CHAPTER 7

Creating Motivating Learning Environments

RAYMOND J. WLODKOWSKI

Today, for most adults, formal learning—whether through workplace training, a college class, a website, or an elderhostel course—is a way of life. Adults in modern society are on a lifelong educational journey. Although technology has changed some of the tools of instruction, the purpose of the instructor remains largely the same—to help adults learn. However, the challenge is far greater now because we have come to appreciate how culturally diverse adults in society are and how their perspectives, experiences, and ways of understanding vary. We know that to be effective, instructors and learning environments have to accommodate this remarkable diversity.

Considering the range of possible differences among them, how do we help *all* adults learn? The response in this chapter is to go to the source, to the energy—to human motivation. All adults want to make sense of their world, find meaning, and be effective at what they value. This is what fuels their motivation to learn. The key to effective instruction is to evoke and encourage this natural inclination—the propensity in all adults, whatever their background or socialization, to be competent in matters they hold to be important.

We know that culture—that deeply learned mix of language, beliefs, values, and behaviors that pervade every aspect of our lives—significantly influences our motivation. In fact, social scientists today regard the cognitive processes as inherently cultural (Rogoff & Chavajay, 1995). The language we use to think and the

ways in which we communicate cannot be separated from cultural practices and cultural context. As Vivian Gussin Paley (1990, p. xii) writes, "None of us are to be found in sets of tasks or lists of attributes; we can be known only in the unfolding of our unique stories within the context of everyday events."

This chapter addresses motivation to learn among adults and how to enhance it effectively among all of them. Learning is a naturally active and normally volitional process of constructing meaning from information and experience (Lambert & McCombs, 1998). Motivation is the natural human capacity to direct energy in the pursuit of a goal. We are purposeful. We constantly learn. When we do so, especially at challenging tasks, we are usually motivated to learn. The processes of attention, concentration, effort, and imagination are motivational processes necessary for learning and sustained with human energy. These operate in concert and are a constant dynamic as we make sense of our world.

Since human energy is finite, motivation has limits. We cannot endlessly expend effort. We do get distracted. We do get tired. We change our minds. Motivation to learn can disappear in a microsecond. A room too warm, a low test score, a boring discussion, an irrelevant example, a sudden headache, or the anticipation of an evening's pleasure are events that can instantaneously dismiss a person's interest in learning. Add to these examples the realization that culturally diverse people bring multiple and often differing needs and perspectives to the learning environment and we can see the enormous challenge that teaching adults is.

To address this challenge and to access the richness that cultural differences can contribute to learning, we have developed a model to guide instructors of diverse learners. In this case, we apply that model to the teaching of adults. The Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995) is a model for teaching and for planning instruction based on the principle that individual motivation is inseparable from culture. It offers a pedagogical approach for creating learning experiences that evoke the intrinsic motivation of all learners. Recent research had indicated its applicability in secondary (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; French, 2001) and postsecondary schools (Wlodkowski, Mauldin, & Gahn, 2001).

What follows is a discussion of the relationship of learning to motivation, culture, and adulthood. The chapter then proceeds with

an overview of the motivational framework and an instructor's distillation of how to plan for and carry out strategies that enhance the motivation of diverse adult learners.

ADULT LEARNING, CULTURE, AND INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Brookfield (1996, p. 379) emphasizes the need for a culturally relevant perspective on adult learning: "the differences of class, culture, ethnicity, personality, cognitive style, learning patterns, life experiences, and gender among adults are far more significant than the fact that they are not children or adolescents . . ." Theories of intrinsic motivation respect the influence of culture on learning. According to this set of motivational theories, it is part of human nature to be curious, to be active, to initiate thought and behavior, to make meaning from experience, and to be effective at what we value. These primary sources of motivation reside in all of us, across all cultures. When adults can see that what they are learning makes sense and is important according to their values and perspective, their motivation emerges. They want to learn. Like a cork rising through water, their intrinsic motivation surfaces because the environment elicits it. Intrinsic motivation is an evocation; it is energy called forth by circumstances that connect with what is culturally significant to people.

Motivation is governed to a large extent by emotions. In turn, our emotions are socialized through culture. And emotions influence task engagement, the visible outcome of learner motivation. For example, one person working at a task feels frustrated and stops, whereas another person working at the task feels joy and continues. Yet another person, with a different set of cultural beliefs, feels frustrated at the task but continues with increased determination. What elicits that frustration, joy, or determination may differ across cultures, because cultures differ in their definitions of novelty, hazard, opportunity, and gratification and in their definitions of appropriate responses (Kitayama & Marcus, 1994). Thus, a person's response to a learning activity reflects his or her culture.

