared entitled *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook II: Affective Domain*.” “It was, according to the authors, the much requested sequel to the first volume. The booklet included a restatement of the domain theory, an explanation of the affective domain, a description of the latter’s relation to the cognitive domain, and a definition of the language used to describe affect and its choice in the committee’s work” (Beane, 1990, p. 41).

The cognitive domain involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills; the categories are listed in order from easiest to most complex (Bloom, et al, 1956). Bloom theorized that learners would have to master tasks from least to most complex by moving through these categories. The first category is called Knowledge, the simple recall of data or information facts, dates, basic information. The second is Comprehension, an understanding of the meaning or interpretation of a problem in the learner’s own words. The third category is Application, the use of a concept that the learner has knowledge of that can be applied to a new and different situation. The fourth category is Analysis, the ability to separate material or concepts into component parts for further study. The fifth category, Synthesis, is virtually the opposite of Analysis; this is the building up of a larger structure from discrete, dissimilar elements. The highest and most complex category is Evaluation, where the learner makes judgments about the value or authenticity of ideas or concepts (Bloom, et al, 1956).

Bloom also understood that learning happened in the Affective domain, and created the following categories (Bloom et al, 1956). First, there is the category of Receiving Phenomena, being able to be aware, or to give focused attention, such as attentive listening to a speaker. Second is Responding to Phenomena, which corresponds to responding, or being willing to respond, to input from someone else, such as

participating in a class discussion. Third is Valuing, the ability to give some intrinsic worth to an object, phenomenon, or behavior. This would be seen in the response to a question that indicates that the listener finds what they hear to be important, whether or not they agree with the point being made. Fourth is Organization, the ability to create some structure to an argument being made (or one that the learner intends to make) with emphasis in comparison or relation between statements. The highest category is Internalizing Values or Characterization. This is the indication that the learner has some internal value system that acts as an internal compass to guide their decisions and actions. This category in particular is important to the discussion of cultural, racial, and ethnic issues because it is at this level that learners will, it is hoped, make positive adjustments in their value systems depending upon the impact of the course that they have participated in (Bloom, et al, 1956).

As with the other two domains, the psychomotor domain has its own set of categories, from most basic to most complex (Bloom et al, 1956). The first domain is that of perception, the ability to use sensory cues to simply be aware of changes in one's environment. The second category is set, the ability and readiness to act, which is closely related to the Responding to Phenomena category of the affective domain. Next is the third category, the guided response. This is the hands-on repetition of some physical action while an instructor or trainer provides specific, real-time instructions. The fourth category is Mechanism, where the physical, learned response has become habitual and the learner's movements in a prescribed ritual can be preformed with some degree of accuracy and consistency. The fifth category is Complex Overt Response; this is the demonstration of a clear competence to do a particular task to a prescribed standard. The sixth is Adaptation, the ability to construct, build, measure, or manipulate some physical objects. This is similar to the Mechanism category, but at this level the movements are much quicker and more accurate, a much more confident behavior. The final category is

Origination, the ability to create a completely new movement or pattern in response to a specific problem. This is the realm of creativity, and mastery of the category (and the psychomotor domain) requires the highest level of skill.

In addition to Bloom's taxonomy, which is perhaps better known as a general taxonomy of learning, Krathwohl created his own taxonomy, specifically for the Affective domain (Krathwohl et al, 1964). Not unlike Bloom's taxonomy, "The taxonomy is ordered according to the principle of internalization. Internalization refers to the process where the affect is 'internalized' and consistently guides or controls the person's behavior (Seels & Glasgow, 1990, p. 28)."

