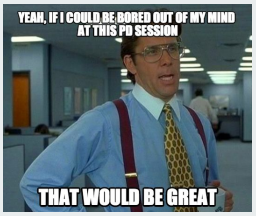
# Principles of Adult Learning

Adapted from the work of Malcolm Knowles




## Our Challenge...

How do we **design** and **facilitate** meaningful learning experiences for adults?

## Examining the Principles

### Self-Concept

Adults generally have a good idea of how they best learn. Giving choice throughout the training gives adults meaningful control over their learning.

### Motivation

Adults are *mostly* driven by internal and intrinsic factors when it comes to learning.

### Experience

Adults thrive in learning environments where their experience is relevant and acknowledged in the training.

## Examining the Principles

### The Need to Know

Adults are driven by feeling they personally need to know the information.

### Readiness to Learn

Adults are most engaged when they can see immediate application of the learning.

### Orientation to Learning

Adults prefer experiences focused around problem-solving and skill development.

## Other Advice

### Co-Facilitation

Try to avoid training alone

### Mix it Up

Switch activities, delivery methods, or have participants move every 15-20 minutes

### Respect Autonomy

Respect the autonomy of the adults you're working with...

### Maintain Integrity

...but maintain the integrity of the learning environment

## Scenario

Martha asked you to provide feedback on her bargaining training. She started with, "pay close attention. There will be a test at the end with a $100 prize for the highest score." She then gave a 30 minute lecture on the history of collective bargaining.

One participant, Pete, was constantly on his phone with loud notifications. Martha stopped mid-presentation, told Pete he was being rude, and asked him to leave. She then shared a 30-minute story about a chief negotiator going into labor at the bargaining table.

After asking participants if they had ever bargained before (everyone had), she remarked, "I guess we're done," and handed out a 50-question test. Participants then waited 30 minutes for scores and prize distribution.