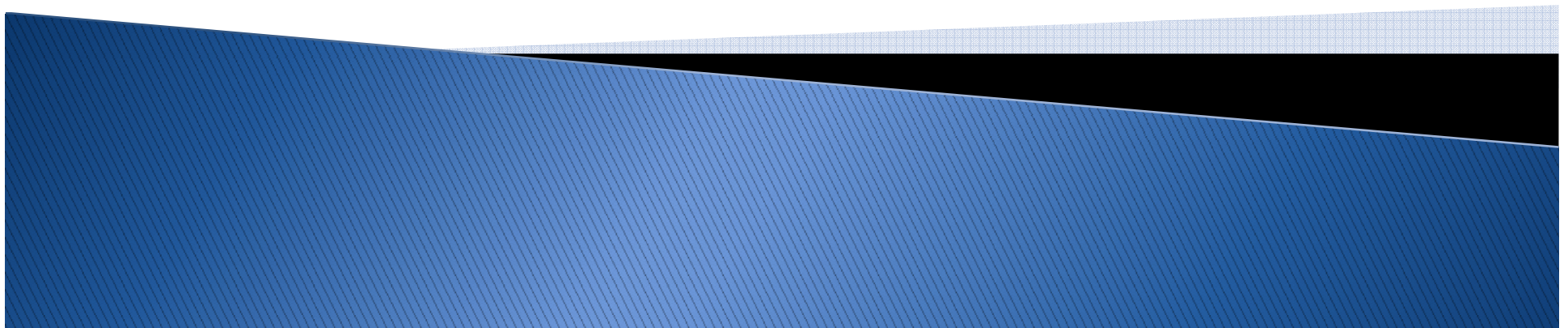


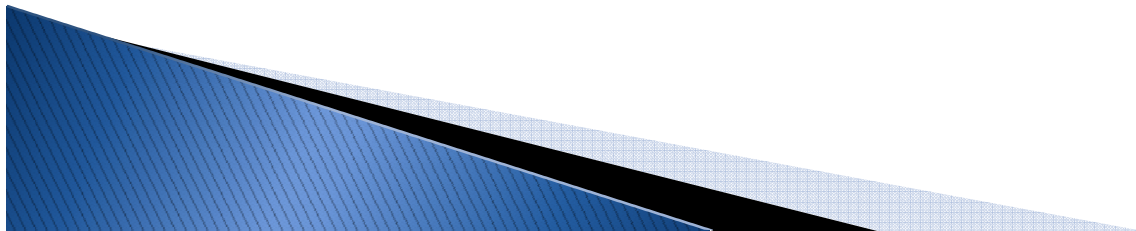
What is Learning?



Definition of Learning

'In its broadest sense, learning can be defined as a process of progressive change from ignorance to knowledge, from inability to competence, and from indifference to understanding'. (Fincher, 1998)

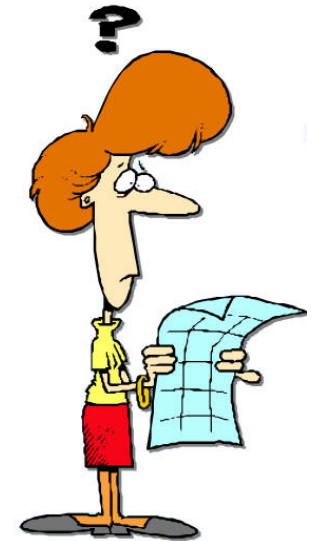
'Learning is what occurs when a person makes sense out of what they encounter or experience in interacting with self, others and the environment'. (Brubaker, 1959)



Why Learn?

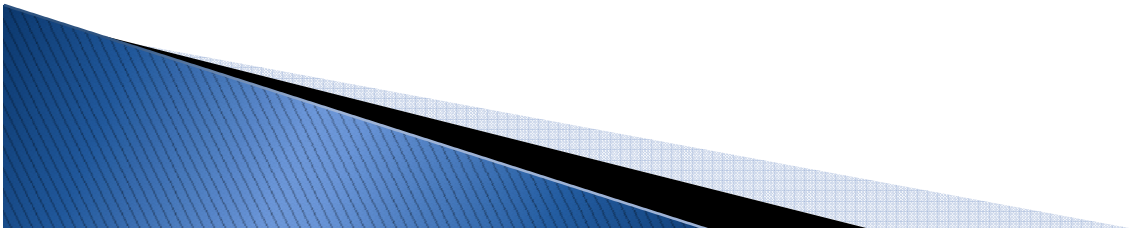
- ▶ What do you feel is your main purpose for returning to studying?
 - Academic
 - Vocational
 - Personal
 - Social

Is it Scary or Exciting??