From this viewpoint, for us to effectively teach all adults requires culturally responsive teaching. Even though the internal logic by which learners do something may not coincide with our own, it

is present nonetheless. To understand an adult's perspective requires communication and respect, realizing that through understanding and sharing our resources, we can together create greater energy for learning. In this light, such influences as religion, myth, ethnicity, and regional and peer group norms have powerful motivational force. The responses adults have to learning reflect this complexity and call upon teachers of adults to be flexible and compassionate.

However, adulthood in the United States does have two norms that are motivationally insightful. The first is that a person is adult to the extent that she or he performs social roles typically assigned by our society to those it considers adults—the roles of worker, spouse, parent, citizen, soldier, and the like. Second, a person is adult to the extent that she or he perceives herself or himself to be essentially responsible for her or his own life. Responsibility is the cornerstone of adult motivation. Most cultures hold adults more responsible for their actions than they do children. For adults this is an inescapable fact. Since institutions like the family, business, and education instill this role of responsibility for adults, they are highly pragmatic learners—they want to learn things that make them better and more effective in their real-life situations such as work and home. Metaphorically, their mantra to their teachers (see it as a pulsating neon sign) is: "Please don't waste my time!"

THE MOTIVATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

In order to promote equitable learning opportunities for all adults, a culturally responsive approach to teaching adults is needed. The Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995) is respectful of different cultures and is capable of creating a common culture within a learning situation that diverse adults can accept. The framework (See Figure 7.1) combines four essential motivational conditions that in concert evoke intrinsic motivation among culturally diverse adult learners.

Each of the major conditions is research-based from applied studies within a number of disciplines (Wlodkowski, 1999). Instructors and learners can collaboratively create or enhance these conditions in a learning environment. They are as follows:
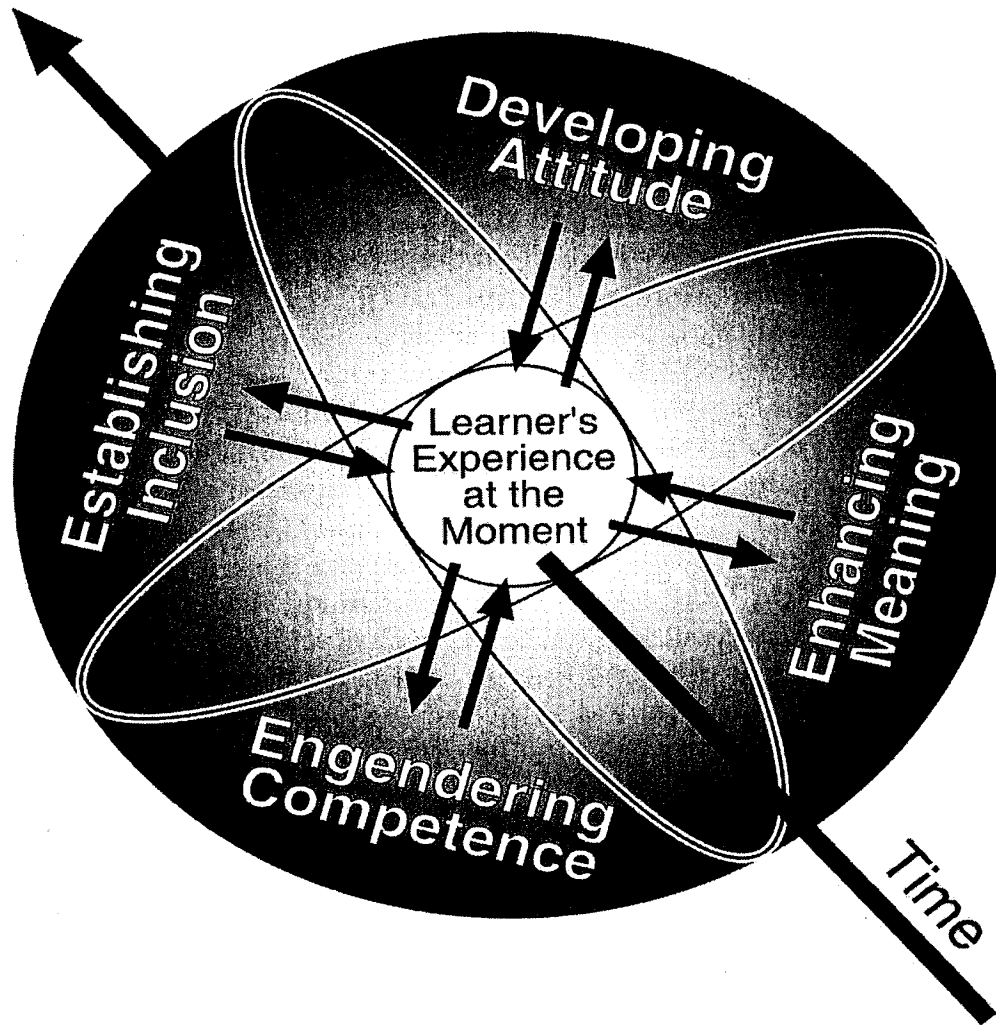
Figure 7.1 A Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995, p. 29). Used by permission of Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers.

