

Facilitate for Impact

Module 9 Transcript

Welcome back to Facilitate for Impact. This is Module 9, and here's the truth every facilitator knows but sometimes doesn't want to admit. Adult learners want to learn their way.

They want to learn what they want to learn, how they want to learn it, when they want to learn it, and that applies to everything from professional development to learning how to make sourdough bread. And our job isn't to fight that, it's to harness it. Now in today's world, learning is more accessible than ever.

If somebody wakes up today and decides they want to learn coding or floral design or even neuroscience of motivation, they can start before breakfast. We've got information at our fingertips these days. One of the biggest game changers in this space is something called MOOCs, Massive Open Online Courses.

Most MOOCs are free or low cost. They're online courses open to anyone, anywhere. You don't have to take an entrance exam or a placement test, and they make learning accessible, flexible, and incredibly scalable.

I mean millions of people are using MOOCs every day for career growth, skill building, sometimes just for the joy of learning something new, changing their careers sometimes. Platforms like Coursera and edX and FutureLearn, they've redefined what professional and personal learning looks like. And here's why they're so powerful, especially through the lens of self-determination theory.

They are cost effective and scalable. They can deliver high quality content to large groups of people without breaking the budget. It's continuous learning.

New courses appear constantly, keeping learners current and curious, which speaks to that autonomy we've talked about. They're flexible. Flexibility's huge.

Learners choose when and how they want to learn. They choose their schedule, their pace. That also goes to that autonomy we've talked about.

Performance improvement is a benefit. Learners can learn any real skill gaps and immediately apply what they've learned, which increases their competence. We've talked about that.

There's talent identification. Facilitators and leaders can easily spot self-motivated, high performing learners who are taking the initiative to take advantage of these MOOCs. So that goes to competence and relatedness.

Now, while you don't get a degree when you take a MOOC, you can get a certificate, sometimes a micro credential, and that can boost competence and serve as tangible proof of your learner's growth. So MOOCs have changed not just how the world learns, but how

facilitators can inspire ongoing learning beyond the classroom. So here's why that's exciting for us as facilitators.

Our role doesn't end when the session does. The most powerful facilitation experiences spark residual learning, the kind that keeps going way after the learners leave the room. So consider pointing your learners to a MOOC that complements your learning session, perhaps one that digs deeper or expands into different areas of a topic, or even better, plan a group MOOC event, sort of like a watch party or a book club, where those who choose to can take a MOOC session at a designated time, or maybe by a specific time, and then you get together as a group in person or virtually and discuss what you learn, how it fit in with what you'd already learned, and any discrepancies, disagreements, questions.

It keeps the conversation going. These types of group learning experiences are incredibly powerful, and you'll probably find that the learners you work with will start asking for more. Another way to create residual learning is to encourage learners to experiment with different forms of note-taking.

I encourage you to do that back in Module 1 for this course, leaving room for questions or doodles or diagrams or charts or summaries, suggesting that they try taking notes differently than they have in the past. Sometimes that fresh approach helps complex topics land differently and more clearly and stick longer. Now, you want to try to avoid things like, write this down.

Remember, we said learners want to learn what they want to learn, when they want to learn it, how they want to learn it. When we tell them what to do, when we tell them to write something down, a lot of times they hear the directive, but it doesn't land the way you think it does. You think because you made them write it down, they'll remember it.

Adult learners really value that autonomy, so instead offer space for reflection throughout the course. Whether it's a short session or a multi-day session, maybe at the end of each module or midway through a session, give them an opportunity to pause and think about where they are in their learning journey. When I do this, I ask the learners to think of three things.

One thing that they've heard that validated something they already knew, one new piece of information that they heard or learned, and one thing that they want to explore further or still have questions about or maybe are still wrestling to grasp. And then once I've asked them to think about those three things, I don't require that they share. I give them the option to share if they choose to, but I don't require it.

You can also have learners generate potential test or quiz questions based on what they've learned. This is actually one of the most powerful and underused strategies for deepening learning and driving home retention. Now that goal of creating residual learning is the main reason why the learning prompts are built into this course.

They create reflection, accountability, and momentum. But your learning prompts don't have to look exactly like mine. They can take many forms depending on your group and the setting.

Maybe it's a follow-up conversation or a small group check-in a few weeks after the session, maybe with a list of prompt options for them to choose from. It could be an email follow-up where learners are asked to reply with what they've used, how they've applied their new skill or the new insight. It could be a virtual roundtable where participants share one-thing-I-tried stories or even an honor system approach where learners hold themselves accountable with gentle reminders from you.

Sometimes I'll even include a MOOC in the list of follow-up options because that's a great way to bridge structured facilitation with independent learning. You don't have to reinvent the wheel to make residual learning happen. You just have to plan for it intentionally.

So think about it this way. If the learning stops when your session ends, it was a good class. If the learning continues after your session ends, it was a great one.

That's the difference between training and transformation. So learner prompt number nine in your book will ask you to reflect on a few things. I'm going to encourage you to take a few minutes to do that now.

Now I'm going to leave you with this thought. Modern adult learners are independent, curious, and capable of charting their own course. Our job isn't to control that.

It's to support it. When we design experiences that extend beyond the classroom, we empower learners to keep growing long after we've logged off or packed up because when adults get to learn their way, they are unstoppable. Now that's it for this module.

Great facilitation isn't about teaching perfectly. It's about sparking growth. We'll see you next time.