

# Discussing and comparing the tyler model



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In this essay I will be discussing and comparing the Tyler model and Knowles model for Adult Learners. This can be seen in section one where the comparison and contrasting of the two models will be established in order to get a better understanding. In section two I will choose one of the two models that are most appropriate for a learning context. The conclusion will consist of a summary of the key points established throughout this paper.

## Section One

Tyler was very much linked with curriculum theory, development, educational assessment and evaluation. In education individuals regard Tyler as the “ father” of behavioral objectives. This form of approach puts much more importance on the needs of the learner. There are similarities between Tyler’s and that of the andragogical model as they both relate specifically to the individuals self direction and their experience. Tyler regularly used this in learning to be a development during which an individual attains new patterns of behaviour. He had four basic questions regarding to learning:

What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?

What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?

How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?

How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (Boone, pp. 26)

The previous questions are now well known in adult education. “ Knowledge of the psychology of learning helps set bounds on what can be learned within the given time and the current environment of the organization” (Boone. Pp. 26). Tyler thought that the makeup of a school’s curriculum had to relate to three main factors that together form the elements of an individuals education experience. First off would be the nature of the individual learner, which may include the individuals developmental factors, their learner interests/needs and also their life experiences. Second would involve the individuals values and aims of society, which may include values and attitudes. The last being knowledge of the subject matter. What the learner believes to be worthy and usable knowledge. In answering the four questions and in designing learning experience for students, curriculum developers had to establish judgments through the three factors. He believed that when “ setting educational objectives, programmers should take into consideration the learners, society, philosophical considerations within the institution conducting the program, the intellectual climate of society and experts in the subject” (Bye & Reich, pp. 181). The assumptions of this model are that all learning can be measured in terms of changing behaviours.

“ One of the most frequently offered criticisms of programs of professional preparation by graduates who subsequently inhabit the ‘ real world’ of practice is that such programs are strong on theory but weak on practical application” (Brookfield, pp. 201). Knowles is regarded as a central figure in US adult education in the second half of the twentieth century. The programming model is structured on his andragogical philosophy, where one assumes that adults move toward self-direction. By doing this use their

experience as a learning resource, then are ready to learn in accordance with socio-developmental tasks and desire immediate application of learning. Knowles believes that the adult learner brings life experiences to learning, incorporating and complementing the cognitive abilities of Piaget's adolescent. As the individual matures:

his/her self-concept moves from dependency to self-direction

he/she accumulates a growing reservoir of experiences that becomes a resource for learning

his/her learning readiness becomes increasingly oriented to the tasks of various social roles

his/her time perspective changes from one of postponed knowledge application to immediate application

his/her orientation to learning shifts from subject-centered to problem-centered (<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/knowles.htm> )

Knowles believes that adults should have developed mature understanding of themselves, able to understand their needs, motivations, interests and goals. Individuals should be able to look at themselves objectively and maturely. They should accept themselves and respect themselves for what they are, while striving to become better. Adult learners should develop an attitude of acceptance, love, and respect toward others. This is the attitude on which all human relations depend. They must learn to distinguish between people and ideas, and to challenge ideas without threatening

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people. Ideally, this attitude will go beyond acceptance, love, and respect, to empathy and the sincere desire to help others. “ Knowles was convinced that adults learned differently to children and that this provided the basis for a distinctive field of enquiry. His earlier work on informal adult education had highlighted some elements of process and setting” (<http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-knowl.htm> ). In doing this Knowles came to the conclusions about the shape and direction of adult education. According to Knowles andragogy model the key points are:

Adults move towards self-direction

Adults use experience as a learning resource

Adults are ready to learn in accordance with socio developmental tasks

Adults devise immediate application of learning (Bye & Reich 2003, p182)

The two models are very different to one another when compared. Tyler’s objective model requires no prior knowledge of the content being taught whilst Knowles institutional model requires some prior knowledge from the adult learner. This prior knowledge helps motivate the learning to participate more in the learning process which results to further /advances in knowledge of the topic being taught. The learner is seen as an ‘empty vessel’ in Tyler’s model. The individual is more dependent on the teacher in learning new things within the learning environment. This is entirely opposite to Knowles model, as the learner seeks growth in knowledge.

Section Two

My goal in this section is to apply Tyler's model with TAFE's Business Management course. Central to Tyler's model is effectively organizing the learning activities. He believes in three criteria's that are required in building organized learning experiences. These are continuity, sequence and integration. Business Management mirrors Tyler's model by creating active learning experiences in a content area that is otherwise found boring. Having identified a number of learning activities, the teacher challenges students in active learning with writing assignments, group presentations, group quizzes, a written financial project, individual and group participation and a final exam. The process of assessment is critical to Tyler's model and begins with the objectives of the educational program. The lecturer will be required to establish the point of the assessment by answering questions such as " what is the purpose of this assessment, what do you want it for?" With an online syllabus, students can prepare for the various methods of assessment. Mid semester evaluations provide valuable feedback on learning activities. A final evaluation of 2009 present important feedback for course revision. As a result, the following semester group learning activities were increased from 10% to 40% of the course content. Other feedback found that students desire for more review time and that the instructions progressed too quickly. Due to time limitations, the lecturer incorporated additional non-graded assignments as group presentations. By doing this the curriculum and instruction assessment helped better achieve the defined outcomes of improving critical thinking, communication and analytical skills. A final exam also helps evaluate the learning objectives and integration of knowledge. Tyler and TAFE's Business Management have comparable strategies for designing curriculum and instruction. Tyler states, " Education is a process of

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changing the behaviour patterns of people”. TAFE uses assessments to achieve the defined learning objectives and promotes participation from individuals through interesting activities. They both value the individual learner.

## Conclusion

“ Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of generations into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes ‘ the practice of freedom’, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world” (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970) By using a combination of adult learner techniques and strategies, educators can create training experiences that will enhance the learning of participants. When an individual is put into positive learning experience that follows andragogy process that has been presented above, they are more likely to retain what they have learned and apply it in their work environment.