



CONNECTING  
COMMUNITIES



*Strengthening linkages between legal and community agencies*

**Connecting Communities**  
**BASIC FUNDAMENTALS OF ADULT EDUCATION**  
November 2013

***Principles*** \_\_\_\_\_

Adults are:

- Internally motivated and self-directed
- Goal oriented
- Practical

Adult learners want

- To learn in an atmosphere of respect
- To be able to bring life experiences and knowledge to their learning
- To make sure the learning is relevant to their life and work

***Components*** \_\_\_\_\_

**Develop rapport** with participants to set **positive and participatory environment** and atmosphere.

Demonstrate your **interest in participants'** thoughts and comments

**Actively listen and respond** to any and all questions

Lead the **participant toward inquiry** before giving answers

Give **regular constructive and specific feedback** (both positive and negative)

**Encourage use of resources**

Set projects or tasks for the participants and allow learners to track their progress

## FRAMEWORK

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### **i. GOAL ORIENTED**

- Use participants' existing foundation of knowledge and experience, and apply it to their new learning experiences
- Support trainees in using their experiences to problem solve
- Help participants reflect and examine own biases, "move to new understanding" (Fidishun, 2000)

### **ii. BUILD ON REAL LIVED EXPERIENCE**

- Participants learn when "they experience a need to learn... in order to cope ...with real-life tasks or problems" (Knowles, 1980 p 44, as cited in Fidishun, 2000).
- Link learning to personal experience, goals and fieldwork
- Use case studies that are based on participants' own experience
- Ask challenging questions to facilitate reflection, inquiry

### **iii. IMPORTANCE OF RELEVANT INFORMATION**

- Adult learners want to know how the information they are learning is relevant.
- Ask students to reflect on what they want to learn; how they are going to apply it once they have learned it; and how it will help meet their learning goals.

### **iv. ADULT LEARNING IS BASED ON DOING /PRACTISING**

- Best learning is through use of real experiences, interacting with real clients, use of hands-on learning and problem-solving
- Promote active participation by using exercises that enable students to try and do, not just observe
- Explain why you are providing the information in the training
- Be explicit about how what the student is learning is useful and applicable to the job and client group you are working with

### **v. RESPECT LEARNERS**

- Identify that this is mutual learning
- Incorporate learners' ideas, questions and experience in the training
- Regard learners as colleagues who are equal in life experience
- Encourage expression of ideas, reasoning and feedback at every opportunity. (Fidishun, 2000; Lieb, 1991)