

ENHANCING ADULT MOTIVATION TO LEARN

Raymond Wlodkowski
San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1985.

Raymond Wlodkowski illustrates and describes expertise, empathy, enthusiasm and clarity as the four cornerstones of motivating instruction. He includes examples and checklists that we may use or modify to provide for clear feedback from our students or from a colleague. He clearly addresses the two central concerns of 1) how to help adults learn effectively, and 2) what is the best way to help them really *want* to learn what I have to offer.

This author explains why he feels it is critical for expertise and empathy to be developed *before* enthusiasm, following the age old dictum of the dean of rhetoric, Aristotle, who reminded us that: our students will demand *ethos* (establish credibility) and *pathos* (arouse emotional response) before they will respond to *logos* (the rational message we wish to convey).

Wlodkowski's analyses of the factors affecting classroom motivation cover six major areas: Attitudes and Needs, Stimulation and Emotions, Competence and Reinforcement, and he shows instructors how these factors can be dealt with in a logical chronological sequence that corresponds to the instructional pattern. For example, at the beginning of any instructional event we must consider the attitudes of our prospective students and respond to their learning needs in order to have the *opportunity* for a continued relationship. His treatment of motivation as a timed sequence of events not only helps instructors to consider this additional parameter, but to provide for it specifically in a motivational plan which aims to systematically apply motivating strategies (68 of them!) throughout an entire learning sequence.

This volume describes good instruction as "technical excellence under the command of artistic expression"—and provides the teacher of adults with an impressive array of suggestions which will allow them to develop dynamic, exciting and positively reinforcing instructional settings for their students. For those of us who work *with* instructors of adults, it provides a framework within which we can plan staff development activities that promise to model the practices we want to encourage in our classrooms. I plan to use the framework to develop a workshop for adjunct instructors, most of whom are subject-matter specialists with no formal pedagogical training. The test of Wlodkowski's theories will be whether instructors find the framework useful, and further, whether adult students find their classes more satisfying.

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