

## 6 TIPS FOR TEACHING

### BASED ON PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING THEORY

#### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- The average age of CSUF students is 23.39 years (Fall 2015).
- We have many adult reentry students.
- Principles of adult learning theory overlap with principles of effective instruction generally.

#### WHAT TO DO IN CLASS

1. Address adult learners' desire to know why they should learn something.
  - Bring out the personal benefits of learning.
  - Have students write personal goals and action plans.
2. Make learning practical and relevant.
  - Make class time more task-centered than subject- or content-centered
  - Provide authentic learning experiences.
  - Provide immediate real-world applications.
3. Use active participation in class, as part of a varied set of teaching methods.
  - Make social interaction part of the learning process.
  - Tap into adults' interest in solving problems, especially practical ones.
  - Provide structured opportunities for them to talk and reflect in class.
  - Make touch and movement part of the learning process to aid the many kinesthetic adult learners.
4. Use adult learners' previous experiences and knowledge effectively.
  - Prompt them to relate their life experiences to what they are learning now.
  - Provide opportunities for them to integrate new knowledge with their existing knowledge.
  - Acknowledge their experiences to address adult learners' desire to be respected.
5. Tap into adults' desires to direct and have responsibility for their own learning.
  - Incorporate self-assessments.
  - Provide choices when creating assignments, selecting readings, etc.
6. Adapt your expectations and policies to adult learners' busy lives.
  - Divide instructional presentations and assignments into segments.
  - Provide ample time to complete work prior to deadlines.
  - Don't require the use of resources that are only available during narrow time windows.

#### HOW TO LEARN MORE

Learn more about [Malcolm Knowles' work on adult learning theory](#).