Chapter 5
Effective Teaching Strategies to Connect With the Adult Learners’ Worldview

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ABSTRACT

Today’s complex and fast-moving environment requires higher education educators to use flexible approaches in their teaching. All educators know that teaching is a challenging yet rewarding task. While teaching may appear easy, the work is highly complex with many causes impacting the learning environment. While many of these forces are not controlled by the teacher, this chapter shares strategies that work well with adult learners. The authors consider students enrolled in higher education to fall into this category.
EFFECTIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES TO CONNECT WITH THE ADULT LEARNERS’ WORLDVIEW

Today’s complex and fast-moving environment places the need for higher education educators to use flexible approaches in their teaching. All educators know that teaching is a challenging yet rewarding task. Teaching may appear easy, the work is highly complex with many causes impacting the learning environment. While many of these forces are not controlled by the teacher, this chapter shares strategies that work well with adult learners. The authors consider students enrolled in higher education to fall into this category.

Worldview

In order to help adult learners make the most of their educational experiences, it is important for both the instructor and the adult learner to better understand the worldview that each person in the learning dyad holds. Defining worldview can be a daunting task but the authors are choosing to define worldview as the view one person holds of the world around them and how that “view” is internalized to make sense of the world they are living in. An example of this could be identified when an adult student is returning to school and perhaps had a negative experiences in previous classrooms, that student might have a negative worldview of education. We see examples of this played out every single day across the world as people interact with others who are different from themselves be it gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, political or religious beliefs. We also see extreme examples on the news when we are witnessing shootings, horrific acts and other extreme examples of negative behavior. Previous experiences shape how we think and more importantly how we act. Each of us can certainly recall both positive and negative experiences in our own educational journey. These experiences are impacting the way the adult learner is understanding material, interacting with classmates and persisting in the educational journey. Combining these educational experiences with differing views on gender, religion, race, ethnicity, political, and other ideological thoughts can make the adult learner more of a challenge to an educator than a pliable first grader. Understanding the thoughts that a learner has about him or herself is a first step to a successful educational experience.
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