Using Accelerated Learning Techniques

Guiding Principles

- **Learning involves the whole mind and body**

Learning is not merely "head" learning (conscious, rational, "left-brained," and verbal); it involves the whole body/mind with all its emotions, senses, and receptors.

- **Learning is creation, not consumption**

Knowledge is not something a learner absorbs, but something a learner creates. Learning happens when a learner integrates new knowledge and skills into his or her existing structure of self. Learning is literally a matter of creating new meanings, new neural networks, and new patterns of electro/chemical interactions within one's total brain/body system.

- **The image brain absorbs information instantly and automatically**

The human nervous system is more of an image processor than a word processor. Concrete images are much easier to grasp and retain than are verbal abstractions. Translating verbal abstractions into concrete images of all kinds will make those verbal abstractions faster to learn and easier to remember.

The Learning Environment

- **A positive learning environment**

People learn best in a positive physical, emotional, and social environment, one that is both relaxed and stimulating. A sense of wholeness, safety, interest, and enjoyment is essential for optimizing human learning. Feelings determine both the quality and quantity of one's learning. Negative feelings inhibit learning. Positive feelings accelerate it.

Training Terminology - Toolkit

- **Total learner involvement**

People learn best when they are totally and actively involved and take full responsibility for their own learning. Learning is not a spectator sport but a participatory one. Knowledge is not something a learner passively absorbs, but something a learner actively creates. Thus, Accelerated Learning tends to be more activity-based rather than materials-based or presentations-based.

- **Collaboration among learners**

People generally learn best in an environment of collaboration. All good learning tends to be social. Whereas traditional learning emphasizes competition between isolated individuals, Accelerated Learning emphasizes collaboration between learners in a learning community.

- **Variety that appeals to all learning styles**

People learn best when they have a rich variety of learning options that allows them to use all their senses and exercise their preferred learning style. Rather than thinking of a learning program as a one-dish meal, Accelerated Learning thinks of it as a results-driven, learner-centered.

- **Contextual learning**

People learn best in context. Facts and skills learned in isolation are hard to absorb and quick to evaporate. The best learning comes from doing the work itself in a continual process of "real-world" immersion, feedback, reflection, and re-immersion. People learn how to swim by swimming, how to manage by managing, how to sing by singing, and how to care for customers by caring for customers.

Step by Step

Before

- Welcome and prepare participants for the course (through welcome kit, letter, pre-quiz, list of participants, previous testimonials, etc.)
- Create emotional connection for students to learn
- Help participants to set their goals regarding the course, get them invested in learning
- Create a welcoming, positive learning environment

During

- Ask students to contribute to shaping the learning environment (decoration, rearrangement, visual goal setting, etc.)
- Utilize all senses of the students, move beyond hearing and seeing
- Offer opportunities of practice through simulations, role plays, active exams, and games
- Use schemes to present learning content (it facilitates learning and enhances memory)
- Follow the principle: "To learn, do." (involve students to learn in an active way)
- Break down preconceived notions
- Facilitate active participation
- Allow time for students to get to know each other and to connect
- Use tasks created by students
- Offer space for reflection (course evaluations, interviews)
- Celebrate the experience (class Q&As, reward system)

After

- Explore ways of applying what the participants have learnt during the course
- Plan for networking (e-mails, forums and other social links)
- Establish mentoring partnerships