1. *Establishing inclusion.* Creating a learning atmosphere in which learners and instructors feel respected by and connected to one another.

2. *Developing attitude.* Creating a favorable disposition toward the learning experience through personal relevance and choice.

3. *Enhancing meaning.* Creating challenging, thoughtful learning experiences that include learners' perspectives and values.

4. *Engendering competence.* Creating an understanding that learners are effective in learning something they value.

These four conditions are essential for developing intrinsic motivation for learning. They work in concert as they influence learners and instructors, and they happen in a moment as well as over a period of time. People experience motivational influences polyrhythmically—that is, as a simultaneous integration of intersecting realities on both conscious and subconscious levels. For example, you walk into a course where the memory of past experiences tells you that you are a respected member of this class; your subconscious association with the room itself is positive; the topic you are studying is relevant to you; and you become engaged in a challenging exercise that creates a new insight that you know will be useful for your job. Your motivation to learn in this course is compelling. It is also *multidetermined*—resulting from cognitions, feelings, and actions that are inseparable from memory, social activity, instructional process, and the ingredients of the setting where the course takes place (Lave, 1988). Just imagine if your memory told you that you had been disrespected in this course. Everything, motivationally speaking, would be different for you in this class.

Our lives are composed in the moment. Perception and action arise together, each constructing the other (Bredo, 1994). Nonetheless, even with such a complex interaction, there are essential conditions that can be constructed to enhance motivation to learn. Let us take a closer look at the four major conditions of the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching to understand how each is vital to evoking adult motivation to learn.

Inclusion

Each condition has two criteria so instructors and learners can be reasonably sure that the condition exists in the learning environment. Criteria help us to create as well as to know the condition is present. For establishing inclusion the criteria are *respect* and *connectedness*. People generally believe they are included in a group when they feel respected by and connected to the group.

For most adults learning begins with relationships, respectful relationships. From my work with adults and study of intercultural communication (Samovar & Porter, 1997), I find adults generally feel respected in a group when they know they are safe and their opinion matters. In this atmosphere, intrinsic motivation is more likely to emerge because adults can give voice to the things that they

care about. Their well-being is more assured. They can develop trust. Relevant learning is possible.

Adults feel connected in a group when they share a common purpose and a sense of mutual care exists—at least some people in the group have their best interest in mind. People in the group care about each other as they pursue their joint goal. For people to connect they need opportunities to find common ground and to support one another. Their capacity to create community is constant (Gardner, 1990). With a sense of community they can find security, identity, and shared values. Such qualities of connection evoke intrinsic motivation among adults because their social needs are met and they can openly reveal their resources and strengths.

Feeling included, people are freer to risk the mistakes true learning involves. However, mutual respect evolves from the nature of human contact and feelings of cultural isolation can cause a sense of community to deteriorate. The norms we set as instructors and the strategies we use to teach will largely determine the quality of social exchange among our learners. Those norms should be supportive of equity, collaboration, and the expression of each adult's perspective (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). It simply makes sense to set a tone in which adult learners can come together in friendly, caring, and respectful ways.

Attitude

Attitudes powerfully affect human behavior and learning because they help people make sense of their world and give cues as to what behavior will be most helpful in dealing with that world. The criteria for developing a positive attitude among adults toward learning are *personal relevance* and *choice*. Personal relevance is not merely prior experience with something. For example, an adult could be very familiar with a television program and find it totally irrelevant. People find learning relevant when it has personal and cultural meaning, allows for their perspective, and reflects their reality. Genuinely relevant learning evokes sincere curiosity. This leads to interest, the emotional nutrient for a positive attitude toward learning and the font of intrinsic motivation.