Krathwohl's taxonomy of the affective domain has five categories (Krathwohl, 1964). The first category is Receiving, or simply being aware of or sensitive to the existence of outside information, such as listening to another person's ideas (with or without agreement). The second of Krathwohl's categories is Responding, which corresponds to some reaction to ideas, materials, or phenomena (again, not indicating agreement). This is where the learner will either agree and comply with some idea that conforms to their opinions, or perhaps resist some idea that they do not agree with. The third category is Valuing, or to be willing to be perceived by others to value certain ideas, materials, or phenomena. These learners are willing to support, debate, or discuss new ideas in order to assess how they relate to their own internal values. The fourth category is Organization, the ability to relate values already held to create an internally consistent philosophy. This is where learners will discuss, theorize, formulate and examine. Finally at the fifth level, Characterization by Value or Value Set, the learner will act consistently in accordance to their internal values. Here, learners will revise, avoid, manage or resolve in accordance to their internal values (Krathwohl et al, 1964).

The entire objective of encouraging learners to move from lower levels to higher levels of an educational taxonomy is to encourage learners not simply to receive the

information, but to respond to what they have learned, value this information, organize it, and maybe someday change their values and behaviors because of it (Bloom et al, 1956). If the learning is designed to gradually move learners from lower to higher taxonomical levels, it is more likely that the instructor or trainer will affect real, positive change in their learners, and that these learners, as a result, will become a more positive influence in the world at large. Once an instructor or trainer understands these taxonomies, they can then create a much more effective lesson plan.

Learning Models

There are several learning models that have been considered for this paper. The models to be examined here are Cooperative Learning, Situated Cognition and Cognitive Apprenticeships, Anchored Instruction, Problem-Based Learning (PBL), and the ADDIE model. Each is presented here with a brief overview with some specific ideas of how they can be adapted to affective course development.

Cooperative learning

As many students are trying to master new materials, or learn to deal with difficult materials, “many students never make it beyond the first-level courses in disciplines outside their majors, discouraged by the barriers of large classes and abstract, complex information presented with a minimum of context or ideas about how it might be applied (Elmendorf, 2006, p. 37). The same could be said for a student dealing with materials dealing with cultural issues. Cooperative learning is one effective learning strategy that will help students to learn together while at the same time learning about each other.

Cooperative learning is an approach to learning that helps learners to work together to help one another master the material. This approach is best described by the phrase ‘we all sink or swim together’ (Oliver, 1999). Cooperative learning goals emphasize collaboration and sharing. Group success is based upon cooperation and

working together to accomplish shared goals (Johnson, Johnson, and Smith, 2006).

“Among the many collaborative learning possibilities, cooperative learning represents the most carefully organized and researched approach” (Wlodkowski, 1994, p. 105).

According to Johnson, et al, (2006). Stage one is the pre-instructional decision stage: in this stage the group size is decided, what method will be used to form heterogeneous groups and what roles to assign to what groups. Also in this stage, learning objectives are written for each lesson, the classroom is arranged to make it more comfortable, and materials are gathered that learners will need to complete assignments

Stage two is the cooperative structure stage: in this stage the instructor explains the academic assignment to learners, the criteria for success, how individual accountability will be measured and evaluated, and what behaviors are to be expected during the lesson that will create positive group interdependence.

Stage three is the monitor and intervene stage. In this stage, the instructor conducts the lesson, monitors each learning group, and steps in as necessary to intervene to improve the flow of taskwork and teamwork. Finally at the close of the lesson, the instructor will review and then wrap up the lesson.

Stage four is the evaluate and process stage. Here the instructor will assess and evaluate the quality and quantity of the learning. At this point, learners will decide what they have learned, make plans for improvement, and celebrate successes (Johnson, et al, 2006).

Cooperative learning is known by its reliance on both individual and group accountability and positive interdependence, using small groups so that students work together to maximize learning for both themselves and others (Johnson, et al, 2006). It is important to “describe precisely what you are doing and why in order to (a) communicate to others the nature and advantages of cooperative learning and (b) teach colleagues how to implement cooperative learning”(Johnson, et al, 2006).