Identifying your barriers to learning!

Think for a moment and see if you can identify what the various barriers to learning might be?

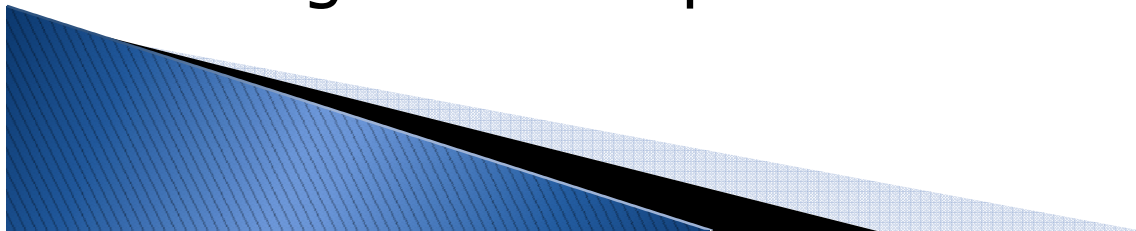


Barriers to Learning

National Adult Learning Survey 2005

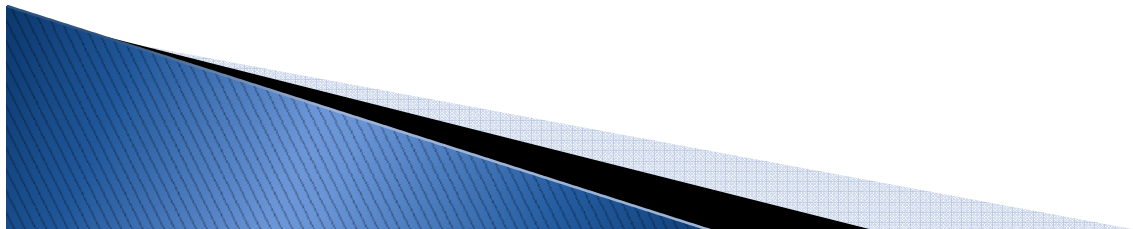
Physical Barriers

- ▶ Lack of time due to work, family, and childcare responsibilities.
- ▶ Difficulties in paying course fees and fear of getting into debt.
- ▶ Disability, particularly lack of mobility.
- ▶ Ill health.
- ▶ Difficulties with reading and writing, English and Numeracy.
- ▶ Jargon in the presentation of new knowledge.



Attitudinal Barriers

- ▶ Being nervous about going back to the classroom and concern about not being able to keep up.
- ▶ Negative perceptions of schooling and scepticism about the value of learning.
- ▶ Low self-esteem and lack of confidence both generally and in relation to learning.
- ▶ Low aspirations and lack of role models.



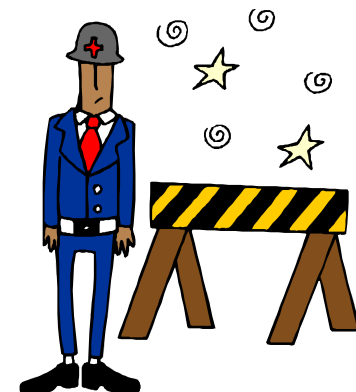
Attitudinal Barriers (Continued)

- ▶ Perfectionism, which makes it difficult to accept exposure to the initial 'not- knowing' and the uncertainty of getting to know, underlined by a fear of not being good enough.
- ▶ Other people's expectations of you, leading to internalised pressure.



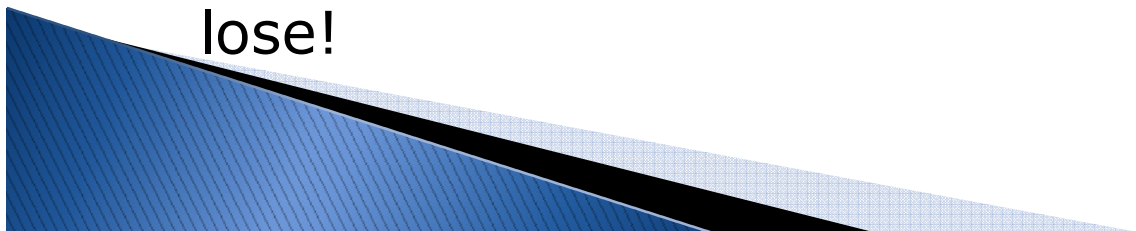
Structural Barriers

- ▶ Lack of transport
- ▶ Lack of suitable accommodation
- ▶ Lack of facilities and equipment
- ▶ Lack of appropriate qualifications or knowledge.



