



The 4-A Learning Sequence™

Designing Effective Adult Learning

The 4-A Model is a tool to guide the process of creating both a learning task and the learning event as a whole. Together, the four components of the model complete a learning cycle. You decide which parts are appropriate for any learning task or a workshop you design. Generally, a learning task requires at least an ADD and an APPLY step, and a learning event will start with an ANCHOR and end with an AWAY.

The 4-A Learning Sequence

One effective sequence of a learning task is to use this sequence



ANCHOR—a task that has the learner access their own prior knowledge or experience with the topic/content/or similar experience (i.e., “Describe your best learning experience of...”)



ADD—a task that has the learner hear/ see/ experience a substantive new piece of content: information, research, theory, skill (i.e., this can be with PowerPoint, film clip, demonstration, etc.)



APPLY—a task that has the learner do something (there and then) with the new content (i.e., practice, application, case studies, compare, etc.)



AWAY—a task that connects the new learning back to the life of the learner and its future use (i.e., a personal action plan, commitment, projection into future, etc.)

Example of a 4-A Learning Sequence Task



ANCHOR—With a neighbor, **describe** one challenge you've encountered in maintaining a healthy diet.



ADD—**Watch** this short Prezi that describes five habits that can help you maintain a healthy diet.



APPLY—**Review** weekly menu of the Smith Family and **suggest** two changes that would make it healthier.



AWAY—**Name** one change that you might make in the future to eat more healthily.



4-A Template

Content

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Learning Objective(s)

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Anchor A task that has the learner access their own prior knowledge or experience with the topic/content/or similar experience (i.e., “Describe your best learning experience of...”)	
Add A task that has the learner hear/ see/ experience a substantive new piece of content: information, research, theory, skill (i.e., this can be with PowerPoint, film clip, demonstration, etc.)	
Apply A task that has the learner do something—there and then—with the new content (i.e., practice, application, case studies, compare, etc.)	
Away A task that connects the new learning back to the life of the learner and its future use (i.e., a personal action plan, commitment, projection into future, etc.)	