Instructional Strategies for Attitude Change, Motivation, and Interest

Posted on October 6, 2010 by Shirley Caruso

Learning strategies are devices employed by learners to assist in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Instruction should guide the learner in the choice of appropriate learning strategies for particular learning tasks. Facilitating the learning of declarative knowledge, concepts, procedures, principles, problem solving, cognitive, attitudes, and psychomotor skills begins with decisions on what content should be presented, how it should be presented, and in what sequence the instruction should follow (Smith and Ragan, 2005). Ideally, an instructional strategy should be as generative as possible while still offering motivational support for learners.

Micro-Level Instructional Strategies

Lesson (micro)-level **instructional strategies** should include an Introduction, Body, Conclusion, and **Learning Assessment**. Because **adult learners** need to know why they need to learn, strategies that deploy attention, arouse interest and motivation, establish instructional purpose, and provide a preview of the lesson should be included in the Introduction. Strategies that facilitate the recall of prior knowledge, process information, focus attention, facilitate learning, provide practice, and give feedback should be included in the Body. The Conclusion should include a summary and review, strategies to assure the transfer of knowledge, and exemplification of the usability of the new knowledge.

Exemplification is necessary to demonstrate to adult learners how this new knowledge can be applied in their workplace or daily lives. Assessment of performance, feedback and remediation should also be included.

Instructional Approaches for Affective Learning

The cognitivist learning theory supports the assumption underlying **andragogy** that adults have a wealth of previous knowledge and experience. As adults, we enter into learning situations with predisposed perceptions and judgments that make us more receptive to certain kinds of information and more prone to organize the information in certain ways.

Attitudes are generally affective. They are concerned with making choices. Cognitive (knowing how), behavioral (opportunity to practice the desired behavior), and affective (knowing why) are three components of attitude learning. Instructional designers should be concerned with the behavioral aspect of attitude learning as well as a student’s motivation to learn.

Smith and Ragan (1999) emphasize the importance of three key instructional approaches that focus on the behavioral aspect of attitude learning. They are demonstration of the desired behavior by a respected role model, practice of the desired behavior, often through role playing, and reinforcement of the desired behavior. Affective learning outcomes are connected to explicit cognitive goals.

**Instructional strategies** effective for the cognitive component include the use of **acronyms or mnemonics**. Group discussion can be considered an opportunity for practice and feedback. A concise restatement of the desired behavior should be included in the conclusion, and assessment of the learning would be the observable component of the learners’ future behavior.
Summary

Instructional strategies certainly have their advantages in assisting learners in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. **Instructional designers** should carefully perform a **task analysis**, analyze learners, and the analyze the context when designing instruction to make a determination to facilitate the use of strategies with more direct prompting of learning strategies or more direct and complete instruction. If inhibitors to use of strategies are present (learners have low skill in strategy use, learners are not motivated, learners do not recognize the applicability of the strategy, learners lack awareness of their own cognitive capabilities, learners are unaware of the learning task, learners have no prior content knowledge, etc.) the instructional designer may need to develop a technique to improve them or choose strategies with more direct prompting or instruction that is more direct. A continuing goal of the instructional designer is to apply the different types of instructional strategies to best achieve the different types of learning.

**References**


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