

Motivating Adult Learners

The following are some ways to motivate adult learners:

- Know the background, knowledge level, areas of expertise, and specific learning needs of your audience, and then tailor your presentations accordingly.
- Think of some of the best training you have experienced. Positive feelings and experiences in training are what you should strive to emulate by identifying the techniques that the trainer used. Remember and use these techniques when planning training.
- Formula for success: one-third (1/3) lecture/instruction, one third (1/3) group/individual, and one-third (1/3) general discussion
- Pay attention to body language for signs that you are losing your audience.
- WII-FM: Explain “What’s In It For Me.”
- Vary presentation styles using:
 - Round table discussions for hot topics and open forums
 - Panels for different viewpoints in a brief time period
 - Formal speech/lecture—use for a professional speaker or significant topic with little time
 - Small group work for team building, idea sharing, and networking
 - Retreat for leadership skills development and strategic direction
- Plan to include these motivators to energize your learners, and remember the old axiom: “Tell ‘em what you’re going to tell ‘em, tell ‘em, and tell ‘em what you told ‘em.”

Eight Ways to Energize Adult Learners
1. Set the climate.
2. Create the need.
3. Involve them.
4. Be organized.
5. Create and maintain interest.
6. Provide recognition and encouragement.
7. Create friendly competition.
8. Get excited yourself.