Interest and choice are soul mates. One leads to the other. Humans make choices to follow their interests; and interests stimulate people to make choices. Even in those cultures where self-

determination is not the norm and choice may seem confusing, people will usually endorse what they are interested in doing, though they may not actually choose it. In my opinion, this perspective is a broader way of understanding choice and a view that can contain a more extensive range of cultures, including many Asian and indigenous cultures. For the process of learning—thinking, practicing, reading, revising, studying, and other similar activities—to be desirable and enjoying, adults have to see themselves as personally endorsing their own learning. People strive to determine their lives as an expression of their deepest beliefs and values. Learning is no exception.

Meaning

According to Mezirow (1997, p. 5), "a defining condition of being human is that we have to understand the meaning of our experience." One way to understand meaning is to see it as an increase in the complexity of an experience or idea that relates to people's values or purposes (Wlodkowski, 1999). Meaning may be beyond articulation, as in the realm of the creative or spiritual. Deep meaning implies that the experience or idea increasing in complexity is connected to an important goal or ultimate purpose such as survival or a strong religious belief. Susan Langer (1942) has posited that there is a human need to find significance. Across many cultures, achieving purpose appears fundamental to a satisfying life (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). Meaning draws out intrinsic motivation because it taps into one of our most fundamental reasons for being—a purposeful relationship to the world.

The criteria for developing a positive attitude among adults toward learning are *personal relevance* and *choice*. The criteria for enhancing meaning for learning are *engagement* and *challenge*. At its most basic level, engagement is a meaningful response to something. In engagement the learner is active and may be searching, evaluating, constructing, creating, or organizing some kind of material into new or better ideas, memories, skills, values, feelings, understandings, solutions, or decisions (Wlodkowski, 1999). Often there is ultimately a product or a goal reached. Challenge includes any opportunity for action that humans are able to respond to (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Challenge often has a goal-like quality and requires some

degree of capacity, skill, or knowledge on the part of the learner such as reading a particular book, writing a story, or creating a mural.

By making adult learners' goals, interests, and perspectives part of learning, instructors can create with them a system that evokes meaning and involvement in learning. A challenging learning experience in an engaging format about a relevant problem, e.g., brainstorming new ways to solve a serious work problem, is intrinsically motivating because it increases the range of conscious connections to fulfilling purposes that are important to adults. Human beings by their very nature need to maintain an ordered state of consciousness (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Acting purposefully is essential for us.

Competence

Competence theory (White, 1959) assumes people naturally strive for effective interactions with their world. We are genetically programmed to explore, perceive, think about, manipulate, and change our surroundings to promote an effective interaction with our environment. Practicing newly developed skills and mastering challenging tasks evoke positive emotions that are obvious in early infancy from how babies watch a hanging mobile to how toddlers play with building blocks (Watson & Ramey, 1972).

The criteria for engendering competence among adults while learning are *effectiveness* and *authenticity*. As adults, we most frequently view competence as being effective as what we value. Our socialization and culture largely determine what we think is worth accomplishing (Deci & Ryan, 1991). When we have evidence (usually through feedback) of how well we are learning and can make internal statements such as "I understand this" or "I am doing this well," we experience intrinsic motivation we are competently performing an activity that leads to a valued goal.

Adults enter educational programs with a strong need to apply what they are learning to their real world. They know their families, jobs, and communities will be the arenas in which they test this new learning. Therefore, they are more motivated when the circumstances under which they assess their competence are authentic to their actual lives. For this reason, assessment through simulations, case studies, problems, and projects that replicate their world are likely to be more intrinsically motivating.

CREATING A MOTIVATING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WITH THE MOTIVATING FRAMEWORK

Instruction is systemic in nature. It is a network of interactions among teachers and learners that leads to learning. With this view in mind, let us take a look at the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching in terms of the teaching/learning process. Because most instructional plans have specific learning objectives, they tend to be linear and prescriptive: teachers sequence learning events over time and predetermine the order in which concepts and skills are taught and when they are practiced and applied. Although human motivation does not always follow an orderly path, we can plan ways to evoke it throughout a learning sequence. In fact, due to motivation's emotional base and natural instability, it is judicious, especially facing a time-limited learning period, to painstakingly plan the milieu and learning activities to enhance adult motivation. For projects, self-directed learning, and situational learning as in the case of problem posing we may not be so bound to a formal plan.

