

Chapter 2

What do I mean by a Learning Culture?

The learner-centered Learning-Culture model (Andragogy) differs from the instructor-centered Training-Culture model (Pedagogy) in how those involved in course design and delivery view their roles. The Learning Culture Instructor/Facilitator is responsible for instructing from the Andragogical point of view, where the adult learner's desires to responsible for their own learning are validated. From initial contact with students, the instructor's give power messages to their students that prep them to be more mindful, and to have total ownership of their learning outcomes. As Knowles (2005) describes, there is now a belief that better outcomes come from "preparing the learner" (p. 117). This change from a student expecting to be educated by a teacher, to being empowered to own their own learning, is sometimes painful for both the instructor and student. I'll cover this more in detail in the learning theory chapters.

This model of fire service Learning-Culture emphasizes learning can be accomplished by setting learning goals, and by making valid domain information, facilitator guides, and constructive learning environments available to learners. Most times these constructive learning environments will need to be facilitated by knowledgeable and trained facilitators. The end result can be excellent in supporting the learning culture, with

As Knowles (2005) describes, there are times when the more traditional approach (Pedagogical) is appropriate: "If a pedagogical assumption is realistic for a particular learner in regard to a particular learning goal, then a pedagogical strategy is appropriate, at least at the starting point" (p. 69). Even though this learning culture model may start

out in a pedagogical mode, where the learners |”are dependent” (Knowles, 2005, p. 71) it should transition into an andragogical mode as the learner develops more depth of knowledge in the subject being presented.

From the beginning, depending upon the knowledge base of the student, the focus of responsibility should be on the learner to add new knowledge to their existing schema. Empowerment of the learner encourages questioning and owning of their understandings, in context and content, towards an ability to have this new knowledge transfer in novel situations for problem solving.

As Knowles (2005) describes, the early understanding of Andragogical principles didn’t take into account the valid need for The instructor/facilitator’s are truly learning guides, and should be very informed and skilled in what subject is being taught. Their skill will keep those involved from bogging down, but they lead the student’s through problem solving exercises that encourage knowledge from other domains to transfer while seeking solutions for constructive learning environment problems.

According to Ellen Langer (1997), educational models which focus on the teacher/instructor to impart new knowledge to the learner, especially if the subject is presented using “conditional or absolute language” as the way to do something, have shown less ability to transfer in novel situations toward problem solving (Langer, 1997, p. 21).