

Audience Listening, Learning, and Retention

Adults Retain:

- 10% of what they read
- 20% of what they hear
- 30% of what they see
- 50% of what they see and hear
- 70% of what they talk over with others
- 80% of what they use and do in real life
- 95% of what they teach someone else to do

Much of our traditional learning experience has led us to believe that we learn best by listening to experts. It has been found, however, that learning that results in increased self-awareness, changed behavior, and the acquisition of new skills must actively engage the individual in the learning process. In particular adults have been found to learn more effectively by doing and experiencing.

Adult learning specialists have described this learning process as a four-phase cycle in which the learner:

- Does something concrete or has a specific experience which provides a basis
- The learner's observation and reflection on the experience and their own response to it. These observations are then:
 - Assimilated into a conceptual framework or related to other concepts in the learner's past experience and knowledge from which implications for action can be derived, and
 - Tested and applied in different situations.

The adult learner assimilates useful information into their personal "experience bank" against which future learning events will be compared and to which new concepts will be related. Unless what is learned can be applied to actual work or life situations, the learning will not be effective or long lasting.

People will learn faster and better when they:

- Want to learn
- Know why it is important for them to learn
- Believe that what they will learn will help them in real ways
- Are in a supportive environment and are free from threat
- Feel good about them and feel able to learn what is expected of them