The most basic way to begin is for the teacher to take the four motivational conditions from the framework and to transpose them into questions to use as guidelines for selecting motivational strategies (Wlodkowski, 1999) and related learning activities to include in the design of the instructional plan:

1. *Establishing inclusion.* How do we create or affirm a learning atmosphere in which we feel respected by and connected to one another? (Best to plan for the *beginning* of the lesson)

2. *Developing attitude.* How do we create or affirm a favorable disposition toward learning through personal relevance and choice? (Best to plan for the *beginning* of the lesson)

3. *Enhancing meaning.* How do we create engaging and challenging learning experiences that include learner perspectives and values? (Best to plan *throughout* the lesson)

4. *Engendering competence.* How do we create or affirm an understanding that learners have effectively learned something they value and perceive as authentic to their real world? (Best to plan for the *ending* of the lesson)

Let us look at an actual episode of teaching where an instructor uses the motivational framework and these questions to compose an instructional plan (Wlodkowski, 1999). Please note in Exhibit 7.1 how each question prompts a motivational strategy and related learning activity to optimally influence the learners' motivation. We will define and further discuss motivational strategies in the latter part of this chapter.

In this example the instructor is conducting the first two-hour session of an introductory course in research. There are 20 adult learners ranging in age from 25 to 55. Most hold full-time jobs. Most are women. Most are first-generation college students. About half are black. The instructor knows from previous experience that many of these students view research as abstract, irrelevant, and oppressive learning. Her instructional objective is: *Students will devise an in-class investigation and develop their own positive perspectives toward active research*. Using the four motivation conditions and their related questions, the instructor creates the sequence of learning activities found in Exhibit 7.1

The narrative for this teaching episode goes like this. The instructor explains that much research is conducted collaboratively. The course will model this approach as well. For a beginning activity she randomly assigns learners to small groups and encourages them to discuss any previous experiences they may have had doing research and their expectations and concerns for the course (motivational strategy: collaborative learning). Each group then shares it experiences, expectations, and concerns as she records them on the overhead. In this manner, she is able to understand her students' perspectives and to increase their connection to one another and herself (motivational condition: establishing inclusion).

The teacher explains that most people are researchers much of the time. She asks the students what they would like to research among themselves (motivational strategy: relevant learning goal). After a lively discussion, the class decides to investigate and predict the amount of sleep some members of the class had the previous night. This strategy engages adult choice, increases the relevance of the activity, and contributes to a favorable disposition emerging in the course (motivational condition: developing attitude). The students are learning in a way that includes their experiences and

Exhibit 7.1 An Instructional Plan Based on the Four Conditions of the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching (Wlodkowski, 1999, p. 85)

Motivational Condition and Question	Motivational Strategy	Learning Activity
Establishing Inclusion: How do we create or affirm a learning atmosphere in which we feel respected by and connected to one another? (Beginning)	Collaborative learning	Randomly form small groups in which learners exchange concerns, experiences, and expectations they have about research. List them.
Developing Attitude: How do we create or affirm a favorable disposition toward learning through personal relevance and choice? (Beginning)	Relevant learning goals	Ask learners to choose something they want to research immediately among themselves.
Enhancing Meaning: How do we create engaging and challenging learning experiences that include learner perspectives and values? (Throughout)	Critical questioning and predicting	Form research teams to devise a set of questions to ask in order to make predictions. Record questions and predictions.
Engendering Competence: How do we create or affirm an understanding that learners have effectively learned something they value and perceive as authentic to their real world? (Ending)	Self-assessment	After the predictions have been verified, ask learners to create their own statements about what they learned about research from this process.

students form research teams. Each team develops a set of observations and a set of questions to ask the volunteers, but no one may ask them how many hours of sleep they had the night before. After they ask their questions, the teams rank the five volunteers from the most to the least amount of sleep (motivational strategy: critical questioning and predicting). When the volunteers reveal the amount of time they slept, the students discover that no research team was correct in ranking more than three volunteers. The students discuss why this outcome may have occurred, and consider questions that might have increased their accuracy, such as, "How much coffee did you drink before you came to class?" The questioning, testing of ideas, and predicting heighten the engagement, challenge, and complexity of this learning for the students (motivational condition: enhancing meaning).

After the discussion, the instructor asks the students to write a series of statements about what this activity has taught them about research (motivational strategy: self-assessment). Students then break into small groups to exchange their insights. Their comments include statements such as, "Research is more a method than an answer." and "Thus far, I enjoy research more than I thought I would." Self-assessment helps the students to extract from this experience a new understanding they value (motivational condition: engendering competence).

