



STRATEGIES & METHODS IN LEARNING ENGLISH
For Adult ESOL Professionals

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“Many students do not simply remain in a program because it ‘feels good’ to them. They remain because they see the potential for meeting their goals.” - Arlene Fingeret (1985)

ADULT ELL LEARNERS AND GOALS



In February our state had a monitoring visit from the US Department of Education, and one of the recommendations made was to be more pro-active in helping our students set achievable goals. We understand the importance of helping our students see a meaning or purpose in coming to school. Proper planning to meet educational objectives requires knowing the skills and the career interests of the adult student. Developing a successful personal education plan and setting attainable goals is critical in retaining and transitioning our adult students. Everyone needs to sit down at some point in their life and write down their personal educational goals. Goals need to be set with the students as soon as possible when they enter the Adult ESOL Program. Teachers can follow the SMART model: goals must be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time framed. Depending on the student, long term goals may be used to help set shorter, more reachable goals. For example, if a student’s goal is to be a doctor, then he/she may focus on a shorter term goal of completing a medical technical course. Some students are unaccustomed to goal setting and may set objectives such as “I want to be rich.” This is not a realistic educational goal which the student can measure or achieve while enrolled in an adult ESOL program.. If goals are not reachable, then students are likely to become discouraged and loose motivation when assessing progress. Unmotivated students with unrealistic goals are more likely to drop out. Identifying what resources are needed, and measuring progresses along the way are crucial components for achieving goals. We need to recognize the reasons why adult ELL learners attend class and guide them towards identifying one of the four core outcomes measured in the NRS report as their goal for the year. Identifying one of these outcomes for each student will increase our districts’ ability to receive credit for helping students achieve success. The four NRS goals are:

- Obtain a secondary credential
■ Enter employment

- Enter postsecondary education or training
■ Retain employment

M-DCPS has entered student’s NRS goals in VACS since last year as mandated by the Department of Education. Counselors assist in setting educational goals; however, teachers are as important in guiding the adult student by monitoring progress and facilitating the resources and skills needed to attain the goals set at the intake process. Proper educational planning will increase student completion and transition rate. If we do not assist our students to reach their goals, a large number of our adult English language learners will not be able to participate effectively in the economic and social fabric of this country.

Teacher/Student Collaborative Goal Setting Plan

All-Star Learner Persistence Kit, McGraw-Hill, New York, USA

Provide students with the opportunity to discuss their goals and provide support to accomplish the goals. Encourage students to think about their goals. Common goals include

- advancing in a career
• receiving a General Education Diploma (GED) or High School Diploma
• studying at a college or vocational center
• helping their children in school.

Identify goals students wish to pursue, monitor, facilitate and evaluate the progress on an on-going basis.

Strategies to Help YOU Achieve your Goals

Table with 3 columns: Strategy Name, Questions student asks self, Definition. Rows include Goal-setting, Directed Attention, Activate background knowledge, and Predict/Brainstorm.



SPOTLIGHT ON YOU!

Israel Blanchard was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and immigrated to the United States in 1995. His journey in the U.S. began as an ESOL student in North Miami Adult Education Center where he learned English and earned his High School Diploma. With his motto: “finis origine pendet” meaning “the end depends on the beginning”, Mr. Blanchard’s next goal was to earn a college degree. Working two jobs and supporting a family, he enrolled in Miami Dade College and the Union Institute & University and graduated in 2006 with a Bachelor Degree in Education. In 2008, he began teaching ESOL at North Miami Adult Education Center; the same school where his journey began. He is the father of two young children, and realizes the importance of setting an example for the future generation. We commend Mr. Blanchard for being an example to his students and showing that goals can be reached with hard work and determination.



National Adult Education Honor Society Member Earns UM Scholarship

Ms. Mayla Quesada, from The English Center earned a scholarship to attend the University of Miami this August. She was selected from approximately 22,000 applicants for one of only 2,000 spaces in the freshman class. She is pictured here with her proud teacher, Ms. Jakubowicz. Contact Lourdes Arriete at The English Center to find out how your students can become members of the National Adult Education Honor Society. Contact Ms. Arriete at 305-445-7731 or LArriete@dadeschools.net



SMILE Honors Dr. Edwina Hoffman

“**Extraordinary**” that’s how, Amanda Jones, Dr. Hoffman’s secretary for the last twelve years describes her...and an **extraordinary career** it has been. Edwina Hoffman stumbled upon the ESL world by pure coincidence. She graduated from high school in the Philippines Islands, and earned her degree in Oriental and African Studies from Middlebury in Vermont, one of the top four-year liberal arts colleges in the country. She moved with her family to Venezuela as a young woman, and was asked to teach English to business people working for her father. She was married in Venezuela and took the opportunity to come back to the United States when the political climate in Venezuela was changing. She decided to complete her formal training in ESL, and earned her Master at Florida International University (FIU). She was the first ESOL teacher for the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians teaching children in K-12. They were the only children in the state of Florida not required to attend school at the time. The tribe leaders only wanted her to teach oral English to the children, and so this presented some challenges. She was honored when the tribe built her a classroom that she could call her own. She used creative strategies to stimulate her students, puppets, games corner and music corner. She accepted an offer to lead the Multi State Bilingual Program at FIU. She traveled extensively for ten years, and one day she got up and did not remember what city she was in. This was a sign that it was time to stay home. She joined Miami Dade County Public School System (M-DCPS) working on the Perkins Project. During the mid-1990’s Guantanamo Bay Naval Base began to house refugees from boatlifts leaving Cuba, 800 of these refugees were children. The US Government asked M-DCPS to assist educating the children detained at Guantanamo Bay. She was able under the leadership of Nelson Perez to work out a deal with national publishers to donate books. The program was staffed by local teachers volunteering their time to teach the children at the base. One day she opened the Miami Herald newspaper to read the headlines that the US Government was granting \$2.5 million dollars to Miami Dade College. She could not believe that after M-DCPS had done all the work, they would not be awarded the grant. She got on the phone, and called a friend in the US government and listed all that M-DCPS had done. Within a week, M-DCPS received \$1 million dollars. This was the beginning of S.A.V.E.S. The S.A.V.E.S program has been a model for the nation because from the beginning it had the support of the adult principals an assistant principals, and by selecting people that had gone through the refugee experience. Dr. Hoffman believes that the best advice for the next generation of leaders is to never stop learning, be patient with the changes we will have to endure, and remember the students’ successes. One of her most memorable memories is while consulting for the state of Montana advising Indian tribes, she befriended an Indian family that honored her by inviting her over several years to their Sun Dances which are very spiritual ceremonies for the tribe. She was deeply touched when they asked her to carry one of their grand daughters during the naming ceremony at one of the dances. She takes satisfaction from everyday doing her best. I noticed a stack of plaques and awards on her credenza, and I asked her if she ever had them displayed. She said she has never had the time, she has been very busy. She can now begin to relax with the pride of her life, her family. We congratulate her on an “**extraordinary**” **job!** She will be greatly missed, as a leader, a mentor and an **extraordinary advocate** for high-quality education for all.

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