

Module 2: Discussion 3 - Case Story

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Discussion 3 - Case Story

- The focus of the discussion is on learning theory and adult learning theory.
- Your discussion will be graded per the Discussion Rubric

Scholar State College sponsors a monthly "Evening Lecture Series" program for students and members of the community. The lectures are always scheduled for Wednesday evenings from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM. Light refreshments are served following the lecture. Scholar is located in the mid-west, in a rural farming community of approximately 10,000 people. The community is conservative, close-knit, and has been struggling economically the last several years due to the closing of two factories. Ethnically, the population is primarily white (farmers, community business owners and professionals) and Latino (migrant farm workers, business owners catering to migrant families).

Previous lectures have focused on literacy, career planning, goal-setting and decision-making, personal finance, and discussions on popular movies and books. The recent quarter's lecture series (3 months) was entitled "Fake News: True or False." A political science faculty member from the college was excited when his lecture series proposal was accepted by the college president. However, enthusiasm soon turned to despair. Participation from the community has been less than expected since the beginning of the program, but especially for this most recent lecture. This quarter's lecture only drew 10 students and 3 people from the community. Ms Wilson, the coordinator of the lecture program, wants to discover ways to involve students and members of the community in the program but is not sure what strategies she should deploy. As a former colleague of Ms. Wilson's from a non-profit organization in a different state, you have volunteered to help her get the program off the ground. What questions and suggestions do you have for Ms. Wilson?

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To assist Ms. Wilson, it is first vital to know the learners that take part in the lectures. Taking an inventory and finding the target audience would be first.

It states in the case story that the individuals that generally attend the lectures come from a wide span of Ethnicities; professionals, farmers, business owners, and migrate workers. These differences in backgrounds and everyday life can determine the type of lecture to provide. Many of these individuals would be hard-working, middle-class families, that would not have a lot of extra time to spend at a lecture with a topic that would not help them.

Merriam & Bierema, 2014, discussed Knowles assumptions of Adult Learners that can used to develop the andragogy. For our learners, it can be assumed that these are intrinsically motivated individuals, whose background knowledge may vary, but it is extensive and they want to know why they are leaning about a topic and are more apt to learn if it is centered around a problem (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 46).

To put these assumptions of the target audience to work, Ms. Wilson, can identify that it would be beneficial to embrace more of a humanistic approach. She can put Knowles 4 Principles of Andragogy to work (Pappas, 2013). Since the audience wants to learn. Ms. Wilson can create a more self-directed learning series that is centered around issues that are important to the community and pulls from already established experiences of the learners (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 29).

I would recommend to Ms. Wilson that rather than lectures, she utilizes a more self-directed educational approach, to get learners interested in the topic so they will want to learn more. This can be accomplished by using topics that are important to the target audience and to get the

learners involved in instruction. Pull from the knowledge of the group members when conducting the lesson (Pappas, 2013).

Furthermore, I would implore Ms. Wilson to combine Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligence Theory to determine the best ways to teach the information and for learners to express the content (Citrus College. 2015). This can be as simple as a questioner that learners complete. The instruction can then be more visual, kinesthetic, or interactive; depending on the learners' preference. The favored output of the content can also be determined. Learners that are more "People Smart" may prefer to discuss or share information, while those that are more "Me Smart" may prefer to take notes and internalize the information (Citrus College, 2015)

Knowing the target audience, using Knowles learner assumptions and principles, as well as, knowing learning styles and intelligence preference can guide decisions made to establish a new community outreach program to assist the local area. Utilizing these techniques engage and get the learner involved in the learning.

References

- Citrus College. (2015, November 30). Learning Styles. Retrieved from <http://www.citruscollege.edu/stdntsrv/counsel/earlyalert/Documents/Workshop%20Workbooks/LearningStylesWorkbook.pdf>
- Merriam, S. B. & Bierema, L. (2014). Adult Learning: Linking theory and practice (1st ed). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. ISBN-13: 978-1118130575. ISBN-10: 111813057X
- Pappas, C. (2013, May 9). The Adult Learning Theory Andragogy of Malcolm Knowles. Retrieved from <https://elearningindustry.com/the-adult-learning-theory-andragogy-of-malcolm-knowles>