This snapshot of teaching illustrates how the four motivational conditions constantly influence and interact with one another. Without establishing inclusion (small groups to discuss concerns and experiences) and developing a positive attitude (students choosing a relevant research goal), the enhancement of meaning (research teams devising questions and predictions) may not have occurred with ease and energy; and the self-assessment to engender competence (what students learned from their perspective) may have had a dismal outcome. Overall, the total learning experience encourages equitable participation, provides the beginning of an inclusive history for the students, and enhances their learning about research.

This class session reflects the systemic quality of motivation and learning. It can be imagined that removing any one of the four motivational conditions would have affected the entire experience and each condition's link to the entire course. For example, would the students' attitude have been as positive if the teacher had arbi-

trarily given them the task to research sleep among themselves? Probably not.

One of the values of the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching is that it is not only a model of motivation in action but also an organizational aid for designing instruction. By continually attending to its four motivational conditions and their related questions, the teacher can select motivational strategies from a wide array of theories and literature to apply throughout a learning unit.

For using this framework, *pedagogical alignment*—the coordination of approaches to teaching that ensures maximum consistent effect—is critical. The more harmonious the elements of the instructional design are, the more likely they are to sustain intrinsic motivation. That's why one strategy like cooperative learning or self-assessment is alone unlikely to evoke intrinsic motivation. It is the mutual influence of a combination of strategies based on the motivational conditions that illicit intrinsic motivation.

This framework provides a holistic design that includes a time orientation, a cultural perspective, and a logical method to foster intrinsic motivation among diverse adult learners from the beginning to the end of an instructional unit. The purpose of this model is to respectfully evoke, support, and enhance the motivation to learn that all adults possess by virtue of their own humanity, to make the instructor a valuable resource and vital partner in their realization of successful learning.

MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

A motivational strategy is a deliberate action or process used by an instructor to enhance adult motivation to learn. For example, when an instructor *gives a learner accurate and positive feedback* (the motivational strategy) about his or her performance, the instructor's action evokes feelings of competence within the learner that usually prompt or support the learner's effort at the task.

As part of an instructional plan, motivational strategies and their related activities can produce the four motivational conditions that create a successful learning environment for diverse adults. Accordingly, the strategies that follow are organized according to the motivational condition to which they most directly relate. These

strategies are classic in the sense that they are well documented by research and the wisdom of practice as being effective with adult learners.

Strategies for Establishing Inclusion

Multidimensional sharing. Multidimensional sharing includes those occasions, from introduction exercises to social activities, when people have a better chance to see one another as complete and evolving human beings who have mutual needs, emotions, and experiences (Wlodkowski, 1999). More substantive than "ice-breakers," they tend to be less gamelike and intrusive. For adults from backgrounds that value modesty, introductory activities that require self-disclosure or the sharing of deeper emotions may seem contrived and invasive.

These opportunities give a human face to a course or training, help to break down stereotypes, and provide experience to better understand another person's world. As introductory activities these are usually most inclusive and motivating when they help people learn each other's names, validate the unique experience of the individuals involved, connect to the subject matter at hand, and relieve the normal tension that most new groups feel at the beginning of a learning experience. The following is a safe and basic example that can be used as a small or large group process: Each person a) introduces herself or himself; b) names one, and up to five, of the places he or she has lived; and c) offers one expectation, concern, or hope he or she has for the course or program. The range of possibilities for multidimensional sharing is enormous. The caution is to be more subtle than intrusive.

Collaborative learning. Collaborative learning describes the variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual efforts by learners, or learners and instructors together. In these situations, adults are working in groups of two or more, mutually constructing understanding, solutions, meanings, applications, or products. Although there is wide variability in collaborative activities, most emphasize the learners' exploration and interpretation of the learning material to an equal or greater extent than the instructor's explication of it. Social needs and the challenge to create something together energize the group. Brainstorming is an excellent example of an introductory way to use this strategy. To ensure supportive

relationships within the group on an ongoing basis, collaborative and cooperative learning should be used throughout the course or training (Johnson & Johnson, 1995).

Participation guidelines. When a course or training is challenging, controversial, and interactive, adults appreciate participation guidelines. By clearly identifying the kinds of interactions and discussion that will be encouraged and discouraged, the instructor and learners create a climate of safety, ensuring that everyone will be respected. The first meeting is an appropriate time to establish these guidelines and to request cooperation in implementing them. The following rules are widely used and usually acceptable (Griffin, 1997):

- Listen carefully, especially to different perspectives.

- Keep personal information shared in the group confidential.

