

# **PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING**

# Characteristics of adult learners

- Adults are *autonomous* and *self-directed*.
- Adults have accumulated a foundation of *life experiences and knowledge*
- Adults are *goal-oriented*.
- Adults are *relevancy-oriented*
- Adults are *practical*,
- As do all learners, adults need to be shown *respect*

# Motivating the Adult Learner

- **Social relationships** :to make new friends,
- **External expectations** :to comply with instructions from someone else .
- **Social welfare** :to improve ability to serve mankind
- **Personal advancement** :to achieve higher status in a job
- **Escape/Stimulation** :to relieve boredom, provide a break in the routine of home or work
- **Cognitive interest** :to learn for the sake of learning,

# Barriers and Motivation

- **barriers against participating in learning**
- adults have many responsibilities
- lack of time, money, confidence, or interest, lack of information about opportunities to learn, scheduling problems, "red tape,"
- **Motivation factors**
- Requirement for competence or licensing,
- an expected (or realized) promotion,
- job enrichment,
- a need to maintain old skills or learn new ones,
- a need to adapt to job changes,
- or the need to learn in order to comply with company directives
- **simply to *enhance* their reasons for enrolling and *decrease* the barriers**

# **Learning Tips for Effective Instructors**

- **motivation**
- **reinforcement**
- **retention**
- **transference**

# Motivation

- **Set a feeling or tone for the lesson.**
- **Set an appropriate level of concern**
- **Set an appropriate level of difficulty**

# Reinforcement

- *Positive reinforcement* is normally used by instructors who are teaching participants new skills. As the name implies, positive reinforcement is "good" and reinforces "good" (or positive) behavior.
- *Negative reinforcement* is normally used by instructors teaching a new skill or new information. It is useful in trying to change modes of behavior. The result of negative reinforcement is *extinction* -- that is, the instructor uses negative reinforcement until the "bad" behavior disappears, or it becomes extinct.

# Retention

- must retain information from classes in order to benefit from the learning
- they must see a meaning or purpose for that information.
- Retention by the participants is directly affected by their amount of practice during the learning
- they should be urged to practice to maintain the desired performance.
- Distributed practice is similar in effect to intermittent reinforcement.

# Transference

- Positive transference, like positive reinforcement, occurs when the participants uses the behavior taught in the course .
- Negative transference, again like negative reinforcement, occurs when the participants do not do what they are told not to do. This results in a positive (desired) outcome .

# Transference occurrence Situations

- *Association* -- participants can associate the new information with something that they already know .
- *Similarity* -- the information is similar to material that participants already know; that is, it revisits a logical framework or pattern .
- *Degree of original learning* -- participant's degree of original learning was high .
- *Critical attribute element* -- the information learned contains elements that are extremely beneficial (critical) on the job .