



The Adult Learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development

By Malcolm S. Knowles, Elwood F. Holton III, Richard A. Swanson

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How do you tailor education to the learning needs of adults? Do they learn differently from children?

How does their life experience inform their learning processes?

These were the questions at the heart of Malcolm Knowles's pioneering theory of andragogy which transformed education theory in the 1970s. The resulting principles of a self-directed, experiential, problem-centered approach to learning have been hugely influential and are still the basis of the learning practices we use today. Understanding these principles is the cornerstone of increasing motivation and enabling adult learners to achieve.

This eighth edition has been thoughtfully updated in terms of structure, content, and style. On top of this, online material and added chapter-level reflection questions make this classic text more accessible than ever. The new edition includes:

- Two new chapters: Neuroscience and Andragogy, and Information Technology and Learning.
- Updates throughout the book to reflect the very latest advancements in the field.

- A companion website with instructor aids for each chapter.

If you are a researcher, practitioner or student in education, an adult learning practitioner, training manager, or involved in human resource development, this is the definitive book in adult learning that you should not be without.

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Editorial Review

Review

‘A great update of a classic. Should be required reading for anyone involved with adult learning in schools, businesses, and communities.’ - *Sam Stern, professor and former dean, College of Education, Oregon State University, USA*

‘This masterly and authoritative 8th edition of *The Adult Learner* provides a welcome update of Knowles, Holton and Swanson’s classic text. Its focus is both retrospective and prospective, offering the reader a comprehensive review of the theory and practice of adult education. It should be essential reading for those engaged in the field.’ - *Prue Huddleston, Emeritus Professor, Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick, UK*

‘Knowles, Holton and Swanson’s book is truly foundational to the understanding of adult education. The eighth edition renews its relevance to this age of information technology and advances in neuroscience, and reconfirms the timelessness of the core principles of adult learning.’ - *Ming-Fai PANG, Associate Professor & Associate Dean (Cross-border & International Engagement), Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong*

‘The Adult Learner continues to be an important and foundational work with increasing relevance in a variety of disciplines. Knowles, Holton and Swanson cover the theory and practice of how adults learn, including the contextual considerations. Their contribution should be required reading for anyone working with human expertise.’ - *Thomas J. Chermack, Associate Professor, Organizational Learning, Performance and Change, Director, Scenario Planning Institute, Colorado State University, USA*

‘That the fields of adult education and human resource development have evolved from simply positing that adults learn differently from children continues to be quite evident in this revised edition. *The Adult Learner* reflects its own subject matter by thoughtfully integrating new topics to the discussion. No other text provides such a comprehensive view of adults as learners in a range of contexts and relationships. Discussions about the principle of whole-part-whole, emerging issues related to information technology, and implications of neuroscience research to adult learning are particularly prescient. Designers of instruction and training programs would be well advised to consider this text as a critical resource, as careful reading brings forth much insightful and practical information.’ - *Ronald L. Jacobs, Professor, Human Resource Development, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, USA*

About the Author

Malcolm S. Knowles was one of the nation’s leading authorities on adult education and training. He was the founding executive director of the Adult Education Association, and Professor of Adult and Community College Education at North Carolina State University.

Elwood F. Holton III, Ed.D., is the Jones S. Davis Distinguished Professor of Human Resource Development and Adult Education at Louisiana State University.

Richard A. Swanson is Professor Emeritus of Organization Learning, Policy, and Development at the University of Minnesota.

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