

ADULT FACILITATION METHODS

Adult candidates need to discover for themselves, just like you. This means instructors of adults need to allow their candidates' opportunities to draw their own conclusions instead of simply being told what is right and wrong.

The following methods require more behind-the-scenes thought and preparation. The great news is these methods allow the instructor to become an observer and/or an assistant rather than the "teacher". In other words, the candidates become their own instructors.

The following are some ways to facilitate adult learning, including some pros & cons of using each. Please note, this is just a sample of what you may consider using & why.

METHOD	DESCRIPTION
Large Group Work	Groups of 5 or more people working together on a task. ⊕ <i>Pros</i> - allows for a lot of different perspectives & ideas ⊕ <i>Cons</i> – individuals can be left out
Small Group Work	Groups of 2 to 4 people working together on a task. ⊕ <i>Pros</i> – easier to keep everyone involved & easier for solutions to be agreed upon ⊕ <i>Cons</i> – if numerous ideas are required smaller groups may be limiting
Stations	Individual activities spaced around an area with instructions outlined at each location and participants work with little to no assistance. Each location/station focused on one specific topic; stations be self-directed or may have set time limits. ⊕ <i>Pros</i> – can be used with individuals or with small groups; allow many different facilitation methods to be used; allows students to work on own ⊕ <i>Cons</i> – requires a great deal of preparing & space to work properly as well as may require lengthy set-up time & equipment to be available
Brainstorming	Instructor poses a question & students try listing numerous ideas or possible solutions in a short period of time (i.e. under 5 minutes) which can later be evaluated or utilized; focus on number of ideas NOT validity of ideas ⊕ <i>Pros</i> – fast way to get lots of ideas or possible solutions; allows individuals to express personal opinions; may be done as either an individual or with any size of group ⊕ <i>Cons</i> – can be threatening for some (i.e. feel they are being judged); has a tendency to run on too long if time limit not established

<p>Role-playing</p>	<p>Giving participants a topic and a delivery method (or choices of). The students act out the solution or situation as laid out by instructor while rest of class and/or instructor watches. Examples include: historical re-enactment, talk show style, news/reporter on location, TV commercials, music video, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ <i>Pros</i> – entertaining way to engage all tactile learners & theatrical students; requires putting information into a visual medium ⊕ <i>Cons</i> – can be threatening for some; one or two may overwhelm rest of group; can be time-consuming if time limits are not established early
<p>BRAIN Games</p>	<p>Giving participants the opportunity to design and/or play intellectual games to help them reinforce their own learning. Examples include: crossword puzzles, board games, Pictionary, Survivor, Jeopardy, Family Feud, 20 Questions, Wheel of Fortune, How to be a Millionaire, Taboo or any other game show (e.g. check out the Game Show Network).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ <i>Pros</i> – allows in-depth study of the material while adding an element of fun & creativity; can stimulate team-work as well as engage those analytical learners (i.e. while creating the game) ⊕ <i>Cons</i> – requires a great deal of resources/materials; some participants may be left out of the planning when working in larger groups; people playing the game must have good command of the subject matter AND how to play the game for this activity to be successful; can be boring for those not answering or actively involved while playing the game
<p>Research Projects</p>	<p>Instructor assigns topics to students – the students investigate on their own & present their findings to the entire group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ <i>Pros</i> – allows active use of resources & allows for students to seek out creative sources of information; engages those analytical learners ⊕ <i>Cons</i> – to be effective instructor must allow sufficient time for person/group to investigate, tabulate, prepare & practice presentation/delivery of results; some participants may be left out of the planning when working in larger groups; may need extra research materials & mediums (like access to a library and/or computers &/or the internet)

Case Studies	<p>Real-life examples are used for students to analyze & discuss. Ideally the students are to come up with possible solutions or the best solution for the situation provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ <i>Pros</i> – allows students to put their knowledge into practice (i.e. to move it from theory to reality); allows creativity and out-of-the-box thinking⊕ <i>Cons</i> – if theoretical cases used, the goal of moving from theory to reality fails; must have real-life solution ready to share with all once students identify their solution(s).
Jigsaw	<p>Simply, it is a way to re-arrange students after their groups prepare a topic. In other words, group prepares solution while each individual of that group has to deliver the solution to other students.</p> <p>For example 5 groups of 2 (i.e. 5 sets of partners). Give them a task to solve or research project to complete or a game to create, etc. Then each partner is split off into separate groups (i.e. one partner is A and the second partner is B – all As together & all Bs together). Now there are 2 groups of 5 people. Each “A” person must teach/share their task/information with 4 other “A”s and so on. This allows preparation is done as a group however delivery is independent (a.k.a. by the individual).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ <i>Pros</i> – ensures all students are participating in the group work since they each will have to deliver it on their own. Allows for faster delivery of same information to the entire group with less start & stop; works well for 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15 & 16 students⊕ <i>Cons</i> – only works if you have the same number of people before and after each shuffle (i.e. does not work with 5 or 7 or 11 or 13); also, if original group’s research or conclusions are incorrect, everyone’s learning can suffer
Simulation	<p>A situation is presented to the student and they are to react to it as though they were in the real situation. For example, first aid situations they must deal with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ <i>Pros</i> – allows adults to walk through the “life-like” situation in a safe environment⊕ <i>Cons</i> – only works if students are willing to act their part and the situation presented is, in fact, life-like

...see the Instructor Notes manual for a few more or check out the web for more ideas!