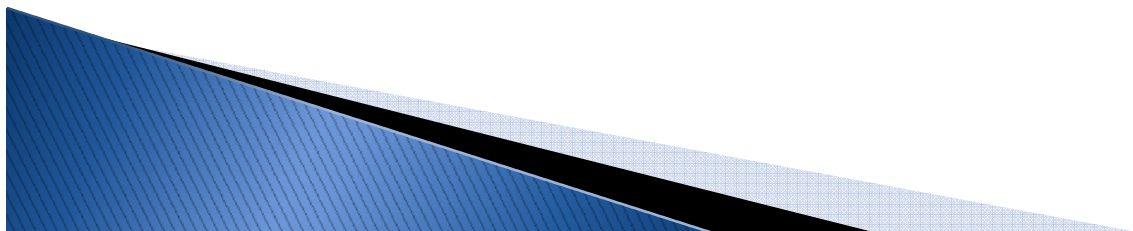
Learning to Learn

- ▶ Recognise that learning can be painful, challenging and disturbing for anyone, not just you.
- ▶ Don't get stressed as this reduces your ability to analyse and retain knowledge.
- ▶ Get enough sleep - A tired brain will struggle harder than a refreshed one.
- ▶ Use your own natural rhythms – get to know when your mind is lively and forge ahead, and equally recognise when you're flagging and give it a rest.
- ▶ Manage your time and your deadlines effectively.
- ▶ Accept that it's a human tendency to make mistakes.
- ▶ Be brave, take risks, have a go. You've nothing to lose!

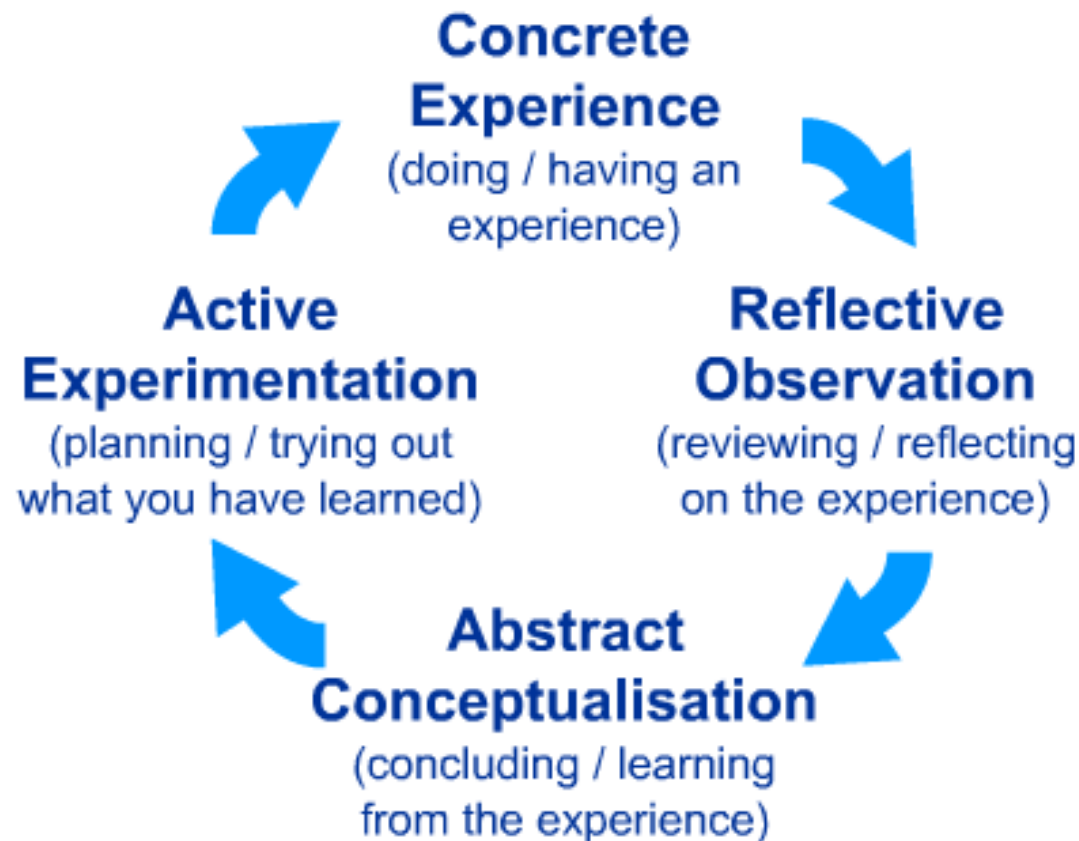


Learning to Learn

- ▶ If you have experienced some big disruptive event in your life, allow for 'worry-time' and accept that your learning pace will be slower.
- ▶ Rather than struggle on your own, get some help.
- ▶ Keep academic staff informed about any factors likely to affect your concentration and ability to study. Don't leave them to guess.
- ▶ Give yourself credit for your achievements.
- ▶ Remember you're a student, not an expert – yet! You don't have to know it all already.
- ▶ Identify your most effective learning style and learn how to use that knowledge to your advantage.