In any cooperative learning venture, the learner is accountable for a specific task or topic, as well as for topics that are assigned to other group members. In addition, each group or team will benefit when all other members perform well. If some members do not perform well, the performance of the overall group or team will suffer. This is particularly relevant to real-world situations where the lack of performance of one member of a team can seriously hurt overall team performance.

Cooperative learning also relies heavily on group processing as learners are coached on group process skills. It will be necessary for learners to support differences, listen effectively, provide honest and direct feedback, make sure that all members participate in the process, and come to a consensus. Each group will also have roles assigned to members for tasks such as group leadership, recording of ideas and contributions, presenting results to the rest of the class, and keeping time for activities as required.

To set up a cooperative learning exercise, the instructor should create small groups of two to four members (Wlodkowski, 1999). Each group should be heterogeneous by gender, race, ethnic identity and ability level. Cooperative base groups are long-term (lasting for at least a year), heterogeneous groups with people who will be there to support, help, and encourage each other to learn the subject matter (Johnson, et al, 2006). This will help to encourage group interaction, discussion, and understanding of differing viewpoints. This will also improve the performance of low-ability learners that are grouped with high-ability learners, but it may also limit the performance of some higher-performing learners.

There are also several strategies that can be used with this approach. One is Think-Pair-Share, where learners are prompted to think about an idea or problem, record their ideas, then share with another learner (Oliver, 1999). This encourages the learner to

reason through the problem on their own first, and then discusses their approach with others to compare and contrast their ideas and assumptions.

The Affinity strategy is used where learners first write down an issue or concern on a card and the group collects the cards (Oliver, 1999). The group then compares them and sorts them into categories and solutions that learners have found that are common.

The Jigsaw strategy takes the tasks and materials and divides them into sections for each group (Oliver, 1999). Members work on each piece of the puzzle individually, and make notes on the topic and possible solutions. The group then re-convenes and the learners teach their topics to the other members of their groups.

The Find the Fib strategy is a unique approach to helping learners to learn about different parts of a topic (Oliver, 1999). Each learner teaches their piece of the topic to the group, and one learner has a fib or non-truthful element that does not fit. It is up to the group to find the fib or the element that does not fit.

The Send-a-Problem strategy is one where group members write down their problems on cards, and then they send these cards to other group members (Oliver, 1999). These other members will examine the card and, if they agree on a solution, they will write that solution on the back of the card. If the group does not agree on a solution, the question is revised until they can reach a consensus. These question cards are then sent to other groups where the cards are read and discussed. If the second group achieves a consensus, they check if they agree with the first group's consensus. If there is no agreement, the second group writes their answer on the back as an alternative and sends it back to the first group. The process is repeated until a consensus is achieved.

All of these cooperative learning strategies can help learners with critical thinking and reasoning. Learners will acquire a better understanding of course content as they explain content to other learners (Ellertson and Thoennes, 2007). Finally, cooperative

learning will facilitate social skill development, and help learners appreciate other opinions and perspectives, leading to higher achievement and productivity among groups.

By using a progressive-refinement procedure of teaching a cooperative lesson, each successive lesson can be improved. By assessing how well the initial lesson went, reflecting on how cooperation could have been better structured, and then teaching an improved cooperative lesson, an instructor can create a continuous improvement process. From that point on it becomes a continual process of teaching assessment, and re-creation of a new lesson plan (Johnson, et al, 2006).

By way of comparison, a competitive environment with learners working against each other to achieve an academic goal such as a good grade that only a few learners will get, can lead to extreme competition, and lack of cooperation (Johnson, et al, 2006). “In cooperative and individualistic learning, you evaluate student efforts on a criteria-referenced basis while in competitive learning you grade students on a norm-referenced basis” (Johnson, et al, 2006, p. 1:12). “Members often block or interfere with each other’s learning, communicate and coordinate poorly, mislead and confuse each other, loaf, and seek a free ride” (Johnson, et al, 2006, pg. 6:2).

