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According to the Canadian Literacy and Learning Network ( <http://www.literacy.ca/professionals/professional-development-2/principles-of-adult-learning/>

[1]

), there are 7 Principles of Adult Learning. This article will review how the Pennsylvania Institute for Instructional Coaching (PIIC) model and its professional development opportunities support the following adult learning principles.

**1. Adults must want to learn** - When working with adults, instructional coaches need to promote the intrinsic motivation of their colleagues. Research shows that teachers who reflect on their pedagogy show the greatest change in practice, and therefore the PIIC coaching model encourages self-reflection for all educators. Through PIIC's professional development and the implementation of the Before, During, After (BDA) model, its coaches learn the skills necessary to promote the teachers' motivation for learning and growth.

**2. Adults will learn only what they feel they need to learn** - Because PIIC coaches are part of their school's community, they know first-hand what professional development may be needed, useful, and relevant to their colleagues. The job-embedded nature of PIIC professional development ensures that coaches are always providing teachers with learning that is immediately practical and useful in their classrooms.

**3. Adult learning focuses on problems, and the problems must be realistic** - PIIC coaches are taught the skills necessary to work in both individual and small group settings. During either of these sessions instructional gaps and specific needs should come to light. The coach and colleagues can then work together to discover solutions for them.

**4. Adults learn by doing** - Because of BDA, modelling, and co-teaching, coaches and their fellow educators can together experience highly effective instructional practices. (The implementation of evidence-based literacy practices is an example.) During the BDA process, the teacher determines the focus and therefore is taking an active part in the learning.

**5. Experience affects adult learning** - The PIIC professional development program teaches coaches strategies that will help them work with colleagues who may have had both positive and negative professional experiences. Coaches can then help teachers use their own knowledge of the classroom and instructional strategies to promote self-reflection, learning, and to build on their personal strengths.

**6. Adults learn best in an informal situation** - A PIIC coach receives training to ensure that the interactions are always non-evaluative and

promote professional growth. Because the teacher and coach collaborate during every phase of the BDA cycle, it provides for rich but relatively informal learning environment.

7. **Adults want guidance**<sup>[1]</sup> - PIIC coaches learn how to collect and analyze data that can be used to make sound instructional decisions. Because of their relationships within their school community, coaches are in the perfect position to use this knowledge to provide guidance and support to their administrators and colleagues.

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<sup>[1]</sup> "Professional Development - Canadian Literacy and Learning ..." 2012. 7 Jan. 2015 < <http://www.literacy.ca/professionals/professional-development-2/> >

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