

# Principles of Adult Learning: The 3 R's and a Number or Two

## **Respect**

Respect means that adults learn best when

- They feel valued and listened to
- They have input into how teaching and learning happen
- They feel comfortable in the learning environment
- They feel safe to make mistakes and learn from them without fear.

## **Relevance**

Immediacy means that adults learn best when

- They can see and experience that what they are learning is useful to them in everyday life
- The usefulness of what they learn is reinforced regularly and often

## **Re-connect**

Adults also learn best when they can re-connect to previous knowledge and experience when learning new things. Experience-based learning means that adults learn best when

- They can attach new learning to previous experience
- Learning enriches their experience with new facts, language and insights.

## **20% - 40% - 80%**

The 20% - 40% - 80% principle means that while learning adults remember

- 20% of what they hear
- 40% of what they hear and see
- 80% of what they discover for themselves by doing!

Adapted from *The Adult Learner* by Malcolm Knowles (1978, Gulf Publishing Company)