- Speak from your own experience, saying, for example, "I think . . ." or, "In my experience I have found . . . , " rather than generalizing your experience to others by saying, for example, "People say . . . , " or, "We believe . . ."

- Do no blaming or scapegoating.

- Avoid generalizing about groups of people.

- Share airtime.

- Focus on your own learning.

Instructors who use participation guidelines usually have a few that are nonnegotiable (Tatum, 1992). Participation guidelines prevent and reduce feelings of fear, awkwardness, embarrassment, and shame. They also provide a safety net for critical discourse. They may be left open for further additions as the program proceeds.

Strategies for Developing Attitude

Relevant learning models. Anytime adults can witness people similar to themselves (in age, gender, ethnicity, class, and so on) competently performing the desired learning goal, their self-confidence is heightened, because they are prone to believe that they, too, possess the capabilities to master comparable activities.

People that adults can identify with also convey information they are more likely to find relevant to their own perspectives and values. With film and video technology we have creative and economical ways to offer learners vicarious examples that are pertinent and realistic. Learners from previous courses and trainings are an excellent source for live modeling sessions. For example, the instructor of a course to develop action research methods could present a panel of past students who have successfully conducted research to share their experiences and findings with current students.

Ensuring successful learning. It is difficult for adults to dislike a subject in which they are successful. Conversely, it is rare to find adults who really like a subject in which they are unsuccessful. Proficient learning in a subject is probably one of the surest ways to initiate a positive attitude toward that subject (Kulik, Kulik, & Bangert-Drowns, 1990).

Some adults may need more time and effort to master what is being taught. We can positively influence their attitudes as well as those of our faster learners when we *guarantee* the following three qualities in the learning environment:

1. Effective instruction that will help them to learn if they try to learn.

2. Concrete evidence that their effort makes a difference.

3. Continual feedback regarding the progress of their learning.

For example, devise a weekly progress check in a word-processing course where the learners can compare their recent work to that of previous weeks and calculate the hours of practice as a ratio to reduce errors and increase speed, e.g., 12 errors per 600 words in 15 minutes after 7 hours of practice, 10 errors per 630 words in 15 minutes after 10 hours of practice, and so forth.

The K-W-L strategy. Originated by Ogle (1986), this strategy is an elegant way to construct meaning for a new topic or concept based on the prior knowledge of the learners. Adults have a storehouse of experiences that can give extraordinary meaning to novel ideas. During the first phase of the strategy, the learners identify what they think they *Know* about the topic. Whether the topic is on-line learning, project management, or mentoring, this is a non-

threatening way to list some of the unique and varied ways adults understand something. It allows for multiple perspectives and numerous historical contexts. This discussion can involve drawing, storytelling, critical incidents, and predictions.

In the second phase, the learners suggest what they *Want* to know about the topic. This information may be listed as questions or subtopics for exploration and research. In the last phase, the learners identify what they have *Learned,* which may be the answers to their questions, important related information, and perhaps new information that counters some inaccuracies they may have held prior to the course or training.

Strategies for Enhancing Meaning

Posing a problem. A problem is any situation where a person wants to achieve a goal for which an obstacle exists (Voss, 1989). This may be a condition on campus or in the workplace, such as how to make one's college or job more available to low-income people. Or it may be more specific, such as how to solve a management problem at work. The more the problem, often presented as a case study, can pose mystery, fascination, or intrigue, the better learner motivation will be. Today, problem-based learning is ascending as a general and international approach to learning across multiple disciplines (Wilkerson & Gijselaers, 1996).

Creating a simulation. Simulations are learning procedures that include role-playing, exercises, and games that allow learners to practice and apply their learning in ungenuine yet sufficiently realistic contexts. When adults can sincerely experience perspectives, ideas, skills, and situations approximating authentic instances of life, they have a real opportunity to enhance the meaning of what they are learning as well as to become more proficient (Meyers & Jones, 1993). These methods are also excellent for the development of empathy and validation. They give learners the chance to take on the viewpoints and rationales of people from different backgrounds as in the case of a role-play where a lesbian couple and a heterosexual couple discuss the merits of a proposed policy concerning domestic partnerships on campus.

Providing variety. Variety is stimulating and draws learner attention toward its source (Gage & Berliner, 1998). People tend to find more engaging those things that are changing rather than those

things that are unchanging. However variety that disrupts necessary concentration is an unwise strategy. Timing an activity so it can serve as a cue or a needed change in function or form of learning is probably the best way to exercise this strategy. These strategies infuse variety:

● Changing methods of instruction, e.g., mini-lecture, discussion, or games.