Cooperative learning is by far the better method, leading to group achievement, positive relationships, and better overall psychological health (Johnson, et al, 2006). “The bad news about high-performance cooperative groups is that they are rare. Most groups never achieve this level of development” (Johnson, et al, 2006, p. 6:4).

Perhaps the most important lesson to be learned here is that when adults learn cooperatively, they tend to “develop supportive relationships across different ethnic, language, social class, and gender groups” (Wlodkowski, 1999, p. 105).

Situated Cognition and Cognitive Apprenticeships

Situated Cognition Theory is a theory of instruction that states that learning is naturally tied to a real-world activity, context, and culture. Cognitive Apprenticeship is

based upon situated cognition theory. The cognitive nature of the apprenticeship emphasizes teaching learners' different ways of thinking about whatever they are learning, as well as any skills associated with the learning activity (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). In this approach, learners must work with each other and their instructor to create some sort of mutual understanding. This approach encourages the free exchange and examination of different viewpoints and opinions, with the idea that it will help everyone involved to better understand each other's perspectives.

Overall, this approach mimics the apprentice model, helping learners to see how the task should be done, breaking a process down into manageable parts, and then modeling the correct approach while also coaching the learner as well. This model also helps the learner to understand and retain both knowledge and behavior in response to real-world scenarios as a way to prepare them for the time when they will have to accomplish these tasks on their own.

Most learning occurs through natural, day-to-day experiences. For centuries, this is the way that craftsmen and tradesmen passed down their knowledge and expertise from generation to generation, by apprenticeships. The intention of this approach to learning is to situate the learning in an environment that is as close to a real-world situation as possible, to facilitate not only basic learning but also the application of that learning. It is important to a successful cognitive apprenticeship to select appropriate real-world situations or tasks that fit well with learner needs, find the right person or persons to do the modeling, and then facilitate the learning process" (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, p. 243).

This model draws upon Vygotsky's 'zones of proximal development', which encourages the learner to adapt to tasks that are just beyond what the learner can accomplish, but are not impossible with the support of peers and instructors. (Borthick, Jones, and Wakai, 2003). According to one article, "learning is defined as the

development that results from social interaction that affords learners increased access to roles in expert performances. Accepting the dual cognitive-social nature of learning creates a new problem for instructors: designing learning experiences that meld the cognitive and social aspects without subordinating either to the other” (Borthick et al, 2003, p. 107). In this way, the learner will have to apply not only what knowledge that they already have, but will have to either use that knowledge in a new and unique way, or gain some new knowledge as necessary.

John Dewey also advocated situational approaches to learning, based upon his contention that understanding is defined within a social unit (Hansen, 2002). As one writer puts it, “his conception derives from two components of his philosophical anthropology: (1) his understanding of the nature of the growing self, and (2) his view of how human beings influence one another” (Hansen, 2002, p. 267). Learning in this approach is not defined by an outside influence, but will emerge as part of a collaborative process. This also is much like the traditional apprenticeship process, where the apprentice learns by doing, learning and being challenged by more complex tasks and situations as their skill level develops.

The cognitive apprenticeship model is made up of three stages (Oliver, 1999). The first stage involves the instructor breaking a complex expert process down into its constituent parts. The second stage is designing authentic tasks that will lead learners to learn the larger process as they are modeling an effective strategy to solve the problem. The final stage is where the instructor then models the strategy and coaches learners as they apply them.

The end result of cognitive apprenticeships is two fold. First, the learner will internalize what has been learned so the learner can do the task or solve the problem on their own. Second, the learner will be able to generalize what they have learned as both a

way to apply this learning to similar situations and as a starting point for further learning (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999).

Anchored Instruction

Anchored Instruction was created to situate learning in realistic problems, allowing learners an opportunity to deal with real-world problems in the same way that a professional in a similar situation would (Oliver, 1999). It also provides a way to recreate some of the advantages of apprenticeship training (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). An anchored module will have all the information in it that is required to solve the problem, which will make it easier to deal with limited time or resources (Oliver, 1999). Using an anchored module may help learners maneuver through experiences and tackle the problems and opportunities that at sometime in real life one may encounter (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999).

