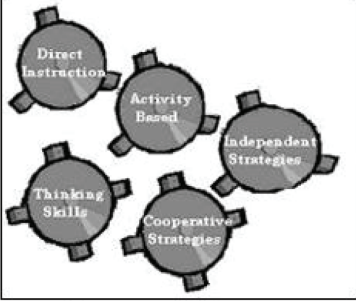Chapter 11

Delivering Instruction to the Adult Learner

Learning Objectives. This chapter examines many of the characteristics and considers the overarching implications of teaching the adult learner. Many of the reflections parallel the previous chapter so the reader may compare and contrast the various modalities for delivering instruction to this particularly important category of learner. Specifically, the reader will:

- Identify the Pillars of Education related to the adult learner. They will be different than discussed in the previous chapter.
- Consider effective principles and practices of teaching the adult learner. Again, different principles and practices will be noted from those mentioned in Chapter Ten.
- Recognize common learning styles found in the adult-focused classroom.
- Become familiar with the variety of teaching and learning strategies appropriate for the adult learner. Major differences will also be noted here.
- Become acquainted with the methodologies for designing instruction for the adult learner, including the Backward Design Model

Figure 1. Adult lesson plan template (focus on resources)

Lesson Plan Template. Refer to **Appendix B, Adult Learner Lesson Plan Template** as the chapter discusses **Focus on Delivery** as depicted in Figure 1.

INTRODUCTION

There is no commonly accepted definition of an adult learner. The best that most educators are able to do (and still feel relatively satisfied with the attempt) is to recognize certain characteristics commonly attributed to adults. For example, adult students characteristically engage is multiple roles that affect both the amount and quality of time they devote to learning. Too, adults typically bring more life experiences to the classroom than traditional students. Experiences often provide a rich source for grounding their learning and for building a basis for new knowledge. Sometimes, these experiences interfere with learning and must be set aside, replaced with new schemata for acting on novel situations. Many adults find that formal education (especially returning to school after years spent in pursuit of career goals) serves as an especially uneasy transition point in their lives. As adults move through a series of stages such as education, insecurity and uncertainty is commonplace. Adult students frequently have established educational goals (especially when compared to their traditional counterparts). They are more likely

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