

Age



Probably the most prevalent stereotype when it comes to adult learners has to do with the age of the learner. Older participants are often considered to have outdated information and not be tech or computer savvy. These are not factual assumptions and should not be considered about older adults. Instead, value the wealth of knowledge and experience that these learners have and capitalize on it to enhance their learning. Give them leadership opportunities or pay closer attention to their thoughts. Likewise, younger learners may be considered uneducated and their opinions and experience may carry little weight. Some may even consider them "dumb" or "naïve." This is a major mistake as well.

Gender



Especially where child care and early childhood education is concerned, we see a massive amount of gender stereotyping. The majority of child care professionals are women and when a man joins the field he can often experience a degree of unfair stereotyping. Sometimes these men are seen as feminine or are not respected as having the potential for providing proper care. In a training situation others may undervalue a man's opinion or put more emphasis on a woman's opinion.

Language



Language barriers exist and it is easy to become distracted and sometimes frustrated with this reality in a training situation. Unfortunately, stereotypes of English Language Learners do exist as well. These often come in the assumptions of intelligence or capability of the learner and couldn't be further from true. It is important to present information in multiple modes to allow English Language learners multiple opportunities to understand the information.

Ethnicity



This is perhaps the category first thought of when considering stereotypes. Different ethnic groups experience unfair stereotyping very frequently, and this ranges from positive to negative stereotypes. For example, Asian learners have probably experienced more positive stereotypes when learning such as the notion that they are skilled in math or science. Hispanic individuals are often stereotyped as industrious and hard workers. Other groups experience negative stereotypes that range from unfortunate to downright cruel.

Religion



In child care and education there are historical tales (some true and some not) that surround different religious groups and their interactions with children. Some programs were perceived to be extremely strict and use corporal punishment while others were perceived to be extremely relaxed and unstructured. Sometimes these stereotypes follow caregivers or programs that are affiliated with different religious groups.