● Changing materials used for instruction, e.g., books, the Internet, or films.

● Changing interpersonal learning patterns, e.g., individual, partners, or small groups.

The general goal is never to allow the course or training to become a grind.

Strategies for Engendering Competence

Consistent and prompt feedback. Feedback is information that learners receive about the quality of their performance on a given task. Knowledge of results, comments about skill performance, notes on a written assignment, graphic records, and an approving nod are forms of feedback that instructors often use with adult learners (Moran, 1997). Feedback appears to enhance motivation because it allows learners to evaluate their progress, to understand the level of their competence, to maintain their effort toward realistic goals, to correct their errors with little delay, and to receive encouragement from their instructors.

Authentic performance tasks for assessment. Authentic performance tasks are one of the oldest forms of assessment and have been commonly used in training and adult education for many years (Knowles, 1980). Authentic tasks resemble as closely as possible the ways adult learners will express in their real lives what they have learned. Thus, if people were learning computer-programming skills, we would assess learning by asking them to program a personal computer in a relevant area. The closer assessment procedures come to allowing learners to demonstrate what they have learned in the environment where they will eventually use that learning, the greater will be learners' motivation to do well and the more they can understand their competence.

According to Wiggins (1998), an assessment task, problem, or project is authentic if it has the following characteristics:

1. *It is realistic.* The task replicates how people's knowledge and skills are tested in their real world.

2. *It requires judgment and innovation.* People have to use knowledge wisely to solve unstructured problems, as a carpenter remodeling a house has to do more than follow a routine procedure.

3. *It asks adults to "do" the subject.* For example for a legal issues course, rather than writing a paper on a particularly objectionable law, learners write a real proposal to legislators to change the law.

4. *It replicates the contexts that adults find in their real lives.* For example, managers practicing conflict resolution skills apply them to their work situations, with consideration of the actual personalities and responsibilities involved.

5. *It assesses the learners' ability to integrate new learning and to negotiate a complex task effectively.* This is analogous to the difference between taking a few shots in a warm-up drill and actually taking shots in a real basketball game. For example, in an adult education course rather than showing how new teaching strategies fit into a lesson design, the learners carry out the teaching strategies in "mini-teaching" experiences with their peers.

6. *It allows appropriate opportunities to get feedback and refine performance or products.* Almost all learning is formative, whether one is learning how to repair plumbing, write a publishable article, or bake a pie. We repeatedly move through a cycle of perform, get feedback, revise, perform. That's how most high-quality performances are attained in real life. Assessment procedures have to contribute to improvement and that means grading processes have to be flexible or designed not to penalize adults for the mistakes they need to make in order to learn effectively.

Early clarification of assessment tasks and criteria. This strategy is the most recent. However, the time has come. No more

secrets. If we genuinely want self-assessing and self-directed learners, we have to make sure they understand the tasks and criteria by which they are assessed. Adults greatly appreciate this approach because becoming competent is no longer a guessing game and they can realistically guide their own learning.

As instructors, we make criteria, examples, and models readily available at the beginning of courses and training. Where scoring or grades are necessary, all learners can understand the rationale for their assignment *before* they undertake their assignments, projects, or tests. To some extent, these criteria and assessment procedures should remain open to input from the learners. This approach is not a free-for-all but a legitimate discussion that is necessary to maintain fairness and respect for the experience and perspectives of adult learners. When reasonably attainable, models and examples that typify excellent performance can inspire adults to higher levels of achievement.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

A practical way to design instruction using the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching is to reflect on the guiding questions that address the four motivational conditions of the framework and select or create those motivational strategies likely to fulfill each condition for the learning objective at hand. After deciding on the strategies, choose or create a learning activity that carries out each strategy as exemplified in Exhibit 7.1.

Because instructional design and lesson planning are creative processes and acts of composing, ideas for learning activities sometimes emerge prior to strategy selection or while teaching is taking place, e.g., the teachable moment or a more Freirean approach to learning. In this manner, strategies can be suitable afterthought. For more possible strategies directly related to adult learners and culturally responsive teaching, see *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: A Comprehensive Guide for Teaching All Adults* (Wlodkowski, 1999).

Designing instruction with the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching is a way to create learning experiences where inquiry, respect, and the opportunity for full participation by diverse adults is the norm. Whatever the pedagogical format,

this is a goal worth accomplishing and an educational environment essential to learning in a pluralistic and democratic society.

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