

Session 2:

Practical Strategies for Inclusive Adult Education

November 13, 2025

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Our plan today...

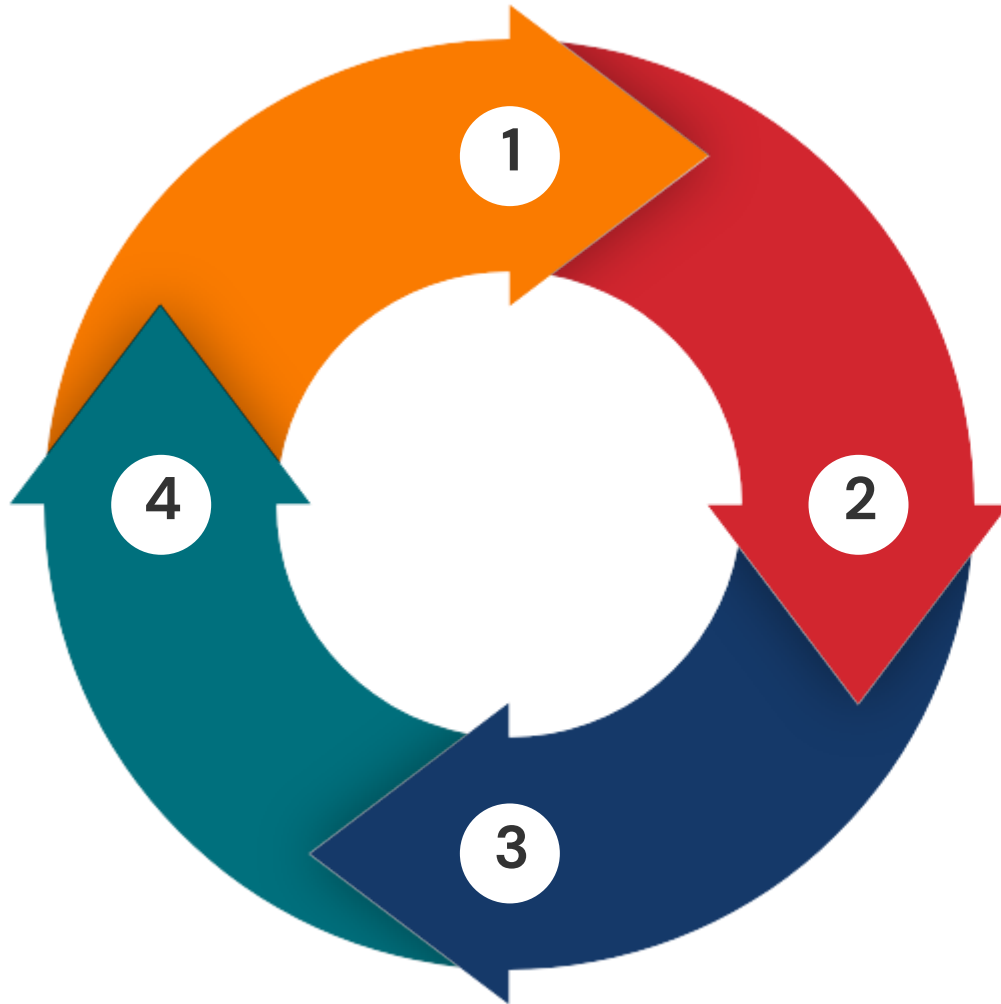


**As we go through
the session,
please write
down:**

- **2 things you
already do**
- **2 new things
you will try**



The Context



- 1 There is diversity within our centers (students, staff, teachers, etc.)
- 2 With this diversity, comes different realities, additional obstacles or challenges, and therefore different needs. We are not always aware of them.
- 3 The Big Challenge: challenging to know exactly what each of our students are experiencing and what they each need.
- 4 The Big Solution: Create learning environments in which students have choices, flexibility, and space to provide feedback and express their needs.

