LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE

[editorial note: This LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE revision of our manuscript about the praxis rationale for adult learning to enhance performance, will continue open access availability on the AAACE website in the publications section that includes Compendium related content and procedures. Co-authors are sending their revisions, including additional examples of likely brief articles for association newsletters and other publications for which you could cite this open access learning exchange article on LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE, for connections to additional publications and examples, relevant to various types of programs and providers. Each of your past contributions are appreciated, and we look forward to continuing opportunities to serve educators of adults during 2020 when societal influences are making our contributions increasingly important. Thanks. Alan (Ed)]

Adults typically want to use what they learn. Lifelong learning can include reasons and results of learning, to enhance performance in their family, work and community roles. This rationale for enhanced learning and performance was illustrated in Compendium (2017) articles and related publications that educators can share with various provider organizations and associations. The outline format of this draft article, which has been available on the AAACE website compendium-related publications section.

1. Educators of adults have two general options for helping adults learn. One teacher-oriented option is an instructional perspective for knowledge transmission familiar during secondary and higher preparatory education for young people who share similar preparation. They often use achievement exams to demonstrate successful completion, but their actual performance occurs later in various life roles and contexts.

   A second learning and performance option is lifelong, life wide, and life deep collective learning by educational program participants, instructors, mentors, coordinators, evaluators, media
specialists and other program stakeholders. They apply their enhanced performance in roles such as family, work, community, recreation [team, music] activities by each stakeholder that entailed combinations of knowledge, skills, and predispositions; as they deal with situational influences.

2. Educational opportunities for adults with a knowledge transmission, or in a learning and performance rationale; along with other learning orientations (Pratt and Smulders, 2016), we share some additional features related to program decisions and effectiveness by educators of adults, who:
   a. have experience with paid and volunteer roles in various helping professions, such as: teaching, health, counseling, clergy, librarian, journalists, and community development.
   b. Can use observation, oral, print and digital forms of communication for learning, practice, reinforcement, and evaluation feedback.
   c. Depend on connections with provider organizations (such as: school, community college, university, enterprise, faith community, association, library, community agency and neighborhood group) regarding resources, planning, standards, expectations, and related associations.
   d. Help program participants use what they gain from their learning activities.

3. A 2017 Compendium map by Stylus publishers and the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE), along with recent publications, are providing an international overview of publications to enhance performance by educators of adults from various provider organizations and related associations. The AAACE website helped to encourage Compendium use, for several years after Compendium publication. The AAACE website
compendium page included: information about topics and authors of compendium articles; thesaurus concept definitions; nine archived bimonthly computer-based one hour discussions during 2018-19 with compendium article authors for up to 50 members of AAACE and partner associations; a 2019 quarterly series of adult learning reflections on future directions; use of a compendium library edition by graduate programs in various regions to facilitate communication with scholars and practitioners regarding publications and archival materials for joint projects.

4. A learning and performance rationale evolved during two years following completion of compendium articles, as multiple colleagues contributed concepts, illustrative publications, and examples. In contrast to a teacher oriented preparatory education perspective for knowledge transmission in secondary and higher education, many lifelong, life wide and life deep educational opportunities for adults have the following distinctive learning and performance features:

   a. various program stakeholders (participants, instructors, mentors, coordinators, evaluators, media specialists) actively engaging inquiry, learning, program development and enhanced performance. (As illustrated by virtual seminar colleagues who contributed to this learning and performance rationale (Knox, 2016).

   b. Enhanced performance by program participants and other stakeholders, during successive approximations, guides additional assessment; ongoing evaluation feedback to stakeholders, and alignment between educational program priorities and stakeholder experience/aspirations (Stake, 2010).
c. Positive and negative organizational and societal influences are recognized as part of program related learning and change (Barker, 1968).
d. Initial collective program participation includes shared information about varied participants and other stakeholders experience and program expectations; to facilitate trust, responsiveness, cooperation and options (Halverson and Kelly, 2017).
e. Sustained a series of learning sequences are important for enhance performance; and especially for beneficial exchanges [cascade of learning examples of diffusion are: Martin & Assoc (2015); Cutrer & Associates (2017).
f. Brief examples on uses of a learning and performance rationale.
   1) Series of family counseling sessions with members during a difficult transition.
   2) Community development specialist guiding exploration of ways that community members can understand and monitor conflicts and improve relationships.
   3) Quality improvement [QI] procedures by organization members to enhance teamwork and results.
   4) Leader of a musical or medical group helping members to improve collective performances.

5. Compendium articles, along with other recent and classic publications, contain many concepts and examples to enhance educator transactions with program participants and other stakeholders. The following publications illustrate options that can enrich learning transactions for responsive programs. Publications related to a learning and performance rationale include: Houle, 1980, continuing learning in the professions;

6. The directions of recent societal polarization and turbulence, contrast with the century-long trend by educators of adults who have enhanced publications and educational opportunities for improved performance and quality of life by adults. This calls for inclusion of effective and responsive educational opportunities; some with a knowledge transmission orientation (in part because preparatory education university departments emphasize knowledge creation and preservation, with less attention to transmission and utilization). Some University (and most community college) outreach and continuing education programs are learning and performance-oriented, as are most continuing education programs provided by: enterprises (such as quality improvement), community education, associations, faith
communities, libraries and community agencies. (Educational technology can facilitate access for some adults, but reduce access for adults who have limited familiarity with technology, so hybrid publications are desirable). Four alternative perspectives explained by Pratt & Smulders (2016) are: apprenticeship, developmental, nurturing and social reform; which share a learning and performance rationale.