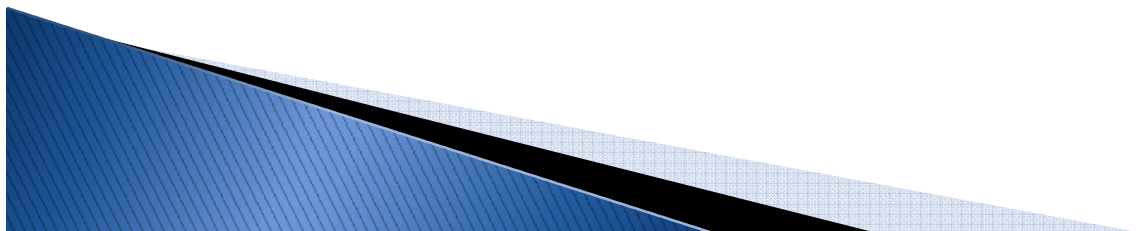


Kolb's Learning Cycle



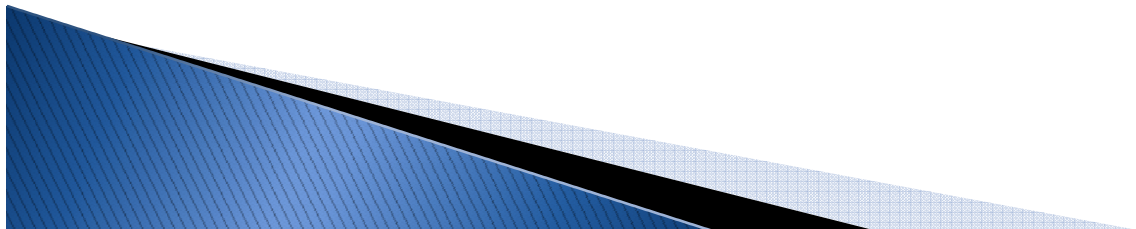
Learning Styles

- ▶ Individuals differ in the extent to which the learning methods deployed within each stage are attractive to them.
- ▶ The concept of learning styles preferences is based on the recognition that some individuals prefer learning in one way as compared with another.
- ▶ Whilst it would be ideal if we were all good all-rounders, but in fact there are substantial differences.



Reflectors

- ▶ **Reflectors** don't like to participate while they are learning. They'd prefer to sit and watch first, let the information absorb, plan their own course of action, and then implement the new techniques they've learned.



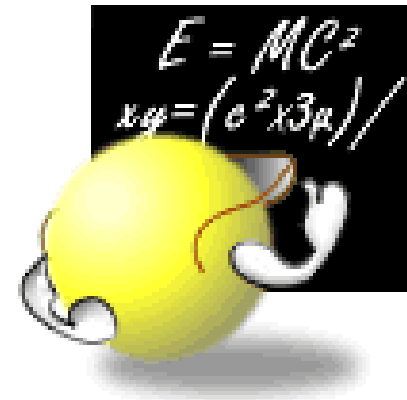
Activists

- ▶ **Activists** are ready and willing to perform shorter tasks in the present. They enjoy lectures, reading, exercises, and activities in which they don't have to be immediate leaders.



Theorists

- ▶ **Theorists** prefer models, theories, and anything that presents an idea in an organised fashion. The models don't even have to be realistic as long as they make a point.



Pragmatists

- ▶ **Pragmatists** search for realistic examples that relate directly to the task at hand. They don't want to waste time with hypothetical situations when they could be learning how to apply something directly to their own job tasks.



The Benefits of Learning

- ▶ Human beings are uniquely adapted to learn and we have the ability to do so throughout our lives – Lifelong Learning!
- ▶ Learning has the power to transform us.
- ▶ We can become more successful.
- ▶ Learning can enable us to solve problems and change our attitudes.
- ▶ It makes us more interesting to be with.
- ▶ It can also be enormous fun.
- ▶ It can also be very challenging.
- ▶ Our survival in the twenty-first century as individuals, organisations and nations will depend on our capacity to learn.
- ▶ A learning population is healthier, more tolerant, independent and fulfilled.