Class facilitation strategies

✓ **Student *Tell me about yourself* sheet**

✓ **Guiding principles exercise**

Agree collectively on what behaviours you want to see in your class and which will not be tolerated.

✓ **Explicit commitment to their own wellbeing & creating a fair and inclusive environment**

Explain what that means to you, why it's important to you

✓ **Get students to better know each other**

Differences but also force them to find points they have in common

✓ **Small group introductory meetings**

Not all students have the same level of implicit understanding of the available resources, norms, expectations, and effective work methods to succeed. This can help students better support each other and facilitate the sharing of this implicit knowledge.

Class facilitation strategies

- ✓ **Set the stage with easy questions in the first few classes**

Importance of reinforcing that what they are sharing has value to the group

- ✓ **Encourage various types of participation**

Different ways that students can add value

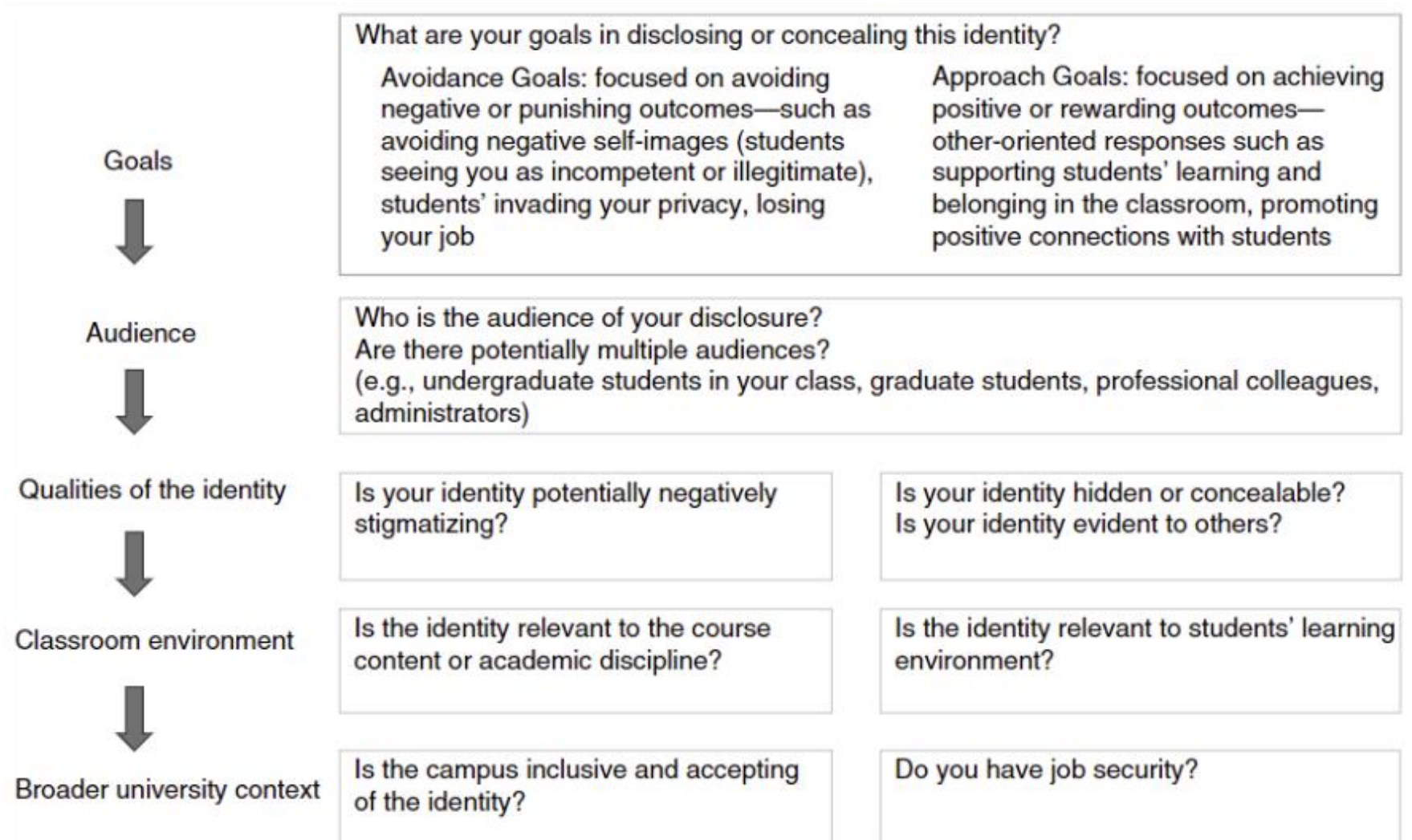
- ✓ **Pay attention to stereotypes or bias you may perpetuate in your examples**

