

Quick Reference Guide: Seven Essentials

Andragogical (Adult) Learning Architecture & Self-Evaluative Framework

How to Use This Guide

This reference guide supports instructional designers and educators in applying adult learning principles. Use it throughout your course development experience or as a reflective refresher tool to assess how well your learning experiences put the learner in control, drive relevance, and optimize retention.

7 BUILDING BLOCKS AT-A-GLANCE

1. Control

"Put the learner in the cockpit."

How we learn new things can change frequently, and adult learners demand personal control over the process.

SELF-EVALUATIVE REFLECTIVE QUESTION	DESIGN IMPLICATION & CHECK-IN
Do you have a hard time scheduling at the right time?	<i>Are modules chunked appropriately for asynchronous access?</i>
How important is impromptu learning?	<i>Can learners jump into content exactly when a workplace need arises?</i>
Are you getting the learning when you want it and how you want it?	<i>Is information easily searchable or organized via intuitive navigation?</i>
How do your current resources support your learning style when your work and schedules are disrupted?	<i>Does the system provide seamless alternative pathing or downloadable reference guides?</i>

2. Social

"Gathering at the same time (synchronous learning)."

Observing and interacting with others significantly supports and accelerates the adult learning process.

SELF-EVALUATIVE REFLECTIVE QUESTION	DESIGN IMPLICATION & CHECK-IN
How often and under what circumstances am I motivated to do something I've observed from someone else?	Are peer modeling, case studies, or expert demonstrations integrated effectively?
How often am I motivated by observing someone else being rewarded or punished for something they have done or said?	Does the scenario architecture demonstrate clear social and behavioral consequences?
Once I've acquired new knowledge or have observed a new behavior or skill, how well am I able to reproduce the previously learned information or action?	Is there a safe practice space provided right after peer-based observation?
How easy or difficult is it to recall information later when responding to a similar situation that was previously observed?	Are contextual cues embedded to trigger memory retrieval in identical operational environments?

3. Independent

"Let me figure it out."

Adults possess the capacity to think, act, and pursue development autonomously without the strict regimen of a heavily managed training program.

SELF-EVALUATIVE REFLECTIVE QUESTION	DESIGN IMPLICATION & CHECK-IN
How effective am I at diagnosing learning needs and formulating goals?	Are self-assessments provided to help learners baseline their own skill gaps?
How well will I take the initiative on this/these topics that I want to learn?	Is there an optional deep-dive track for highly motivated independent learners?
What will my process be for identifying resources such as subject matter experts and reference material?	Are curation asset lists, indices, and expert contact channels readily available?
How would I describe my readiness and willingness to learn?	Is the purpose of the experience communicated to clear away initial motivational barriers?

4. Repetition

"A crowd favorite :)"

Strategic repetition and structured retrieval practice are essential mechanics for driving long-term performance improvement.

SELF-EVALUATIVE REFLECTIVE QUESTION	DESIGN IMPLICATION & CHECK-IN
When did you last do an activity that required repetition for improved performance?	<i>Are skill building blocks layered progressively across multiple modules?</i>
How likely is it that efforts at repetitious learning will be enhanced by accurate and timely feedback?	<i>Are automated feedback systems immediate, specific, and instructional?</i>
How will I be able to constrict or enhance repetition by adding or subtracting elements to the exercise/activity?	<i>Are there scaffolding parameters to increase or decrease scenario difficulty dynamically?</i>
How important is it to revisit course material frequently and consistently to maximize benefits?	<i>Does the overall curriculum support a spaced-repetition distribution model?</i>
How much self-discipline is there to space out practice times to make sure the new skill or knowledge sticks? (e.g., vocabulary spaced repetition)	<i>Are automated reminders or flash-drill mechanisms utilized to prompt micro-practice?</i>

5. Relevance

"Think objectives."

Adults thrive in highly goal-oriented environments requiring a direct route from problem to solution. Wandering is completely optional.

SELF-EVALUATIVE REFLECTIVE QUESTION	DESIGN IMPLICATION & CHECK-IN
How will I use this content again?	<i>Is the target terminal performance outcome transparently mapped to real operational KPIs?</i>
Is the challenge or activity grounded in a real-world scenario?	<i>Are fake, generic, or theoretical settings replaced with realistic workspace tasks?</i>
How does this topic connect to everyday life?	<i>Does the narration bridge conceptual models with immediate daily routines?</i>
How does this learning invoke passion, opinion, questions and action?	<i>Are high-stakes choices or controversial dilemmas embedded to prompt deep cognitive investment?</i>
How will this learning cultivate my unique perspective and clarity toward my goals?	<i>Does the tracking design allow for customized outcomes tailored to the learner's explicit professional career path?</i>

6. Feedback

"Both formal and informal."

Feedback must be highly concise and is absolutely critical for the learner when deciding the next best step toward awesomeness.

SELF-EVALUATIVE REFLECTIVE QUESTION

DESIGN IMPLICATION & CHECK-IN

How timely is the feedback in relation to a course correction?

Is constructive criticism delivered at the exact point of the misconception, rather than delayed until the end?

How specific is the current feedback mechanism?

*Does feedback explicitly target the *why* behind a mistake, instead of just displaying a generic "Incorrect"?*

Does the feedback allow for multiple perspectives?

Are multi-layered stakeholder perspectives (e.g., client reaction, teammate fallout) visible inside evaluation states?

7. Experiential

"ft. Hands-On"

The learner must play a comparatively active role in the process rather than serving as a passive consumer of video or slide decks.

SELF-EVALUATIVE REFLECTIVE QUESTION

DESIGN IMPLICATION & CHECK-IN

How much concrete experience is being provided?

Are there sandboxes, simulations, or interactive trial loops rather than flat text pages?

How are reflective observations from others incorporated in my studies/work?

Are post-activity debriefs or multi-user peer reflections integrated into the completion criteria?

How often are new experiences created by testing variations of existing ideas?

Does the scenario architecture support multi-path experimentation, allowing learners to fail safely and see alternative outcomes?

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