To begin with, the instructor creates an anchored story, identifies the steps that will be required to solve a problem, and then creates a story line to put the entire scenario together (Oliver, 1999). The problems should not be too easy to solve, and there should be opportunities for learners to discuss and debate various options and choices that they make as they try to solve the problem. Many of these scenarios will require more than ten steps to solve them, and more than one solution path is often possible. If many groups in one class are working the same scenario, it can be helpful for each group to present to the others how they formed their own solution to the problem as a way to discuss with others (Oliver, 1999).

The problem should be 'anchored' in a realistic situation. Learners then need to go beyond problem identification and then create several potential solutions. The instructor should coach each group to extract key facts, issues, or data that will highlight potential roadblocks. Some institutions recommend that the original scenario be given via video as a way to make the experience as real as possible to the learners (Oliver, 1999).

Once the learners are put into small groups of less than ten learners each, they should begin to discuss the pros and cons of their solution plans. Once they have formulated a working solution, they then will present to the entire class for comparison and further discussion (Oliver, 1999).

One of the biggest challenges in generating creative solutions to complex problems is ironically a standardized curriculum (Oliver, 1999). Cramming facts about complicated issues will not help learners to formulate solutions to difficult scenarios. Anchored instruction creates an environment where learners will immediately apply what they've learned as a group, and also have the opportunity to see how others have attempted to solve the same problem. Once all groups have had the chance to present their solutions, there are even more opportunities to discuss and critique each other's ideas and solutions. This approach will help all learners to learn from each other and have a deeper appreciation of both the complexity and the potential that these scenarios have.

Another way to understand why this model works is to look at macrocontexts, which are complex problems explored over extended periods of time from different perspectives (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). The macrocontexts become the tools of learning, which takes on different forms such as asking the learners to come up with a problem-based case study, or having instructors/trainers provide videos which contain a problem to be examined and discussed (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). Building macrocontexts generally work better with graduate students and professional groups when used with other effective instructional technique (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999).

The overall goal of anchored instruction is to have learners grow from the weak side of knowing something to becoming strong in knowing something, or to 'grow from the inside out' (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). Indeed, from one such study the data "suggest that the anchored instruction approach addresses the shortcomings of existing structure in educational computing courses by providing a venue that fosters a rich shared

environment that generates interest and motivation, and enables student to alleviate the problem of inert knowledge” (Kariuki and Duran, 2004. p. 443),

Problem-Based Learning

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) began in the 1950’s as a movement to change medical school education to better replicate real-world situations (Oliver, 1999). PBL is used to help understand real world problems, and also is a way for learners to learn and apply critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and other essential concepts that are required for a particular discipline (Wlodkowski, 1999). Even colleges and universities are considering PBL, as “it would prepare students to think in an interdisciplinary way so that, when they are confronted with the problems of tomorrow, they start with the problem rather than with their toolbox, and then work with others to choose the set of toolboxes that will best address the problem at hand” (Sternberg, 2008, p. 17).

In addition, many instructors of affective curriculums are considering PBL as the basis of a contextual learning experience. One reason that PBL is being used more as a learning model is because “Social work educators are starting to embrace PBL because students can become active partners in their educational experience and can integrate knowledge and practice skills” (Coleman et al, 2007, p. 98).

PBL begins with a problem, and teaches facts and skills in a relevant context. This approach was designed to require learners to solve open-ended problems that may have many correct answers. Problems are authentic and many are actual cases taken from professionals in the field (Oliver, 1999). These problems can also be characterized as a goal that a person wants to achieve in spite of an obstacle that exists in some specific situation (Wlodkowski, 1999).