American adults from various communities, regions, traditions, stages and walks of life, currently have access to educational opportunities related to each of their life roles (family, community, work, health, recreation, society); which are influenced by societal, political, demographic, and economic conditions and trends. Effective educators of adults seek to address program alignments between learner experience and aspirations; and the combination of local, national, and international trends and conditions that are relevant to learner’s lives. Educators use educational needs assessment regarding past experience and future aspirations, and analysis of the organizational and societal context and trends when planning a program. The concept of social class (London, Wenkert & Hagstrom, 1963) and pyramid relations among educators of adults, explain important contributions that educators toward the apex with additional preparation can provide for colleagues toward the base who tend to be volunteers and part-time stakeholders [this helps keep program activities close to local and member concerns]. Alignment and exchanges between educators and society occurs at five levels: personal and provider organization team interactions; collaboration by provider organization stakeholders with members of other provider organizations in the community and region; interactions in
professional associations related to provider organizations; connections among partner associations representatives; and field wide organizations and academies.

In each provider organization, educators of adults can engage in visioning, SWOT analysis, strategic planning and review of program priorities; to guide individual and collective goals, decisions, and cooperation with related organizations. The results can contribute to program marketing; external collaboration; and acquisition of resources, contributions and mutually beneficial exchanges.

In related associations, members can modify mission statements to align them with member provider organizations, cooperation with related associations, especially with societal trends and issues related to their mission and member benefits.

In the general international field, association representatives and prominent advocates can build on the accomplishments and mission of provider organizations, related professional associations’ publications, communications, and supporters, in relation to policymakers in government and nonprofit organizations.

Seven general themes are suggested that educators of adults can understand and use with a learning and performance rationale to provide their professional learning programs.

a. System-open systems concepts (such as a logic model) can help us recognize pertinent influences on program goals, plans, activities, and evaluation.

b. Collaboration- focus on a pragmatic orientation toward how things work, which can be gained by inquiry and refined by practice and feedback; along with familiarity regarding terminology and trends.
c. Coordination- appreciate coordinator use of mutually beneficial exchanges for sustained cooperation and enhanced performance.

d. Performance- clarify pertinent values and predispositions related to program development, standards, and engaged performance.

e. Inquiry- use ongoing inquiry and evaluation feedback to program stakeholders to guide progress (Davis, 1998)

f. Outcomes- recognize the cascade of learning that can occur from publications and mentors, which results in subsequent learning innovation and enhanced performance.

7. The following examples illustrate basic ways in which educators of adults can apply combinations of their knowledge, skills and predispositions to guide learning and performance rationale transactions.

   a. A faculty member guiding a practicum course or workshop for educators of adults can arrange for several students to each explore with local experienced practitioners from different types of provider organizations, their effective use of some learning and performance transactions and procedures. They can then submit a manuscript based on comparative analysis of such case examples for print or digital publications read by educators engaged in various types of provider organizations.

   b. A prominent educator of adults can initiate a monthly roundtable of interested practitioners and scholars in the local region, on behalf of their provider organizations (such as community college, library, community education, enterprise, community agencies, university outreach). They
can use media and meetings to arrange for mutually beneficial activities that include adults who are typically underserved by further education opportunities.

c. Educators in a multistate region in which at least one Compendium university library edition can enable leaders of national professional associations interested in regional activities in that multistate region, to cooperate regarding enhanced ability, resources, materials, and innovative projects.

d. Representatives of national professional associations that have partner arrangements can share information about awards for outstanding programs, excellent publications, and criteria for standards; to illustrate for regional, national and international policymakers, major benefits from a variety of effective educational programs for adults.

e. Future directions for the field can be explored by members of a rotating panel composed of prominent and representative educators of adults from various associations (such as association past presidents, Hall of Fame members, previous handbook and Journal editors, and award recipients). Including representative panel members is important, by rotating term limits and variety regarding career stage, types of providers, scholars and practitioners, as well as attentive to past trends and alternative future directions. Results could include attention to international field wide communication, recognition for excellence, and advocacy.

8. In conclusion, learning and performance program coordinator roles are central to guide stakeholder use of learning and evaluation concepts and procedures that are responsive to
participant experience, progress and enhanced performance. The 2019 adult learning quarterly series of reflections on future directions, addressed our century long progress for increased access to lifelong learning and Wisconsin Idea opportunities; which is being eroded by foreign and domestic polarization and turbulence during this decade. [See Brooks (Ed) quarterly reflections, Adult Learning, Vol.4. Nov 2019; and Michelson, Adult Education Quarterly, Vol 69 (2)].

Half a century ago, educators of adults in AEA based their democratic movement on social philosophy with roots in 1776 Scottish Enlightenment publications that combined Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations and his previous 1759 Theory of Moral Sentiments. These classic publications clarified the interdependence of affluence built on competition and regulation, which also reflects community-wide conscience and sympathy. Contemporary Scandinavian examples of mixed systems, and open systems explanations (Katz & Kahn, 1966) suggest potential directions for a new enlightenment movement by educators of adults; which reflect farewell advice and constitutional provisions from three centuries ago.

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REFERENCES provided in a separate document.