



Are adults learners that different from children?

In my twenties I believed that my role, as a teacher of pre-teens, was to build a desire for knowledge and learning; and then to help students build the skills to seek knowledge themselves.

On recent reflection I realised that my work with leaders and teams, has the same goal. I support adults build a desire to learn and change. It is only when they have this desire that they will invest time and attention to changing behaviour and/or apply new skills.

Some leaders I work with have high self-awareness and know what they want to learn but others need help

Help can come from: self-reflection, feedback, assessment tools or a 360 assessment. Without this desire people are unlikely to make the effort to change in a world that competes for their attention.

Unlike my school students (pre-internet), once adults discover what they want to know, it is easy for them to search information and participate in learning activities. What is not so easy and often missed is that skills are different from knowledge.

Whilst my 11 year old students needed basic literacy and numeracy skills to interact with the world, my adult learners need skills to deliver requirements, build relationship and energise others, and build for the future.

Acquiring knowledge, doesn't mean doing ... and here we circle back to the importance of self-reflection, feedback and assessment tools ... we circle back to the need for leaders and teams to build a desire to learn, but more importantly the need to learn new skills and change behaviour.

Leaves me thinking – *is training adults that much different from working with children?*

It also reinforces to me the benefit of access to tools like Prodigie® for assessment and support for leaders learn on the job.

Leonie Black
Principal Consultant
www.cadence.co.nz