Although the basic steps used in problem-based learning may vary, for the most part they create a practical model for designing instruction. The intent is to create

learning which is a self-directed, constructive process which takes into account the fact that learning is a social activity which does not happen in a vacuum (Wlodkowski, 1999). The learner's pre-existing knowledge is critical to this approach, with the objective being to start with what the learner already knows (Oliver, 1999). Keep in mind that solving problems may be culture-bound. Social and ethical codes may influence how learners see and tackle problems from building a home to settling a divorce (Wlodkowski, 1999).

It is necessary to begin by giving learners access to considerable information and resources to solve these open-ended problems, encouraging them to use an appropriate research strategy, much like would be done in a real-world situation. In fact, determining this research strategy is an important by-product of this approach (Oliver, 1999).

To begin with, learners are divided into groups. A real problem is then presented to the group, and the problem is discussed. Brainstorming takes place in the first meeting which learners identify what is known about the problem, what information is needed, and what strategies or steps must be taken. With the list from the brainstorming session, now each learner can take different parts of the problem to research. This is the part of the process where learners form study groups in order to organize their ideas with the new information as a way to relate this new information to previous knowledge related to the problem (Wlodkowski, 1999).

These resources are then evaluated by the group, and the cycle is repeated until learners feel that the problem has been framed adequately and all issues related to the problem have been addressed (Oliver, 1999).

At this point, the group will discuss possible actions, recommendations, solutions, or hypotheses. Learners will comment on both their own efforts and other group member's efforts. If a consensus is achieved, a recommendation is formed. If not, the cycle will be repeated until all members feel that they can come to a consensus (Oliver, 1999).

The final part of the process is the preparation for presentations. If possible, give the learners at least two weeks before their presentations to gather the final information, write the report, and prepare the presentation. When it comes to giving the presentations and assessments, the group will present the information. The rest of the class, along with the instructor, will then give feedback (Wlodkowski, 1999).

The instructor will need to provide guidelines for the assessment (Koh, Khoo, Wong, and Koh, 2008). In this case, high marks should be given for clear statements of objectives, clear and concise presentations, and a clear and easy-to-follow sequence of individual topics. Each topic should be supported by good examples, with an easy to read and understandable format. Presenters should be able to provide precise answers to questions, and clearly demonstrate how they have used new and useful information. Along with the marks, each learner should receive a feedback sheet with the other learners'. For some instructors, each presenter (or group) might also be required to submit a thousand-word written report of the presentation strictly for the instructor to grade and comment on (Wlodkowski, 1999).

In order to help the process along, a facilitator will be required. A facilitator will model higher-order process skills, but will never identify issues that might have been missed or state their own opinion while the learners are trying to frame the problem. The facilitator in this case is the expert model, and it is their job to question learners when they struggle with the process, asking what information might be missing or challenging the learners to consider what the next step might be (Oliver, 1999).

The advantages of Problem-Based Learning are a greater recall of knowledge, and a better retention of that knowledge. This approach is interdisciplinary, and can require the learner to access and use information from a variety of subject domains while it also helps the learner to better integrate their existing knowledge. This can lead to the effective development of lifelong learning skills such as how to do research, how to

communicate with a group, or how to handle an impasse. In general, Problem-Based Learning will help to increase motivation and interest in the subject area, increase learner-to-learner interaction, and also increase learner-to-instructor interaction (Oliver, 1999).

The ADDIE Model

The ADDIE model (analyze, design, develop, implement, evaluate) is one model that has become quite popular in the Instructional Design (ID) community. “Instructional Design (ID) is a conceptual model for developing instruction and typically includes analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation (i.e., ADDIE model)” (Magliaro and Shambaugh, 2006, p. 83). As with all of these models, the challenge here is to create an effective training program that will enable learners from different cultural backgrounds to understand and appreciate one another so that they are able to work together more effectively.