- ✓ **When you give individual clarifications, share with everyone**

Cultural & class differences might impact the willingness to ask for regrades, questions, review draft, or visit profs.

Class facilitation strategies

Teacher disclosure



Course Design Strategies

Include lots of choices

- Having them vote on certain topics to discuss in class
- Choice of assignment * topic
- Choice of format to submit
- Choice in participation mode

Include diverse perspectives

- Cases with a diversity of protagonists
- Diverse authors & speakers
- Include students' own perspectives (have them teach)

Variety of materials

- Different types of readings
- Videos / Ted Talks
- Exercises / Application
- Podcasts
- Offer the same content available in different formats (tip: use AI, such as NotebookLM)

The Best Strategy Overall: Seeking Feedback



1 Be vocal about the importance of feedback and how you will use it.

2 Gather feedback on an ongoing basis.
(Anonymous form, stop-start-continue exercise, etc.)

3 Respond productively to feedback.

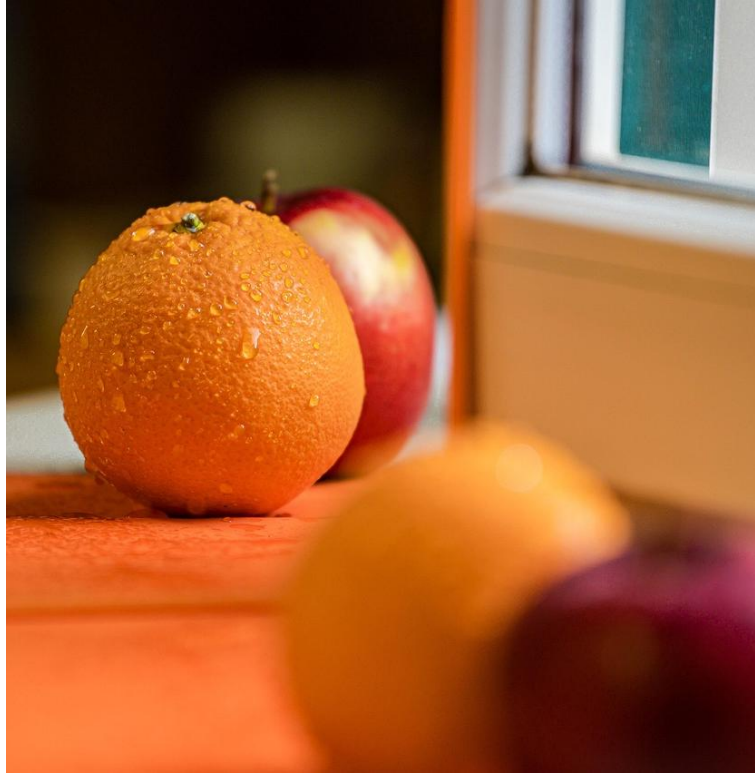
**Managing
yourself:
Be aware of
biases**



Managing yourself: Common biases in education



Similarity bias



Contrast bias



Selective perception & confirmation bias

Managing yourself: Allyship

Who is an Ally?

