

Connecting with your Adult Learners from 18 to 80!

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I. VARK Learning Styles

Fleming, N. (2014). VARK a guide to learning styles. Retrieved from <http://www.vark-learn.com/english/index.asp>

VARK help sheets at URL:

<http://www.vark-learn.com/english/page.asp?p=helpsheets>

| Learning Style | Study Strategies |
|----------------------|--|
| V – Visual | Pictures, flow charts, underlining, highlighting, graphs, use space when taking notes then fill in more detail |
| A – Aural (auditory) | Discuss topics with others, read notes aloud, record voice memos on iPhone |
| R – Read/Write | Make lists, use handouts, textbooks, reading textbook, rewrite notes, convert pictures or diagrams to words |
| K - Kinesthetic | Use real-life examples, role-play topic scenarios, apply topics to own experiences |

II. Felder & Soloman Learning Styles

Explanation of learning styles and strategies at URL:

<http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/ILSdir/styles.htm>

"Everybody is active sometimes and reflective sometimes."

(Felder & Soloman, 2011, para. 2)

"Everybody is sensing sometimes and intuitive sometimes."

(Felder & Soloman, 2011, para. 6)

| Learning Style | Study Strategies |
|--------------------|---|
| Active Learner | Study in a group, find ways to make topic relevant |
| Reflective Learner | Think of questions, write summaries of readings |
| Sensing Learner | Make connections to real world, apply concepts |
| Intuitive Learner | Interpretations that link facts, look for connections |

| Learning Style | Study Strategies |
|--------------------|--|
| Visual Learner | Find visual representation of course material, handouts |
| Verbal Learner | Write summaries, explain what you have learned |
| Sequential Learner | Outline material in logical order, use references to find info |
| Global Learner | Skim through chapter to get an overview, see connections |

III. Possible Generations in One Classroom

Hammill, G. (2005). Mixing and managing four generations of employees. *FDU Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.fdu.edu/newspubs/magazine/05ws/generations.htm>

| Generation | Veterans (1922 – 1945) | Baby Boomers (1945 – 1964) | Generation X (1965 – 1980) | Generation Y aka Millennials (1981 – 2000) |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Core Values | Conformers | Involvement | Informality | Social |
| Communication Media | Rotary phones | Touch tone phones | Cell phones | Internet, Smartphones, email |
| Work Ethic and Values | Adhere to rules | Question authority | Want structure and direction | Multi-tasking |
| Interactive Style | Individual | Team player | Entrepreneur | Participative |
| Communication | Formal | In person | Direct | E-mail Voice mail |
| Feedback and rewards | No news is good news | Title recognition | Freedom is the best reward | Meaningful work |
| Messages that motivate | Your experience is respected | You are valued/needed | Do it your way | You will work with other bright, creative people |

Consider if these messages will reach the various adult learners in your classes.

Veterans:

I appreciate the experience you bring, student name, to...
Student name, thank you for sharing your opinion on...

Baby Boomers:

As an integral part of our class, student name, thank you for...
Student name, I appreciate the insights you bring to our class discussion on ...

Generation X:

Thank you, student name, for bringing your point of view to ...
I appreciate you sharing your frame of reference, student name, so that we may...

Millennials:

Student name, sharing your thoughts on ... have added to our class collegiality.
I appreciate your innovative ideas on... student name.

IV. Indicators of Instructor Presence that are important to students in online courses

Sheridan, K. & Kelly, M. A. (2010). The indicators of instructor presence that are important to students in online courses. *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching* 6(4), 767-779. Retrieved from http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no4/sheridan_1210.pdf

Sheridan & Kelly (2010) showed that the 10 most important indicators of instructor presence are:

1. Clear course requirements
2. Communicate due dates
3. Sets clear expectations
4. Provides clear instruction
5. Provides timely feedback
6. Clearly communicates course topics
7. Course is easy to navigate
8. Clearly communicates course goals
9. Keeps course calendar updated
10. Always follows through with promises made to students (p. 772).

V. Factors of Adult Learning

Galbraith, M. W. (2004). *Adult learning methods: A guide for effective instruction* (3rd ed.). Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

According to Galbraith (2004), there are seven factors of adult learning:

1. Learner centered activities
2. Personalizing instruction
3. Relating to experience
4. Assessing student needs
5. Climate building
6. Participating in the learning process
7. Flexibility for personal development

VI. General Categories of what best online teachers do

Brinthaup, T. M., Fisher, L. S., Gardner, J. G., Raffo, D. M, & Woodward, J. B. (2011). What the best online teachers should do. *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 7(4), 515-524. Retrieved from http://jolt.merlot.org/vol7no4/brinthaup_1211.pdf

According to Brinthaup, Fisher, Gardner, Raffo, & Woodward, 2011, there are three general categories of what best teachers do:

1. Fostering student engagement
2. Stimulating intellectual development
3. Building rapport with students (p. 519).