In the analyze phase, basic data about the problem is gathered and analyzed (Peterson, 2003). This is the phase where the needs assessment occurs, and instructors will use this phase to gather information about the situation that needs to be changed, and who the potential learners might be. It is critical to the success of any education program that a thorough and accurate needs assessment is done as part of the analyze phase.

In the design phase, the instructional designer or instructor puts together basic information about the educational program (Peterson, 2003). What has the needs assessment found to be areas where education can be of assistance? Who are the potential learners and what are their needs? What are their learning styles? The answers to these questions and more formulate the basis of any good instructional design.

Next, in the development phase, the instructional designer or instructor needs to do the actual course development (Peterson, 2003). Lesson plans, handouts, PowerPoint slides, selection of audio or video clips needs to be done. Also, in this phase the instructor

in particular needs to be aware of the environment of the class. How large is the classroom? Will there be any potential distractions? Can the learners hear and see what is going on in the classroom? What is going to be done to insure that the learner feels emotionally comfortable with the topic being discussed? How will the instructor set the example for the class when discussing their own opinions or life experiences?

In the implement phase, the actual learning takes place (Peterson, 2003). This is where the instructor is actually teaching the class, and all of the previous work will have the greatest impact on the learner's experience. All of the previous work on needs assessment, course design, and course development come together to create the total learning experience. If the instructor has prepared properly, this is where the learner will truly experience a potentially life-altering event.

In the evaluation phase, this is where most courses have the learners fill out a survey about how they felt about the course and what they might do differently (Peterson, 2003). Also, there is the possibility of sending a follow-up survey in the future to see if the learner's change in attitudes and values has held up in the real world. It is from this feedback that the instructional designer and instructor can then go back to the needs assessment and design phases and prepare for the next class, using this feedback.

Conclusion

The overall objective of this literature review was to examine and evaluate the literature as it applies to the development of an effective multicultural learning program. From environment to needs assessment to adult learning theory and learning models, there are many factors that need to be taken into consideration in the design and delivery of effective adult learning. The need for such education is increasingly apparent. "Organizations with increasingly diverse workforces and customer populations face challenges in reaping diversity's benefits while managing its potentially disruptive effects" (Kreitz, 2008, p. 101).

In addition, it is also noted that such education will continue to be even more important as the population ages. As one study of European government agencies finds of older adults, “they should not suggest that supportive guidance, transparent assessment and inclusiveness in formal learning programmes are not important: there are strong progressive possibilities in new discourses of inclusiveness, as well as spaces for inspiring and empowering learners, and for them to inspire and empower us!” (Ecclestone, 1999, p. 344).

Chapter III: Discussion and Recommendations

Introduction

By the time many people become adults, they find that many of their attitudes and behaviors have already become habitual. The question is: how many of these beliefs and prejudices are inaccurate or altogether wrong? Many beliefs that were learned about culture, ethics, race, and many other issues are tainted by a lack of real, accurate information (Puurula et al, 2001). Sometime this information received was negative. This can cause barriers to the adult learning process, at work or even in the community, and especially when it comes to learning more about different cultures.

Barriers to communication

People are afraid to say anything for fear of saying the wrong thing, offending someone, or simply being misunderstood, so many people simply keep still. As the result of these fears, a barrier of silence comes up which will cause poor communication or negative feelings, especially towards different cultures and races (Orenstein, 2005). If people stay on this path, they will isolate themselves. However, it is hard for many people to change their old ways of thinking.

Now is the time to encourage adults to take a step out of their comfort zone and learn about other cultures, race, ethics and other issues. In order for this to happen, instructors and trainers need to create a safe environment where the learners can open up and be honest without being put down. This can be done through the creation of a safe learning environment, doing an effective needs assessment of learner's needs, having a basic understanding of adult learning theory, and selecting among many effective learning models to create successful learning programs (Sturz et al, 2005).

Environmental Factors

The learning environment, especially the development of trust, is the most important factor in the adult learning process (Erdem and Ozen, 2003). Environment is

the biggest part of the adult learning process in either a classroom or training setting.