Someone who is not a target of the discrimination at play, but who is aware of them and wants to take action to fight them.

Avoid

Negotiating, contesting or denying when someone is sharing their experience of exclusion or iniquity.

Instead, LISTEN.

Even if your first instincts are to react, to deny, to try to play the devil's advocate, just listen to truly understand what it's about.

Speak up and make room for other voices

Next slides!

Managing yourself: Allyship

1. Don't accuse

Blunt statements, such as “That’s racist,” result in much more defensive reactions. When people feel defensive, they’re less likely to hear you or be willing to change their minds.

2. Ask a question

Say more about that... What did you mean by that comment?

What information are you basing that on?

How have you come to think that?

Could you walk me through your thought process?

How does this point tie into the topic of the business discussion?

3. Explain the impact of the comment

It’s more likely to change their behavior in future situations because it shows the person the negative impact their statements can have and why they should change.

I know you didn’t realize this, but when you __ (comment/behavior), it was hurtful/offensive because __. Instead, you could __ (different language or behavior.)

4. Share information –Optional

Example:

The person suggested that a female colleague is slacking off by leaving work early, you might say something like: “I read an interesting study the other day that found that when working moms leave the office, we assume they’re taking care of their kids. But when working dads leave the office, we don’t even notice.”

Gallo, Amy. (2017). [How to Respond to an Offensive Comment at Work](#). Harvard Business Review.

Adapted from: Cabral, A. (2020). *Allies and advocates: Creating an inclusive and equitable culture*. John Wiley & Sons.

Yoon, H. (2020, March 3). How to respond to microaggressions. The New York Times. Retrieved March 13, 2023, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/smarter-living/how-to-respond-to-microaggressions.html>, Washington, E. F., Birch, A. H., & Roberts, L. M. (2020). When and how to respond to microaggressions. Harvard Business Review.

Managing yourself: Allyship

Sometimes, it doesn't
feel safe to speak up...

At least, don't laugh.

Abruptly change the
subject.

Appeal to someone in
authority.

Managing yourself: What if you're the one who said something wrong?



Washington, E. F. (2022). Recognizing and Responding to Microaggressions at Work. Harvard Business Review Digital Articles, 1–11.

Conclusion

We discussed:

- Class facilitation strategies
- Course design strategies
- Seeking Feedback
- Managing yourself: Bias
- Managing yourself: Allyship

In the chat, share **two** new things you plan to try.



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THANK YOU!

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Managing yourself: Allyship – The PASL Approach

Pause

Pause/Halt/Stop/Slow the Conversation.

Interrupt the flow of the conversation to let the speaker know that you are interested in learning more about something they just said. Use your own instinct and language to pause the conversation when you hear something that you think might need to be addressed further.

"Wait a Second," "Excuse me," "Um, hold on a second..."

Acknowledge/Ask

Acknowledge what the person is saying.

Let them know what you think you heard them say. Maybe you misunderstood the person. Keep your voice calm. Sometimes that is all you need to do. Ask for clarification. Get curious, make sure you understand what the person said.

"I think you said that gender defines who makes a good leader..."

"What I hear you saying is..." Or: "I appreciate your thinking on this..." "That sounds important, can you say more?"

Listen

Listen to what the person said. Treat them with dignity. What really matters to the person? Generous listening conveys genuine curiosity, openness, and suspension of your own inner voice. Try to truly understand where the other person is coming from and listen harder when you disagree. Try to imagine the other person's perspective.

Speak Your Truth/Share Stories

Be clear. Describe your objection. Share your learning. Speak calmly. There is something powerful in storytelling. While sharing factual data may be helpful, we know that people are moved to open up and take other perspectives when they hear stories. You may share your own story, or share the story about someone you know.

"I used to think that way too, but I have learned this is a stereotype and a person can be a good leader regardless of gender."