Instructors or trainers may be knowledgeable in the topic they will be covering or have written a good curriculum, syllabus, or a lesson plan. If instructors or trainers do not take the environment into consideration then a barrier of some kind may form and might not get the end result they want. In order for any educational program to be successful, the instructor needs to create a comfortable environment where the learners feel safe and are encouraged to take part in discussions. If possible, it helps for the instructor to check out the room early, for size, lighting, temperature, and noise level. The instructor should also check the equipment such as the projector, computer, and DVD player to make sure it works and know how it works if they have any problems with the equipment (Mucciolo, 1998). This is just part of the process to create a comfortable environment.

Another aspect of facilitating learning is to rearrange the chairs, tables, or desks, to suit the situation, as this will help to enhance learning (Levack, 2007). There are four common ways that instructors could rearrange the room: the circle, semi-circle, u shape, theater, and traditional. The circle is the best one to use in order to facilitate an effective discussion, this way learners have much more interaction, and can easily read each others' non-verbal as well as verbal cues.

Even the physical environment is important, keeping in mind that as the learners get older, they may develop visual or hearing problems (Purdie and Boulton-Lewis, 2003). The adult learner may be slow to understand a new concept or respond to a question if they cannot see or hear well within the learning environment. These issues and more should be covered by an effective needs assessment (King and Jakuta, 2002).

Design of Learning

As for the design of the learning itself, there are many models to choose from. The cooperative learning model encourages students to teach and learn from each other (Ellertson and Thoennes, 2007), (Elmendorf, 2006).

Cognitive apprenticeships are an updated model of the old apprenticeship method, and very effective in bridging the cognitive-social nature of learning, especially when it comes to cultural issues (Borthick et al, 2006). In particular, as stated before, the learning environment can be particularly important, especially when discussing cultural issues (Hansen, 2002).

Anchored instruction uses stories to teach in context, and this reflects learning in a real-world situation. This is especially important as different students will develop different solutions, and this also will facilitate discussion and understanding (Oliver, 1999).

Problem-Based Learning is another potential strategy, because it draws on situations that come from professionals in the field (Oliver, 1999). The more the learners encounter a real-world problem, the more likely they will feel that the discussion is relevant to what they will be facing outside of the classroom. If such real-world problems are not well defined and have various challenges to any solution, the learners are more likely to be able to partner to more effectively deal with these situations (Sternberg, 2008), (Coleman et al, 2007).

Finally, the ADDIE model gives many instructional designers a generic framework to create instructional programs (Magliaro and Shambaugh, 2006). Through the iterative process of analysis to design to evaluation, the course materials and teaching methods can be improved by following the feedback of each successive class of learners.

Conclusions

So, what is the best way to create effective multicultural training programs? The answer is: it depends. It depends mostly on the population of learners that will be attending the class. An effective needs assessment is critical here. When the instructor listens to learners' wants and needs, it will help to tailor the program specifically to those learners' needs and they will be more likely to appreciate and use the information

presented. This will also enhance the learners' motivation, because the learners are learning more about their own lives.

Are adult learners afraid to speak up? The environment of trust with effective guidelines for discussion will have to be clearly delineated and enforced by the instructor. Do the learners feel that their own needs are taken into account? Have them help to create these guidelines. Are all learners contributing to the class? The instructor needs to facilitate the discussion to make sure that everyone is participating.

After everyone agrees to these guidelines, it will be possible to have the groups move on to more effective discussions. However the group agrees to them, these guidelines need to be clearly stated or posted so that all learners understand what is expected of them.

Each adult has a lifetime of experience to share, some good and some bad. By following some simple strategies to create an effective lesson plan, classroom environment, and discussion guidelines, it is much more likely that learners will not only participate in exercises and discussion, but they will also learn from each other as well as the instructor. And that will ultimately enhance everyone's life by understanding other people and their unique contributions to our world at large.

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